

August/September 2009

## Nearly 800 Registered for New Orleans Assembly

**L**CWR members continue to register for the national assembly, with the total heading to 800 at the time of this newsletter's publication.

Many congregations made donations to the 2009 assembly scholarship fund. As of July 16, the national office had received \$16,900 in contributions, thus enabling the conference to assist 31 individuals with registrations and/or hotel accommodations.

In order to prepare fully for the assembly, all members are encouraged to do the following:

\_\_\_ Read the 2008 - 2009 LCWR annual report  
[www.lcwr.org/lcwrpublications/report09.pdf](http://www.lcwr.org/lcwrpublications/report09.pdf)

\_\_\_ Read the Summer 2009 issue of *Occasional Papers*

\_\_\_ Read the information on the candidates for the LCWR president and secretary (See the LCWR Members' Information section of the LCWR website at [www.lcwr.org](http://www.lcwr.org))

All are reminded to verify that they have registered for the assembly (the cancelled check is confirmation) and made hotel reservations.

### Online Assembly Evaluation

Immediately following the assembly LCWR members will receive an online survey that will serve as the assembly evaluation. All members are asked to complete the survey whether they attended or not. The feedback obtained from these evaluations is invaluable for planning purposes.



### LCWR Members Indicate Support of Shared Futures Plan

**M**ore than 600 LCWR members responded to the online questionnaire regarding the LCWR Shared Futures plan. Members were asked to indicate their support of the plan. The following are the results:

Support the plan	90.7%
Support and made suggestions	8.5%
Did not support the plan	0.8%

Discussion of the plan as well as the members' feedback will take place at the assembly on August 13.

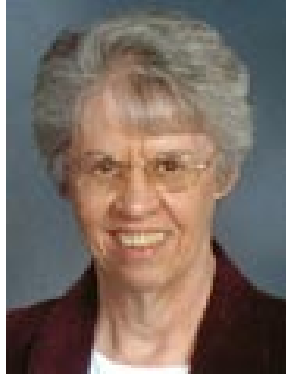
### Inside this issue:

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## *From the LCWR Presidency* Gratitude for the Privilege of Service

by Mary Whited, CPPS — LCWR Past President

In my presentation to the 2008 LCWR national assembly, I spoke of how midwives deliver new life, pass on to others what they have learned, and then step back so that others can lead. The time has come for me to step aside as others step up to lead our conference. As I write my final column, various feelings bubble up, particularly gratitude for the privilege of serving the conference.



I attend to an apostolic visitation of my congregation and doctrinal assessment of LCWR, I am deeply saddened by initiatives that do not build on common ground and indicate that the contributions of women religious are not valued by some in the church. To carry this pain has been the most difficult part of my service to the conference.

I trust that I have brought to the presidency a reconciling presence, reflective of the mission of the Sisters of the Most Precious Blood. I hope that I have helped us claim our place at the table in settings that call for a contemplative perspective and the passionate presence of women religious. As the presidency engaged in honest, and sometimes difficult, conversations with Vatican officials and others, I hope that I have judged well when to push and when to simply breathe.

*I have been blessed and enriched far beyond what I could ever have imagined when I said "yes" to leadership in LCWR.*

Late one evening, a few weeks ago, I received the news that two of our sisters had been hit by a car while crossing a street. Elaine died at the scene of the accident and Marie Frances was critically injured. After a sleepless night, I kept my appointment with Mother Clare, scheduled for the following day. While the hopes and concerns about which I spoke did not change, the tragedy put the conversation into a very different perspective. Life and death has a way of shifting priorities to what is most important.

At Elaine's wake, our chapel was packed with hundreds of people who had been touched by her presence and who supported our loss. As I listened to powerful and beautiful tributes by so many, I noted the irony of this situation. No visitors were present to hear the stories of untiring fidelity to her call and service to the church. Her generosity and prayerful presence will not be reflected in the final results of the investigations. As

I have been blessed and enriched far beyond what I could ever have imagined when I said "yes" to leadership in LCWR. I will truly miss the significant collaboration between LCWR and the Conference of Major Superiors of Men, the dialogues around current issues in church and world with conferences of Latin American and Canadian religious, the conversations with the International Union of Superiors General in Rome and, especially, the wonderful women I have come to know on the LCWR national board and executive committee. It has been a joy to share the presidency with Bea Eichten, Mary Dacey, J. Lora Dambroski, and Marlene Weisenbeck. I am grateful to have worked alongside former and current executive directors Carole Shinnick and Jane Burke as well as the wonderful LCWR staff. I admit, I will not miss the meetings or the conference calls. But I will surely miss the faith, wisdom, and laughter shared at many dinner tables.

In light of the theme of last year's assembly, I leave you with this message:

*Climbing the mountain has become a way of life for us, ecclesial women who desire to see from the perspective of God. Let us open ourselves to a new moment of grace when the Mysterious Presence, whom we call Spirit of God, leads and supports us in our climb. In her presence, we will not be deterred from the heart work and the head work that are essential to climbing.*

## US Women Religious Become Focus of Media Coverage

Since the beginning of July, US women religious have been featured on television and radio programs and in newspapers and blogs throughout the country. The following are links to some samples of the coverage.

### “US Nuns Facing Vatican Scrutiny”

New York Times, July 2

Article on the Vatican’s apostolic visitation of US women religious and doctrinal assessment of LCWR  
[www.nytimes.com/2009/07/02/us/02nuns.html?th=&emc=th&pagewanted=all](http://www.nytimes.com/2009/07/02/us/02nuns.html?th=&emc=th&pagewanted=all)

### “Focus: Women & Spirit Exhibit at Cincinnati Museum Center”

Cincinnati Public Television, July 2

Interview with Helen Maher Garvey, BVM; Barbara Hagedorn, SC (chair of Cincinnati exhibit); Jane McKnight (senior registrar, Cincinnati Museum Center)  
[www.cetconnect.org/MediaPlayer.aspx?vid=4055](http://www.cetconnect.org/MediaPlayer.aspx?vid=4055)

### “Visitors in the past”

National Catholic Reporter, July 6

Article by Gary Macy on history of Vatican oversight  
[ncronline.org/news/women/visitors-past](http://ncronline.org/news/women/visitors-past)

### “How Catholic Nuns Shaped America”

Fox Business News, July 7

Article by Elizabeth MacDonald on the *Women & Spirit* exhibit and the Vatican investigations  
[emac.blogs.foxbusiness.com/2009/07/07/how-catholic-nuns-shaped-america/](http://emac.blogs.foxbusiness.com/2009/07/07/how-catholic-nuns-shaped-america/)

### “Sisters Face Death With Dignity and Reverence”

New York Times – July 8

Article on end-of-life care offered by the Sisters of St. Joseph of Rochester, New York  
[www.nytimes.com/2009/07/09/health/09sisters.html?pagewanted=1&\\_r=2&hp](http://www.nytimes.com/2009/07/09/health/09sisters.html?pagewanted=1&_r=2&hp)

### “US Nuns and the Vatican”

National Public Radio, On Point with Tom Ashbrooke, July 8

Interview with Sandra Schneiders, IHM; Mary Traupman, CDP; Mother Mary Quentin Sheridan, RSM; and Laurie Goodstein, national religion correspondent for The New York Times

[www.onpointradio.org/2009/07/u-s-nuns-and-the-vatican](http://www.onpointradio.org/2009/07/u-s-nuns-and-the-vatican)

### “Pope Hopes Excommunicated Nun Might Become Saint”

Article by James Martin, SJ on Mother Mary McKillop America, July 9

[www.americamagazine.org/blog/entry.cfm?blog\\_id=2&id=51639454-3048-741E-3028918618441006](http://www.americamagazine.org/blog/entry.cfm?blog_id=2&id=51639454-3048-741E-3028918618441006)

### Letters to the Editor

New York Times, July 10

Responses to July 2 article

[www.nytimes.com/2009/07/10/opinion/lweb10nuns.html?scp=3&sq=&st=nyt](http://www.nytimes.com/2009/07/10/opinion/lweb10nuns.html?scp=3&sq=&st=nyt)

### “A Nun’s Life”

National Public Radio, Cleveland — The Sound of Ideas, July 10

Interview with former LCWR president Catherine Pinkerton, CSJ; Mary Ann Flannery, SC; Susan Durkin, OSU; and Erin Zupal, OSU

[www.wcpn.org/WCPN/soi/26980](http://www.wcpn.org/WCPN/soi/26980)

### “What the Sisters Are Up To”

New York Times, July 12

Editorial by Francis X. Klines on the Vatican investigations

[www.nytimes.com/2009/07/12/opinion/12sun3.html?\\_r=1&emc=eta1](http://www.nytimes.com/2009/07/12/opinion/12sun3.html?_r=1&emc=eta1)

### “Women religious leadership conference has been faithful to its mission”

National Catholic Reporter, July 13

Essay by Richard McBrien

[ncronline.org/blogs/essays-theology/women-religious-leadership-conference-has-been-faithful-its-mission?nocache=1#comment-47739](http://ncronline.org/blogs/essays-theology/women-religious-leadership-conference-has-been-faithful-its-mission?nocache=1#comment-47739)

## LCWR Leading from Within Retreat

A retreat for LCWR members and LCWR associates who are serving in congregation leadership

January 17 - 22, 2010

### Redemptorist Renewal Center at Picture Rocks

Tucson, Arizona  
[www.desertrenewal.org](http://www.desertrenewal.org)

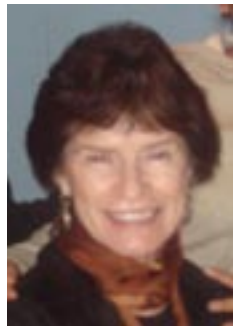


Join with other women religious leaders for a five-day retreat that will provide opportunities to reflect on the blessings and challenges of religious life leadership today. The days will include input, quiet contemplative space, a variety of ritual experiences, and some opportunity for individual and group spiritual direction for those who so choose.

### Retreat Directors



Regina Bechtle, SC



María Elena Martínez, OSF

Registration forms will be sent online at a later time. Participation will be limited to the first 25 members to send in their form and check.

## Women & Spirit Schedule

### Cincinnati Museum Center at Union Terminal in the Cincinnati History Museum

Cincinnati, Ohio  
*May 16 - August 30, 2009*

### The Women's Museum: An Institute for the Future

Dallas, Texas  
*September 25 - December 2009*

### Smithsonian-International Gallery in the Dillon Ripley Center

Washington, DC  
*January 15 - April 2010*

### Statue of Liberty National Monument/Ellis Island Immigration Museum

New York City  
*September - December 2010*

### Mississippi River Museum

Dubuque, Iowa  
*February - April 2011*

Visit [www.womenandspirit.org](http://www.womenandspirit.org)

As of July 15, more than 27,000 persons had visited the *Women & Spirit* exhibit at the Cincinnati Museum Center

## New Encyclical Offers Analysis of Economic Crisis

Pope Benedict XVI's new encyclical "Caritas in Veritate - Charity in Truth" offers an ethical analysis of the global economic crisis and an essential moral framework on how to move forward as a global community. The encyclical is drawing great attention in the United States and around the world.

The USCCB's Department of Justice, Peace, and Human Development is offering resources to assist with the exploration of the encyclical. These resources, along with a link to the text of the encyclical, are available at [www.usccb.org/jphd/caritasinveritate/](http://www.usccb.org/jphd/caritasinveritate/).

## Healthcare Reform and Comprehensive Immigration Reform Face Uphill Struggles

Two issues which are high on the priority list of many LCWR member congregations are authentic healthcare reform and comprehensive immigration reform. Although both are sorely needed, reform does not come easy. Carol Keehan, DC, president and CEO of Catholic Health Association is at the table with members of the Administration and with the Senate Finance Committee working on behalf of the uninsured, the underinsured, and hospitals who care for the most vulnerable people in our society. When the committee finalizes legislation, LCWR member congregations will be called upon to advocate for true healthcare reform.

NETWORK also works on behalf of healthcare reform and was one of the sponsors of an interfaith prayer and rally for healthcare reform on June 24 in Washington, DC. Several hundred people of faith from around the country came to the Capitol to raise their voices in support of affordable, accessible, quality healthcare for everyone. While not a sponsor of the event, LCWR was represented.

At the same time, members of the Justice for Immigrants campaign continue to keep alive the need for comprehensive immigration reform. Members of congressional offices continue to say that they hear more from the opposition than they do from supporters of CIR. Many representatives are taking a wait-and-see attitude until a piece of legislation is introduced. Strong advocacy efforts will be called for on this issue also. JFI plans another convening to be held in Philadelphia, October 7-9, 2009.



*Update* is an official publication of the Leadership Conference of Women Religious published monthly and distributed to members nationally.

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## LCWR Systemic Change Think Tank 2010 Planned for Florida

Since the last three LCWR systemic change think tanks have been held in the west or southwest, the planning committee decided to hold Think Tank XII in Florida at the Bethany Center, north of Tampa in the St. Petersburg Diocese, March 1-4, 2010.

Carol Zinn, SSJ will facilitate “The Evolution of Human Thought and Religious Life for the Life of the World” using the framework of spiral dynamics. The think tank is open to both LCWR members and justice and peace coordinators of LCWR member congregations. Registration flyers will be distributed during the 2009 assembly and will also be sent electronically. Carol issues an invitation to “celebrate this moment of creation history where we come to realize that God’s transforming love is always available to us and can do infinitely more than we could ever imagine!”

## Clarification of Finance Committee Statement in Annual Report

Since the annual report was posted to the LCWR website to allow members to review the document prior to approval at the assembly, several inquiries were made about one of the reported expense items. The report narrative did not reference it and the officers and staff would like to clarify this item.

The Finance Committee report appears on pages 25-26 of the 2009 annual report. Page 26 shows the actual figures taken from the audit review for the 2008 fiscal year. Last fall Catholic Charities USA (CCUSA) awarded a grant of \$2.1 million for the New Orleans recovery project. LCWR is acting as manager of that grant.

The first 40% of the grant was received and checks were written to grant recipients the week before Christmas 2008. The amount received from CCUSA for distribution was \$804,000 and is part of the total reported under contributions in the Revenue section of the Revenue and Expenses Statement. Under the Program Expenses section there is a line item titled CCUSA which reflects the checks written to grant recipients.

## Upcoming LCWR Dates

### LCWR Assembly

*New Orleans, Louisiana*  
August 11 — 15, 2009

### LCWR Leading from Within Retreat

*Redemptorist Renewal Center*  
*Tucson, Arizona*  
January 17 — 22, 2010

### LCWR New Leader Workshop

*The Retreat Center at St. John's*  
*Plymouth, Michigan*  
March 11 — 14, 2010

### LCWR Assembly

*Dallas, Texas*  
August 10 — 14, 2010

### LCWR Leading from Within Retreat

*San Pedro Spiritual Retreat Center*  
*Winter Park, FL*  
January 16 — 23, 2011

### LCWR New Leader Workshop

*The Retreat Center at St. John's*  
*Plymouth, Michigan*  
March 24 — 27, 2011

### LCWR Assembly

*Garden Grove, California*  
August 9 — 13, 2011

## The RCRI National Conference

October 20-23, 2009

Atlanta, GA

The first national conference of the Resource Center for Religious Institutes (RCRI) will be held at the Hilton Hotel in Atlanta, Georgia from Tuesday, October 20 through Friday, October 23, 2009. The theme of the conference is "Changing Times." Pre-conference seminars as well as keynote and major addresses and individual presentations will develop aspects of this topic.

- Annemarie Gibbons, director of CLINIC's Division of Immigration Services, will speak on "The Changing Rules on Immigration for Members and Employees."
- Simone Campbell, SSS, director of NETWORK, will deliver the opening keynote address entitled "Change! Hope! We the People One Year Later!"
- Mary Waskowiak, RSM, president of the Institute of the Sisters of Mercy of the Americas and Dominic Izzo, OP, prior provincial of the St. Joseph Province, will present a joint keynote address, "The Changing Face of Religious Life in the United States."
- Lynn Jarrell, OSU, president of the Ursuline Sisters of Louisville and Daniel Ward, OSB, executive director of RCRI, will give a major address, "Future Ecclesial Relationships: Institutes and the Universal Church."

## RFC Seeks Program Director

The Religious Formation Conference (RFC), Silver Spring, Maryland, is seeking a full-time program director. The director will be charged with designing, planning, implementing, and evaluating current and new programs in the area of initial and lifelong formation of members of religious institutes of women and men.

The candidate will have experience in initial and ongoing formation; in program design, development, and implementation; a master's degree in theology or equivalent credential and experience; computer proficiency; and familiarity with Microsoft Office programs. She/he will work in close cooperation with the executive director.

RFC offers a comprehensive benefits package, salary commensurate with experience, and a cordial work environment.

To apply, submit résumé and three references to:

Violet Grennan, mfc  
Executive Director  
Religious Formation Conference  
8820 Cameron Street  
Silver Spring, MD 20910