

Update

A Publication of the
Leadership Conference of Women Religious

August/September 2007

A Checklist to Prepare for the LCWR Assembly

This year's LCWR assembly will provide many opportunities for members to engage in the important work of exploring the future of religious life and addressing some important conference matters. In order to take full advantage of these opportunities to join with other members in significant conversations, members are encouraged to do the following:

- Read the 2007 LCWR Annual Report
- Read the Summer 2007 issue of *Occasional Papers*
- Review the two assembly resolutions (sent online to all LCWR members)
- Familiarize yourself with the candidates for LCWR officers
(see LCWR Members' Information section of the LCWR website — www.lcwr.org)

Also, be sure you have:

- Registered for the assembly (your cancelled check is confirmation)
- Made hotel reservations
- Made airline and shuttle reservations



Lorena Bolte, OP



Andrée Fries, CPPS

LCWR Mourns the Death of Two Religious Life Leaders

LCWR mourns the recent unexpected deaths of two active leaders. LCWR Region 13 chair, Lorena Bolte, OP, age 58, died in a car accident on July 4 in Kansas. The executive director of the National Religious Retirement Office (NRRO) and former LCWR president Andrée Fries, CPPS, age 65, died on July 14 in Baltimore from complications following knee surgery. Both deaths are felt keenly by the conference as a whole, and by women and men religious throughout the US.

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From the LCWR Presidency Saying Farewell

by Beatrice Eichten, OSF — LCWR Past President

After a month of saying farewell to people – some expected and some unexpected – I find myself reflecting on how we experience saying ‘goodbye’ and found myself going to a quote by Frederick Buechner, a Protestant pastor and writer:

Each time members of the tribe die, the self we were with them dies too, which is to say that the kind of words we spoke only to them – were only to them – and the kind they spoke only to us are spoken no longer.

*But if outwardly our language is thus impoverished, inwardly it is enriched because when members of the tribe die, the words they were are added to the vocabulary of the heart, where we have more than just ears for hearing them.*¹

The first farewell was my dad’s death in June – expected yet not. He’d been in a nursing home, was alert, and ready to complete his life’s journey. During a brief hospitalization, his heart shut down and he

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died peacefully and quickly. He gifted me with the intuition that I needed to leave a community meeting to be with him on his last day of life. Later, as we planned and prepared ourselves for his funeral, we each remembered words of his life – honesty, generosity, responsibility – that live on in our heart.



Then we heard of Lorena Bolte’s unexpected and tragic death. Her community and we, her LCWR colleagues, were stunned. Her death leaves a hole for us all, and we are still in the process of understanding what her death means to us. What I hear from her are words of gentle wisdom and loving presence.

Just this past week, Andrée Fries died from complications after knee surgery. Her passing is a terrible loss to her community and to our church. I honor the indefatigable energy she poured forth on behalf of women and men religious. I kept hoping for her recovery and, in some ways, am still in disbelief that such a vital woman is

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through the lives of so many people.
May you know words that enrich you and
guide you in your
ministry of leadership.*

gone. I hear her wonderful laugh, her wise observations about church, and her willingness to give of herself.

And now, I will be saying ‘goodbye’ to serving LCWR in the presidency. There are so many words of love, challenge, hope, and support from all of you that have swirled around me and anchored themselves in my heart during my five years in leadership and these three years in the presidency. Truly you have been gift to me.

I celebrate the vocabulary of the heart that has grown richer and deeper in me through the lives of so many people. May you know words that enrich you and guide you in your ministry of leadership.

¹ Frederick Buechner, *The Eyes of the Heart*, p. 106-107

LCWR Mourns the Death of Two Religious Life Leaders

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Lorena Bolte, OP

Lorena had been prioress of the Dominican Sisters of Great Bend, Kansas at the time of her death. As chair of the LCWR region in which the 2007 conference assembly will take place, she was a key player in coordinating the local arrangements for this event and had been slated to offer the welcome on the opening night.

Lorena professed her first vows in 1968. She ministered in various capacities including 20 years of service in Nigeria, West Africa where she was the formation director and later major superior of the indigenous congregation of the Dominican Sisters of St. Catherine of Siena of Gusau. In 2002 she became assistant prioress of the Great Bend community and four years later assumed the office of prioress.

Lorena was buried from the Dominican Sisters' motherhouse on July 9.

Andrée Fries, CPPS

Andrée had been in leadership positions serving religious life for more than 35 years. She worked as the NRRO project director for retirement services from 1998-2000, before becoming director of the office. Previously she had worked for the NRRO as associate director/director of allocations, TriConference Retirement Project (now (NRRO) from 1987-91. To these positions she brought both financial skill and compassion as she helped men and women religious face a daunting retirement crisis without losing sight of their mission of service

She worked in leadership in her own religious order, the Sisters of the Most Precious Blood of O'Fallon, Missouri, where she was superior general for two terms, 1980-86, 1992-98; and vicar general/member of the institute's administrative council, 1974-80. Andrée also was director of financial planning for the order, 1970-74.

In addition to serving as LCWR president from 1994-

95, from 1995-98, she was one of three elected US representatives to the International Union of Superiors General.

Andrée co-founded the National Association of Treasurers of Religious Institutes (NATRI) and served as its vice-president 1979-81, and a member of its national board, 1977-81. She was also a member of the National Association of Church Personnel Administrators (NACPA), and served on its executive committee, 1985-88; national board, 1985-88; and finance committee, 1982-90.

Services for Andrée were held at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, DC on July 18. She will be buried from her congregation's motherhouse on July 21.

LCWR unites in prayer with the many people throughout the US and abroad who mourn the untimely loss of these two outstanding women religious who assumed the ministry of elected leadership with great dedication and touched the lives of thousands.



Watch for Retreat Registration Forms in September

LCWR will be offering for the fourth year its **Leading from Within Retreat**, a five-day experience designed for women religious serving in elected leadership. The retreat will be led by María Elena Martínez, OSF and Margaret O'Brien, OSU and will be open to the first 25 LCWR members who register. (Only one person per leadership team may attend.) Registration forms will be sent online in early September.

LCWR and CMSM Issue Statement on Failure of Comprehensive Immigration Reform Legislation

Despite the long, hard struggle of many organizations and individuals to have Congress pass a comprehensive immigration bill, the legislation died in the Senate on June 28, 2007. In response, the executive directors of LCWR and CMSM issued a statement on behalf of the two conferences, expressing deep regret for this failure, maintaining that the status quo is morally unacceptable, and urging Congress to take up immigration reform as soon as possible.

The statement of July 5, 2007 was sent to members online and is available on the LCWR website at: www.lcwr.org/lcwrpressreleases/publicstatements/ImmReform7-07.pdf. The Vatican radio station in Rome followed up on the statement with an interview of CMSM associate director Michael McNulty, SJ.

Educational Resources on Child Abuse and its Prevention Available on LCWR Website

A new resource has been added to the LCWR website to assist members looking for ongoing educational opportunities for their congregations on topics related to sexual abuse and its prevention. A committee of three LCWR members – Donna Markham, OP; Rosemary Moynihan, SC; and Anne Myers, SSJ – identified existing resources that could be used for member continuing education in the areas of sexuality, sexual abuse, and appropriate professional boundaries. These resources include written material, speakers, websites, and AV materials.

LCWR members are reminded that in January 2005 LCWR, in collaboration with CARA (Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate) designed, distributed, collected, and interpreted an inventory to assess the preparedness of LCWR member congregations to address sexual abuse. The inventory, developed in conjunction with persons from a variety of disciplines and perspectives looked at two questions:

1. What policies, practices and procedures do LCWR member congregations have in place to address allegations of past member sexual misconduct?
2. What policies, practices and procedures do LCWR member congregations have in place to prevent future sexual misconduct by members?

Although the inventory showed that the large majority of LCWR congregations were well-prepared to address allegations of member sexual misconduct, a review committee of LCWR members noted

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“with liberty and justice for ‘all’”

All is a shrinking circle.
To my shame
I am safe inside,
white skin
birthed in this shining
city on a hill
where the lights grow dim
candles of hope
snuffed
one by one
for you called “alien”
branded “illegal”
(as if any Earth-child
has no birthright)
most of you brown-skinned
who speak and sing
a musical “unofficial”
language.
So, leave us, the legal ones.
Return to your land of birth
to feed your children dust
and leave us sniveling
with our unharvested fields
shuttered restaurants
overgrown gardens
our English only
land of the free
treasured values
in archives
locked.

Marie Lucey, OSF, 6/29/07: the day after immigration reform died in the Senate. May it be resurrected in stronger form which addresses root causes of immigration, including unfair US trade policies which force small farmers to come north in order to feed their families.

Marie is the LCWR associate director for social mission.

Educational Resources Available on LCWR Website

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areas related to prevention that needed strengthening, in particular, the ongoing education of members.

After receiving the results of the CARA study and the review committee recommendations, the LCWR national board decided that members should be offered information about available opportunities and resources for ongoing education. This list is now available on the LCWR Members' Information section of the LCWR website (www.lcwr.org).

In addition, the board decided that LCWR would reissue the CARA study in 2008 in order to track the improvements made by LCWR and its member congregations, particularly (but not exclusively) in the area of ongoing education for members

LCWR and CMSM Welcome New Receptionist

LCWR and CMSM recently welcomed Christabel Lartey as their new receptionist. A native of Montgomery County, Maryland, she holds a bachelor of arts degree in psychology from Chowan College and plans to begin graduate studies soon. Her background in the labor force includes customer service and clerical work.



Christabel replaces Alberta Yeboah who ended her time with LCWR and CMSM in June.

Systemic Change Think Tank X

Earth as Teacher:

The Dynamics of Emergent Processes

February 4—7, 2008

Franciscan Renewal Center

Scottsdale, Arizona

Led by Paula González, SC

Registrations are due by December 1, 2007



During the summer flurry of activity on Capitol Hill, LCWR signed on to the following:

Support for Jubilee Act:

LCWR joined a number of national organizations in signing a letter to Congress urging co-sponsorship of the Jubilee Act for Responsible Lending and Expanded Debt Cancellation of 2007 (H.R. 2634) in the context of reducing global poverty.

Letter to Senate Finance Committee re SCHIP:

LCWR supports the efforts of Catholic Health Association, the Interreligious Working Group on Domestic Human Needs and others to strengthen the SCHIP (State Children's Health Insurance Program) reauthorization bill by providing at least \$50 billion over five years in new funding. LCWR signed a letter to the Senate Finance Committee making this request plus inclusion of new tools for states to cover more children with more comprehensive benefits.

Water for All Statement:

As a member of the Religious Working Group on Water, LCWR signed a "Water for All" statement which will be used to guide the work of the group in relation to development assistance, international financial institutions, and practices of extractive industries.

SHARE Letter to the Salvadoran Government:

LCWR joined religious organizations, NGOs, and other members of US civil society in signing a July 13, 2007 letter to Salvadoran government officials expressing deep concern about the actions of riot police in Suchitoto against a peaceful protest in opposition to the privatization of water. The organizations also urged the release of 14 people held in those arrests who are threatened with the charge of terrorism. SHARE initiated the letter after attempts by individuals to send faxes to government officials failed because fax machines were shut down.

From the LCWR Executive Director
Solemnest of Industries

*The bustle in a house
The morning after death
Is solemnest of industries
Enacted upon earth.*

*The sweeping up the heart
And putting love away
We shall not want to use again
Until eternity.*

Emily Dickinson



Carole Shinnick, SSND

Soon we will gather in Kansas City to explore together the next frontier of religious life. We will be a bit more solemn I suspect, carrying with us the losses of the summer. Oh, there will certainly be happy exchanges in the meeting of old friends. There will be excited greetings that first night in the ballroom. Federations will supper together. Regions will gather. Tables will process.

But we will also come poorer this year – short two leaders recently lost, and many, many others. We will come wiser this year, acutely aware of our powerlessness. We will come hungry this year, yearning for a glimpse – just a glimpse – of the tomorrow still hidden in mist and shadow.

They say that the old westward trails of the pioneers are strewn with objects left along the way. The first things to go were the luxuries – framed pictures, heirloom furniture, fancy mirrors. Eventually they left behind

*Our provident God will quietly guide us
over rough terrain.
And the sturdy vehicles that carried us this far
will become the frames for our new homes.*

Unexpectedly, in the brash, bright light of July, this solemnest of industries has been ours. Two sudden deaths. Two unusual women. Two vital leaders. Two stinging losses. We have become accustomed to frequent deaths as our elders slip away after decades of life and service. We know those rituals by heart and do them well. But we are unprepared for the loss of vital, active members – people on whom we count each day, people with desks and telephone numbers and car keys and calendars.

Sometimes I get very angry at God. I say, “Look – we are doing our absolute best, trying to move into the future. We pour our hearts into a tomorrow we cannot

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see. We struggle to read your message in the signs of the times. But then you go and do something like this to us. You snatch away someone we thought we would have with us for much longer. I don’t get it. I don’t like it. I’m really mad at you. I’m sad.”

God just listens. To date I have heard precious little response. No explanations. No excuses. Only quiet. And the silent melting of one day into the next.

everyday items - children’s toys, worn-out boots, scraps of calico. By the time the travelers stopped, most of their past and the treasures they hoped to replant in a new world were lost or discarded. Ultimately they even dismantled their tired old wagons to build new houses.

Moving towards the future is costly. The price is more apparent every day. We will only be able to find it by giving up much of what we hoped to bring along. But the dear companions who stayed with us for part of the trip will send us the strength of their new and vital spirits. Our provident God will quietly guide us over rough terrain. And the sturdy vehicles that carried us this far will become the frames for our new homes.

Upcoming LCWR Dates

LCWR Assembly

Kansas City, Missouri
August 1 — 5, 2007

LCWR Leading from Within Retreat

Redemptorist Renewal Center
Tucson, Arizona
January 20 — 25, 2008

Systemic Change Think Tank

Franciscan Renewal Center
Scottsdale Arizona
February 4 — 7, 2008

LCWR New Leader Workshop

The Retreat Center at St. John's
Plymouth, Michigan
March 13 — 16, 2008

LCWR-CMSM Joint Assembly

Denver, Colorado
August 1 — 4, 2008

LCWR Leading from Within Retreat

Franciscan Center
Tampa, Florida
January 12 — 16, 2009

LCWR New Leader Workshop

The Retreat Center at St. John's
Plymouth, Michigan
March 19 — 22, 2009

LCWR Assembly

New Orleans, Louisiana
August 11 — 15, 2009

Occasional Papers Correction

An error was made in the Summer 2007 issue of LCWR's *Occasional Papers*. The article "Learning from Those Already in the Frontier" was written by Denise Wilkinson, SP (not Wilkerson).

NETWORK /NEP Boards Meet Local Members in Houston

Several members of the NETWORK and Network Education Program boards and three staff members met July 13-15, 2007 outside Houston, Texas at the DUCK (Discovery, Understanding, Creativity, Knowledge) Farm initiated several years ago by a board member and her husband as a center for education and retreats for people of all ages to learn about land restoration in a spiritual context.

The group also met with local NETWORK members and representatives of local justice organizations at the conference center of the Houston CCVIs who are gracious and generous supporters of NETWORK. This gathering provided a productive opportunity for board, staff, and local members to meet, listen, and exchange ideas. Given the enthusiastic response of all involved, NETWORK will look for future similar opportunities.



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Editor: Annmarie Sanders, IHM

8808 Cameron Street Silver Spring, MD 20910
Phone: 301-588-4955 Fax: 301-587-4575

NRVC Offices Are Moving

Due to the reconfiguration of administration and office space at the Catholic Theological Union, the National Religious Vocation Conference is moving its offices across the street to the original but newly renovated CTU administration and classroom building. Although the phone and fax numbers will remain the same, the new NRVC address is as follows:

5401 S. Cornell Ave.
Chicago, IL 60615-5698

Vision 2008 Available August 1

The 2008 *Vision* vocation guide will be available August 1. Orders may be placed online at www.vocationguide.org or by calling 800-942-2811. This year, for the first time, trilingual *Vision* posters in English, Spanish, and French are being freely distributed throughout the US and Canada.

The *Vision* 2008 website is under construction and will go live August 1 as well. In addition to the English and Spanish sites, there will be several articles available in French. The new site will have a streaming video server, so all advertisers will be able to submit short video clips to accompany their online listings

NRVC Appoints New Associate Director

The National Religious Vocation Conference (NRVC) has appointed Charlene Diorka, SSJ as its new associate director. Charlene will transition into her new position beginning on a part-time basis in August. She will assume her full-time duties in the Chicago national office in mid-October.



A Sister of St. Joseph of Philadelphia, PA, Charlene served her congregation as vocation director for the past six years. Prior to vocation ministry, she was a secondary school teacher. She has a bachelor of science Degree in elementary education from Chestnut Hill College in Philadelphia, PA, and a master of arts Degree in theology from St. Michael College in Winooski, VT.

Charlene is a familiar face to NRVC members. Appointed to the NRVC national board in 2003, Charlene has been a member of the leadership team for three years, serving as leadership team coordinator for the past two years. She has also been co-chair for NRVC Region 3 for the past four years. She was recently appointed to the convocation planning committee, the steering committee for the NCEA seminary department's psychological assessment project, and will be a co-presenter at the NRVC orientation program for new vocation directors in the fall. She is also a member of the initial formation committee for the US Federation of the Sisters of St. Joseph.

2007 NATRI Conference

November 6—9, 2007

Hyatt Regency Hotel, Miami, Florida

This year's NATRI conference theme, Transformation: Envisioning the Future, is reflective of the growth and change that religious institutes continue to experience as the future opens. In order to remain viable, religious institutes must be open to the transformation mode that is sweeping through the non-profit sector and inviting religious to envision the future creatively. NATRI even has a new Tuesday-through-Friday schedule that allows participants to get home for the weekend or possibly enjoy extra time in Miami.

At the conference, religious institutes will be challenged with future-directed sessions. Louis DeThomasis, FSC, chancellor of St. Mary's University of Minnesota and co-founder and first president of Christian Brothers Investment Services opens the conference with a challenge to bring faith and finance together. On Thursday morning, Patricia Wittberg, SC, professor of sociology at The University of Indiana – Purdue University in Indianapolis will share her research on sponsorship and sustainability of mission among religious institutes.

Other sessions will provide solutions for adapting investment strategies or changing investment managers. The lessons learned in the reconfiguration will be shared by people who have been through the process.

Additional information and registration materials are available on the NATRI website (www.natri.org) under Programs-National Conference.

New LRCR Publication Available for Purchase

**Procedures & Documents for
Canonical & Civil Administration in
Institutes of Consecrated Life and
Societies of Apostolic Life**

Publication price for 2007-2008 LRCR subscribers:
\$55.00

Publication price for non-LRCR subscribers:
\$75.00

Legal Resource Center for Religious Workshops

(1) MEMBERSHIP ISSUES:

CANONICAL, CIVIL & PSYCHOLOGICAL

September 11-13, 2007

Sheraton Greater Cincinnati Airport

Faculty:

Lynn Jarrell, OSU, JCD; Donna Markham, OP, Ph.D.

Daniel Ward, OSB, JD, JCL

(2) CIVIL & CANON LAW 301:

ADMINISTRATION PROCEDURES

September 13-14, 2007

Sheraton Greater Cincinnati Airport

Faculty:

Lynn Jarrell, OSU; Daniel Ward, OSB, JD, JCL

Hotel Rate \$99 plus tax

Subscriber Registration Fees:

Workshop 1 - \$350, Workshop 2 - \$300

Special Fee both Workshops - \$600

(3) RECONFIGURATION:

BEST PRACTICES

CIVILLY, CANONICALLY, CULTURALLY

February 11-13, 2008

Hilton San Antonio Airport

Faculty:

Janet Fleischhacker, CSJ; Stephen Glodek, SM

Lynn Jarrell, OSU, JCD; Mark MacDougall, JD

Mary Reichert, JD; Daniel Ward, OSB, JD, JCL

Hotel Rate \$99 plus tax

Subscriber Registration Fee: \$450

Group Rate: 3 or more from same institute/firm \$400

See www.lrcr.org for more details

Marriott City Center

Pittsburgh, PA

November 8 - 11, 2007

More information available at

www.relforcon.org

Seminars include:

Forming for a Prophetic Way of Life in An In-Between Time—Luisa M. Saffiotti, Ph. D

Formation for religious life today unfolds in a time of “not anymore” and “not yet.” An in-between time pregnant with questions, calling for transforming vision and radical hope. What does it mean to be prophetic and to form for a prophetic way of life in this in-between time? How does one form individuals for loving and living the questions? How does one form for imagination, creativity, and hope? What are some of the psychological challenges for formators and candidates undertaking this kind of formation today?

The Future of Religious Life in Context—Mary Charlotte Chandler. RSCJ

A survey of the current US context for hints of the future of religious life. Topics include: new emerging communities, the emergence of the laity (lay movements, lay ecclesial ministry and consecrated laity), the various forms of consecrated life, the dreams of young religious, and a profile of the millennial generation

Formative Communities: Challenging Our Death Wish—Donald Bisson. FMS

A look at ways to create and support a formative community for new members, renewal of community life and creating a preferred future. This will require confronting our workaholicism, excessive independence, terror of change and an unconscious death wish, if we attempt to renew community life.

Pre-Congress Activities include:

Reading the Signs of Our Times in Religious Life: Listening to the Voices of Younger Women Religious –

Thursday, November 9, 2007

Organizers of Giving Voice, which connects women religious under age 50, will explore the insights, hopes, longings, and concerns of women religious in their 20s, 30s, and 40s. Open to anyone interested in the experience of younger women religious.

Urban Plunge - Thursday, November 9, 2007

Visit and experience change in The Hill District of Pittsburgh, a thriving cultural neighborhood. Examine the use of political power - its loss and retrieval by residents. Transformational learnings in one neighborhood that you can bring home to yours.

CONGRESS 2007

Compelled by the Spirit to be Fire

Impulsadas/os por el Espíritu a ser Fuego



From the
**Center for the Study of
Religious Life**

KINDLING, the publication of the Center for the Study of Religious Life, will be arriving in the mail boxes of all CSRL members during August. This issue focuses on the topic of religious brothers in the church.

The issue also reports on the current context for US religious life, the new members of the CSRL board of trustees, the new home for the Center for the Study of Religious Life, and the upcoming cultural audit workshop.

At the end of August this issue of *KINDLING* will be available to download from the CSRL web site at www.religious-life.org/newsletters/index.html. Also available on the same web page are past issues of *KINDLING* including those on charism families, cultural diversity, emerging communities, and reconfiguration. A subscription form can also be found on that page.