

December 2010

Leadership Teams Encouraged to Reflect on Emerging Insights

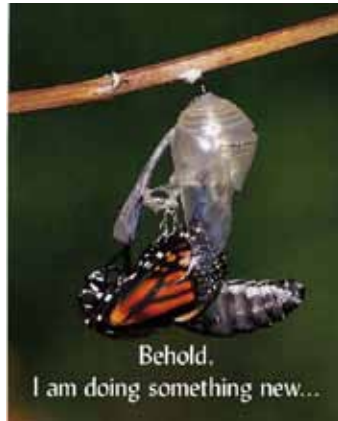
The LCWR regional meetings included a contemplative process designed to bring forth insights on the new questions and realities that are emerging for women religious.

The insights submitted to the national office thus far are posted on the LCWR website -- www.lcwr.org/what%27snew/new.htm. (The insights are also available there in PDF format.) The LCWR Contemporary Religious Life Committee encourages LCWR members to pray with these insights and to reflect on them together as leadership teams. The following questions may assist the reflection and conversation:

1. As you ponder the statements, what new questions or realities do you see emerging?
2. What is the new life that we as leaders need to attend to?

On December 9, the LCWR national board will participate in a conference call, along with members of the Contemporary Religious Life Committee to reflect together on the regional insights. The board members will be considering the question: "As you ponder the responses from all of the LCWR regions, what is the new life that we leaders need to attend to?" They will be listening for any commonalities that may provide direction for future planning for LCWR's programs and resources.

Each regional chair has also been asked to evaluate the contemplative process used at the regional meetings so



American Catholic Historical Association Honors LCWR

LCWR has been chosen to receive the American Catholic Historical Association's first annual Service to Catholic Studies Award for its sponsorship of the *Women & Spirit* exhibit.

LCWR president Mary Hughes, OP and LCWR history exhibit coordinator Helen Maher Garvey, BVM will accept the award at the association's annual banquet on January 8 in Boston.

The award acknowledges exceptional contributions of those who promote the study and research of the history of Catholicism apart from teaching and publication.

According to ACHA president Rev. Steven M. Avella, LCWR has substantially advanced the hopes of US Catholic historians who have attempted to fold the American Catholic story into the larger narra-



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that it can be refined as the conference continues to utilize it at various gatherings of its members. The process is designed to foster a national conversation around the critical issues in the world and church today which impact religious life and which call for a response from women religious.

A copy of the contemplative process used at the regional meetings is also on the website at www.lcwr.org/what%27snew/process.pdf. Members have been adapting the process for use with their own religious institutes.

From the LCWR Presidency

Laying Down Our Lives by Faithful Living

by Pat Farrell, OSF — LCWR President-Elect

We begin Advent this year commemorating the 30th anniversary of the martyrdom of the four US church women. LCWR is sponsoring a delegation to El Salvador this month where sisters will join the Salvadoran people in their memorial of Ita, Maura, Dorothy, and Jean, while also embodying the ongoing solidarity of US women religious both there and with oppressed peoples around the world.



I knew Ita Ford in Chile, where she spent the majority of her years as a Maryknoll missionary. She had been in El Salvador only nine months when she and the others were killed. Their death had

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a profound impact on the people of El Salvador, many of whom were desperately trying to leave the country for safety. The witness of these women who came voluntarily to accompany the people in their suffering and chose to stay when Salvadorans were leaving, gave strength and courage to many.

In the United States, the news of their death was pivotal. Bumper stickers appeared saying “El Salvador, where US guns kill US nuns.” Media coverage began to create an awareness of how citizens’ tax dollars were being spent to fund the repression. US military spending gradually became more dependent on verification of the human rights situation in El Salvador. Many of us participated in the opposition to US funding of that

war. It is part of our living memory. Through it all, I have no doubt that the death of the four church women, as well as the resolute response of so many women religious, made a difference.

But what is most engraved in my heart is way the church in Chile responded to the news of the death of Ita and her three companion martyrs. I recall a memorial Eucharist that was celebrated in the cathedral of Santiago. The gospel theme of that liturgy was a message I will never forget. “When you have done

all this, say we are merely servants; we have done no more than our duty.” (Lk. 17:9-10) Our duty! Nothing more, nothing less. There was no mention of heroism. To have made heroines of them would have distanced them from us and created the illusion that the vocation of a martyr is somehow different from the call that we’ve all received. No, there was no talk of heroism, but only of faithfulness. The servant is no greater than the master.

To be a follower of Jesus is to lay down our lives, as Jesus lay down his life, by truthful, faithful living. We can expect crucifixion, though it might not look as dramatic as the death of Ita, Maura, Dorothy, and Jean. We tell their stories, as well as the stories of Dorothy Stang

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and the five religious martyred in Liberia, to rouse one another to the same kind of courage and faithfulness. Our own times and our own circumstances are calling us to lay down our lives in ways we’re only beginning to name. Advent invites us to hope that God’s power at work in us can make us faithful.

LCWR Executive Committee Moves Conference Efforts Forward

The LCWR executive committee met from November 8–11 at both Trinity University in Washington, DC and at the LCWR offices in Silver Spring, Maryland. The members of the committee are: Mary Hughes, OP, president; Pat Farrell, OSF, president-elect; Marlene Weisenbeck, FSPA, past president; Ellen Dauwer, SC, secretary; Sheila Megley, RSM, treasurer; Patricia Crowley, OSB and Carol Zinn, SSJ, members-at-large; and Jane Burke, SSND, executive director.

Among the items on the agenda were:

Vocation Symposium

Mary Hughes represented LCWR at the September symposium of the National Religious Vocation Conference (see *LCWR Update*, November 2010). She reported to the committee on her experience of working with others to explore ways to assist young women and men discern a possible call to religious life, and how to continue the life-long process of personal growth and development needed to live an apostolic life.

Rebuilding Haiti

Pat Farrell represented LCWR at a meeting in Miami of key ecclesial collaborators from Haiti, several other Caribbean countries, and the United States (see *LCWR Update*, November 2010). She expressed great concern for the Haitian women religious, particularly those of indigenous congregations. After extensive dialogue by the executive committee, particularly in light of the 2010 LCWR assembly resolution, it was agreed that Jane Burke will make connections with LCWR congregations that have members in Haiti, as well as with the Hilton Foundation, to explore possible ways of standing in greater solidarity with the religious of Haiti. It was also noted that the Raskob Foundation has expressed interest in working with congregations that are serving orphans in Haiti and that LCWR has been gathering that information for the foundation.

LCWR's Canonical Status

Marlene Weisenbeck reported on her work designed to provide LCWR mem-

bers with information on the implications of the conference's canonical status.

Proposal for Leadership Development Program

The executive committee considered a proposal presented by the staff for a leadership development program to be offered to elected leaders by LCWR, in collaboration with Washington Theological Union. The proposal, which grew out of a discussion by the national board in August on the need for leadership development programming, looks at offering educational opportunities to leaders in a variety of formats. The proposal calls for updating the *LCWR Leading from Within Manual* and a development of programs and mentoring opportunities based on the material in the manual.

The executive committee recommended that the staff move forward with the proposal and bring a full report to the national board in February. The staff will begin looking at initial funding for the updating of the manual, the design of the program, and a pilot project. More information will be shared with the membership as the project develops.

Other

Jane Burke, as well as Pat Cormack, SCSC, associate director for business and finance; Marie Lucey, OSF, associate director for social mission; and Annmarie Sanders, IHM, director of communications, reported on the work in their own areas as well as on the various projects of the conference, including the efforts of the Strategic Operational Plan Committee and the Contemporary Religious Life Committee.



Members of the LCWR and CMSM executive committees meet at the LCWR and CMSM offices in Silver Spring. Standing: Paul Lininger, OFM Conv; Mary Hughes, OP; Ronald Talbot, SC; John Edmunds, ST; Thomas P. Cassidy, SCJ; Giles Hayes, OSB; Carol Zinn, SSJ; Thomas Smolich, SJ. Seated: Patricia Crowley, OSB; Marlene Weisenbeck, FSPA; Jane Burke, SSND; Pat Farrell, OSF; and Ellen Dauwer, SC.

LCWR Participates in Commission on Religious Life and Ministry

Mary Hughes, OP; Pat Farrell, OSF; Marlene Weisenbeck, FSPA; Ellen Dauwer, SC; and Jane Burke, SSND attended the annual meeting of the Commission on Religious Life and Ministry. The commission is comprised of representatives from the USCCB, LCWR, Conference of Major Superiors of Men (CMSM), Council of Major Superiors of Women Religious (CMSWR), and the National Religious Retirement Office (NRRO).

Along with reviewing the NRRO budget and approving a memorandum of understanding between the NRRO and USCCB, the commission held an in-depth conversation about the need for retirement planning in many congregations of religious.

Paul Bednarczyk, CSC, executive director of the National Religious Vocation Conference, attended the meeting to give an update on the NRVC vocation symposium, which led to conversation on vocation promotion by the commission members.

LCWR and CMSM Executive Committees Meet Jointly

The executive committees of both LCWR and CMSM held a joint meeting on November 11 at the conferences' offices in Silver Spring, Maryland.

Among the topics discussed were:

- The National Religious Retirement Office
- The *Women & Spirit* Exhibit
- The 2010 and 2011 Inter-American Committee activities
- Rebuilding the Catholic Church of Haiti
- The 2011 Visits to Vatican Offices

LCWR Attends USCCB Meetings

The LCWR presidency and executive director also attended the November meeting of the US Catholic Conference of Bishops (USCCB) as observers.

Jane Burke, SSND also represented LCWR at the USCCB Committee on Clergy, Consecrated Life and Vocations. Jane and the other representatives from various consultative groups, reported on their organizations' activities and had the opportunity to raise questions for discussion.

The question brought to the group by LCWR was: How can women religious congregations' efforts and concerns about the future of religious life work with local diocesan offices with the same concerns?

The chair of the committee, Archbishop Robert Carlson, reported on a recent meeting held with the bishops of Missouri, the leaders of local religious congregations, and Mother Clare Millea, ASCJ, on the apostolic visitation.

Representatives of LCWR, CMSM, CMSWR, USCCB and NRRO met in November.



LCWR Systemic Change Think Tank

Franciscan Retreat Center

Scottsdale, Arizona

March 7 — 10, 2011

'Awakening the Dreamer'

The planning team will integrate resonating themes of specific interest for women religious throughout the flow of the basic Awakening the Dreamer Symposium framework. The design of the symposium provides natural points where themes may be expanded. Topics will include:

- Identifying roles of women religious in the emerging global community (Sacred Earth Community)
- Addressing the pain of environmental despair (personally as well as within community and society)
- Recognizing and affirming congregational charisms as life-evoking energy and directive force in co-creating the future
- Judy Cannato's work, *Field of Compassion*

Also, there will be video segments not included in the regular symposium, as well as additional reflection/visioning/sharing exercises. More information is available at www.lcwr.org/lcwrsocialjustice/tt2011.pdf.

American Catholic Historical Association Honors LCWR

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tive of American history. "This significant display has skillfully intersected the work of women religious with some of the major developments and figures of American life..." wrote Avella. "This exhibit makes clear what Catholic historians have long known: the prayers and work of women religious have not only built the Catholic church – they have helped to build the nation.

"Our award is not only intended to affirm this excellent exhibit," he continued, but also to pay tribute to religious women in the United States and to underscore our appreciation for their loyalty and service to the mission of the church."

The ACHA was founded in 1919 and is one of the oldest and largest associations of historians of the Catholic church.

LCWR Leading from Within Retreat Now Open to More Than One Member Per Leadership Team



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

January 16 - 21, 2011

San Pedro Spiritual Retreat Center
Winter Park, Florida

Directors:

María Elena Martínez, OSF and Regina Bechtle, SC

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.

Registration form is available at
www.lcwr.org/lcwrprogramsresources/retreat2011.pdf

LCWR Supports Catholic National Call-In for New START

A number of interfaith groups held a weekend lobby effort in Washington, DC from November 14-15 for ratification of the new START treaty. Several Catholic organizations, noting they were unable to bring people to DC, offered to promote a Catholic national call-in day on November 16. The USCCB is strongly behind ratification of the treaty, joining military leaders, Defense Department, State Department, and President Obama who signed the treaty with the Russian president in April. Not ratifying the treaty is dangerous for the US, yet several key Republican senators are blocking ratification during the lame duck session of Congress.



- A letter to President Obama from faith leaders and NGOs urging action to prevent exploitation and death of migrants.
- Letter to House Education and Labor Committee to pass the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act (S3307), signed by several hundred national and state organizations.
- Letter from Interfaith Working Group on Trade and Investment to National Security Director of Development supporting greater participation of marginalized groups in trade agreements and more just distribution of access to gains of economic growth.
- After thoughtful consideration, LCWR agreed to a request to join other interfaith groups in filing an amicus brief in the Supreme Court calling on the state of California to take action to address severe overcrowding in state prisons leading to violence, illness, and suicide. In light of LCWR's membership in NRCAT (National Religious Coalition Against Torture) which addresses torture-like conditions in some US prisons, as well as engagement of some LCWR congregations in prison ministry, including California, the presidents agreed to having LCWR become an "amicus curiae," or "friend of the court."

LCWR Annotated Bibliography

The LCWR Contemporary Religious Life Committee has added four recommended readings to the annotated bibliography on religious life. The bibliography can be found at www.lcwr.org/what%27snew/bibliography4-10.pdf.

A set of reflection questions accompany the recommended readings. LCWR members are encouraged to utilize the bibliography and share it with their community members as well.

LCWR Finance Committee Meets in Washington

The LCWR Finance Committee met at Trinity University in Washington, DC on Monday, November 8. Two new members were welcomed to the committee. Membership for 2010-2011 includes: Sheila Megley, RSM, treasurer; Doretta Meier, OSF; Bea Hernandez, OSF; Helen Ingles, IHM; Karin Dufault, SP; Nora Hahn, PHJC; and Pat Cormack, SCSC, staff.

The committee reviewed the proposed 2011 LCWR budget, made some adjustments and forwarded it to the executive committee. Representatives from Christian Brothers Investment Services presented information about the LCWR investments and about the socially responsible investment (SRI) practices of CBIS.

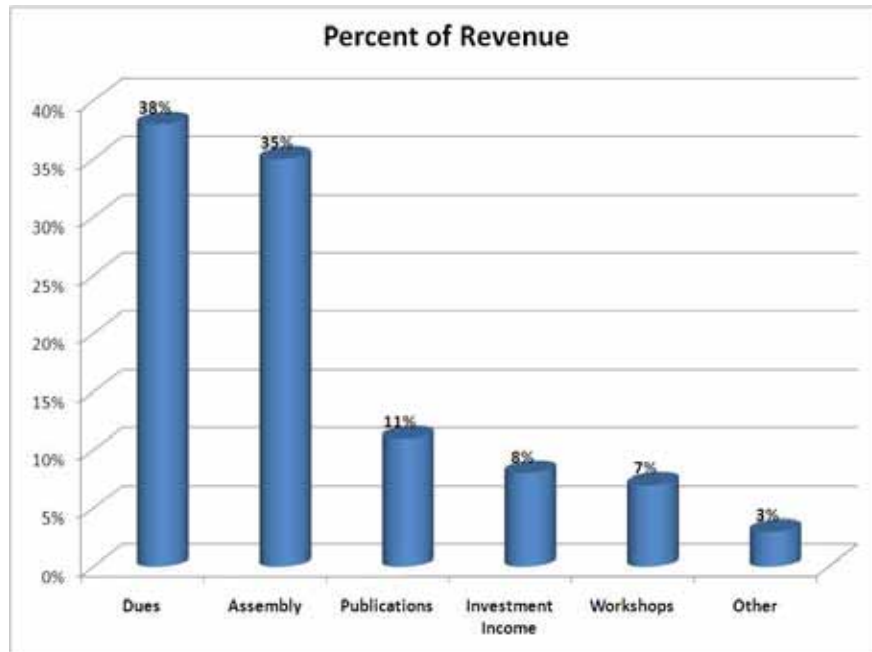
The committee designated several of its committee members to begin working on a financial plan for the conference as well as a review of the SRI policy. The committee also commended the staff for their efforts to contain costs including their willingness to pick up additional responsibilities when the staff was reduced by one full-time employee this past year.

The committee will meet again in Chicago on March 28, 2011.

Understanding the LCWR Dues Structure and its Revenue and Expenses

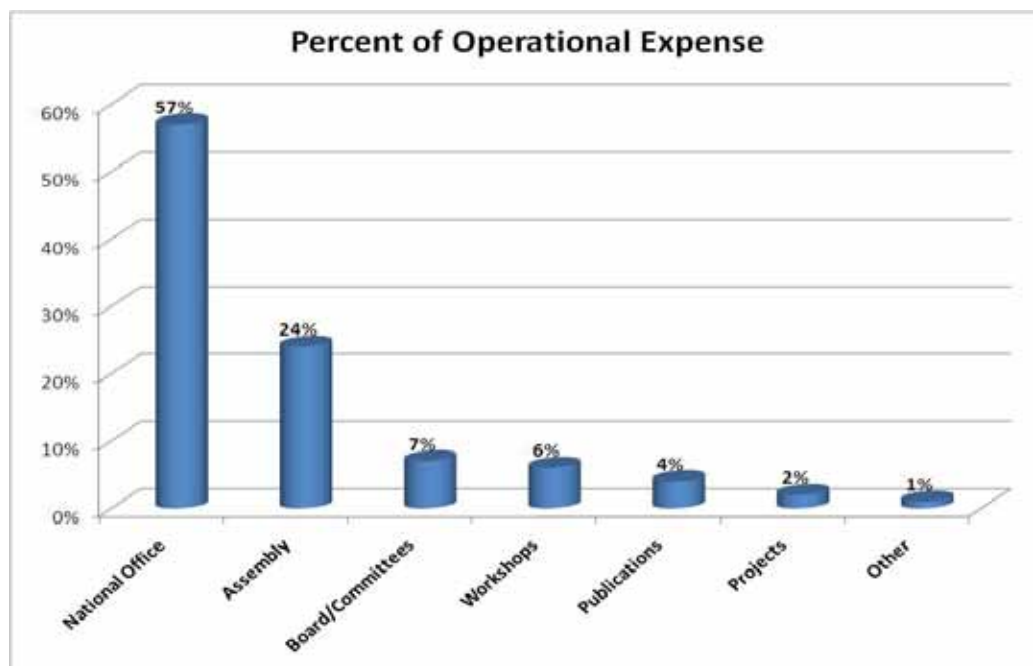
The dues structure for LCWR for 2011 through 2013 was presented to members during fall regional meetings. Some newer members of LCWR have asked questions for further clarification. The following information may assist in understanding the dues structure.

Using the 2009 review of LCWR finances, the following chart indicates gross income for the conference.



The amount of gross income supplied by dues has decreased over the years due to the decline in the number of congregations. The current structure captures a more equitable distribution of conference expenses according to the size of member congregations.

The following chart shows the distribution of gross expenses.



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Understanding the LCWR Dues Structure and its Revenue and Expenses

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As is true for most organizations, the bulk of the expense supports the functioning of the national office. As a matter of practice, LCWR does not attribute the cost of staffing to specific projects/publications because this would seriously inflate assembly and workshop fees as well as costs for particular publications.

At the direction of the board, the projected expenses in the budget for 2010 (the current fiscal year) were reduced by 3%. The staff was reduced from 7 ½ to 6 ½ employees, and costs were carefully monitored throughout the year. Despite the unanticipated costs for the doctrinal assessment and the apostolic visitation, the conference anticipates some small income from operations in 2010.

The finance committee has recommended a balanced budget for the coming fiscal year (2011). This was affirmed by the executive committee and will be presented to the board for approval in February 2011.

The finance committee is studying the impact of membership trends upon dues structure and financial planning. The following table compares the number of member congregations according to their size from 2007-2010.

Range	2007	2008	2009	2010
1-50	108	102	94	100
51 - 100	73	66	76	76
101 - 150	60	58	51	44
151 - 200	33	32	26	30
201 - 300	33	28	26	24
301 - 400	19	21	15	15
401 - 500	11	9	10	9
501 - 600	9	9	4	8
601 - 700	6	5	7	3
701 - 800	1	4	1	3
801 - 900	1	1	4	3
901 - 1000	4	1	2	2
1001 - 1100	1	1	0	1
1101 - 1200	0	0	1	0
1201-1300	1	1	0	0
1301 +	2	1	0	0
Total number of congregations	361	339	317	318
Largest congregational unit	1772	1772	1109	1071
Smallest congregational unit	4	5	4	4

The chart to the right shows the decline in the reported number of professed members of all LCWR member congregations from 2007-2010.





Upcoming Showings

Statue of Liberty National Monument/ Ellis Island Immigration Museum

New York City -- September 24 - January 22, 2011

Mississippi River Museum & Aquarium

Dubuque, Iowa -- February 18 - May 22, 2011

Mount St. Mary's College

Los Angeles, California - June 19 - August 14, 2011

Center for History

South Bend, Indiana -- September 2 - December 31, 2011

The California Museum of History, Women & the Arts

Sacramento, California

January 24 - June 3, 2012

Housing Options in Dubuque

While the *Women & Spirit* exhibit is on display at the Mississippi River Museum & Aquarium in Dubuque, Iowa, a number of local congregations are making housing available for women religious and associates. A listing of the options is available on the password-protected area of the LCWR website at: www.lcwr.org/members/dbqhousing.pdf. LCWR members are encouraged to make the listing available to those in their communities.

JFI Promotes New Year's Resolution for National Migration Week

The USCCB Justice for Immigrants Campaign will join the Interfaith Immigration Coalition in encouraging commitment to a New Year's Resolution for Just and Human Immigration Reform in 2011. JFI will focus its efforts on National Migration Week, January 2-8, 2011. Information will be posted on www.justice-forimmigrants.org. Resources are available on www.interfaithimmigration.org for their roll out in November.

Women & Spirit in the News

"Forums for dialogue"

Catholic Sentinel

Column by Archbishop John Vlazny

November 3, 2010

www.catholicsentinel.org/Main.asp?SectionID=4&SubSectionID=43&ArticleID=13097

"'Spirit' of Sisters Infuses Exhibit"

Catholic New York

Article by Camille D'Arienzo, RSM

and

Slide Show of *Women & Spirit* Exhibit at Ellis Island

September 9, 2010

cny.org/detail.html?sub_id=3477

NETWORK Board Attends to an Ambitious Agenda

From October 21-26 members of the NETWORK and Network Education Program (NEP) boards, joined by staff on Friday, worked to finalize several new bylaws and policies, complete the strategic planning process, review candidates for a proposed slate for electing new board members, form a new coordinating council, complete work on changing the pay structure for staff, and meet in board-staff standing committees.

In addition, the ad hoc committee planning a 40th anniversary celebration in 2012 provided an update on its work and sought feedback from the board. While the anniversary will continue from December 17, 2011 to December 17, 2012, the DC event will be on April 12, 2012. Also, a status report was given on the hiring of an NEP coordinator, a strong, immediate need. The board also agreed to give greater attention to the issue of racism, and to place a focus on mission at its spring meeting.

Mission Congress 2010 Energizes and Challenges Participants

Nearly 400 people of diverse cultures, geography, gender, and age, including bishops, laity, clergy, and religious, filled the ballroom of the Albuquerque Marriott October 28-31, 2010. From the opening liturgy, with Tucson Bishop Kicanas presiding, and the first challenging keynote address by Gary Riebe-Estrella, SVD, to the final sending-forth ritual, participants enthusiastically engaged with speakers and one another on the theme, "God's Mission, Many Faces: A Portrait of US Catholics in Mission." Keynote speaker and LCWR member Janice McLaughlin, MM drew participants into her reflection on "Turned Upside Down: Lessons from the Margins" while Cardinal Oscar Andrés Rodríguez Maradiaga of Honduras, described the need for a church that is welcoming to all, compassionate, and joyful.

A variety of workshop/dialogue sessions further energized participants before they set out to visit the Native American Cultural Center and then on to Santa Fe for liturgy at the cathedral. During the final session on emerging directions in mission, two realities were emphasized: the church's mission is now primarily, though not solely, carried out by the laity, and the call to mission is a call to all Catholics by virtue of baptism.

Is Your Leadership Term About to End?

If your leadership term is ending this month, you must submit a change of leadership form so that the LCWR membership can be properly transferred to the new leaders. This will ensure that there will be no gap in communications from the national office. Please use the change of leadership form found in the LCWR Members Information section (password-protected) of the website at www.lcwr.org/members/index.html.

Tragedy and Inspiration Found in Iraq

LCWR has remained connected to events in Iraq and to US policy since the conference's participation in a Catholic Relief Services delegation of US women religious to Lebanon and Syria in 2008 to witness and respond to the plight of Iraqi refugees. During that visit, delegates met a number of Iraqi Dominican sisters, and during the past two years, LCWR has participated in several meetings at the USCCB to engage in conversation with Marie Therese Hanna, OP, a former prioress of her congregation in Mosul, Iraq, whom the delegates met in Syria.

The October 31, 2010 bombing of the Syrian Catholic cathedral in Baghdad was particularly disturbing because of this connection. Cardinal George, president of the USCCB, issued a message to President Obama urging the administration to help Iraq protect its citizens, "especially Christians and others who are victims of organized attacks. Having invaded Iraq our nation has a moral obligation not to abandon those Iraqis who cannot defend themselves."

The fidelity and courage of the Iraqi Dominican sisters is a ray of hope in the midst of violence. Their story is told by Marie Hanna in a new book titled *Drawn by Love*. Proceeds from the sale of the book will be used to help finance the higher education of the young Dominican sisters, a number of whom have been trained by the Adrian Dominicans in the United States. Their education in areas such as peace studies, medicine, pastoral care, psychology, and theology is a priority for the congregation in their mission of forging a better future for the people of Iraq. (Copies can be ordered online at Sor Juana Press, www.sisterfarm.org or through webershop@adriandominicans.org. Cost is \$20 plus shipping and handling.)



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Editor: Annmarie Sanders, IHM
 8808 Cameron Street — Silver Spring, MD 20910
 Phone: 301-588-4955 Fax: 301-587-4575
 E-mail: asanders@lcwr.org Website: www.lcwr.org

Transformation of Religious Life in North America An Action-Oriented Initiative

The **Religious Formation Conference** is hosting a number of gatherings across the United States of women and men religious committed to the ongoing transformation of religious life in North America.



Open to all religious, the gatherings are designed to assist congregational members to assume responsibility for animating communal openness and movement towards transformation in the service of shaping prophetic religious life for the future.

More information can be found at: www.relforcon.org.

Upcoming LCWR Dates

LCWR Leading from Within Retreat

San Pedro Spiritual Retreat Center

Winter Park, Florida

January 16 — 21, 2011

LCWR Systemic Change Think Tank

Franciscan Retreat Center

Scottsdale, Arizona

March 7 — 10, 2011

LCWR New Leader Workshop

Conference Center - University of St. Mary of the Lake

Mundelein, Illinois

March 24 — 27, 2011

LCWR Assembly

Garden Grove, California

August 9 — 13, 2011

LCWR Leading from Within Retreat

Redemptorist Renewal Center

Tucson, Arizona

January 15 — 20, 2012

LCWR Assembly

St. Louis, Missouri

August 7 — 11, 2012

LCWR Assembly

Orlando, Florida

August 13 — 17, 2013