

November 2006

## LCWR Joins Sisters of Loretto in Honoring Mary Luke Tobin, SL

dent of LCWR, died at age 98 at her congregation's motherhouse in Nerinx, Kentucky on August 24.

Mary Luke was well revered for her leading role in the US renewal of religious life. While president of the Sisters of Loretto and head of LCWR, she was one of only 15 women worldwide invited to attend the last two sessions of the Second Vatican Council as an auditor. She also was one of only three women who assisted in drafting the council documents when she worked with the commission that drafted the council's "Pastoral Constitutions on the Church in the Modern World."

Following her experience at the council, Mary Luke served at the forefront of religious life renewal. She also became an ardent ecumenist and advocate of church renewal, peace, social justice, and women's rights. She traveled extensively throughout the United States and the world as a speaker, retreat leader, and witness for peace.

Mary Luke developed a friendship with Thomas Merton and later co-founded the International Thomas Merton Society and established the Thomas Merton Center for Creative Exchange in Denver.

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Mary Luke Tobin, SL

## LCWR Travels to New Orleans to View Progress and Learn About Needs

Participants at the 2006 assembly were deeply moved by the panel presentation, Finding Meaning in Chaotic Times: Katrina and Transformative

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Touring the grounds of the school of the Sisters of the Holy Family of New Orleans

# From the LCWR Presidency Of Many Doorways.....

by Beatrice Eichten, OSF — LCWR Past President

n the feast of St. Francis on Ocober 4, I had the opportunity to celebrate with the Franciscan Sisters at Rochester, Minnesota. They, like many other religious communities, mine included, are living into new space after reconfiguring their motherhouse. They blessed the new doorway that will be used by the sisters to access their living and ministry area. It is a doorway to new space, new realities, new patterns of living.



A doorway opened for me this past weekend when my father, age 89, had a mild stroke that brought to the fore all the health issues we were attempting to deal with at home. We knew that soon we would need to make other arrangements for his care. The stroke made 'someday' today. The blessing is that he and we were ready to take this next step because of having worked faithfully with the 'now' reality.

We are surrounded with doorways

Sometime during the day, the phrase 'doorway of the future' was used. As I thought of the preposition, 'doorway of' seemed more immediate than 'doorway to.' Doorway 'to' makes me think of sometime off in the future, but my experience is that the doorways are already here, opened or opening, and we are stepping through, often without realizing it. They are doorways of newness, of change, of invitations to step into the unknown. that beckon, invite, and challenge. Whether within our families, congregations, or our ministries, our relationship with world events, or with the cosmos, we are a people moving on. The call is to believe and trust that God is present here and now in all the events of the day and to open our hearts to hear God say, "I love you." Only then will we be doorways of God's peace. And so we pray...

God, fashion us anew as doorways to your peace. Where there is violence and hostility, let us bring compassion. Where there is abuse of power, let us bring dignity and respect. Where there is deliberate deceit, let us bring truth and authentic concern. Where there is a shuttering of dreams, let us bring visions of hope. Where there is conflict in relationships, let us bring reconciliations. And where there is disregard for creation, let us bring reverence and care.

O Divine Creator, let us not so much seek to be centered on ourselves as to focus on the needs of those neglected; To be appreciated by others as to further the gifts of the forgotten; To be materially secure as to share our wealth with the poor. For it is through awareness of injustice that suffering will be healed, It is by simplifying our life style that consumerism will lose its grip, And it is through a selfless commitment to love that peace will be reborn.

Peace Prayer of St. Francis, adapted by Jean Schwieters, OSF



Sculpture by Margaret Beaudette, SC

### LCWR Travels to New Orleans to View Progress and Learn About Needs

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Leadership. During the membership meeting, members called for renewed commitment to the sisters and the people of New Orleans. The national board, meeting immediately after the assembly, considered several suggestions for ways to continue supporting and walking with the New Orleans congregations.

Aware that Mary Dacey, SSJ (LCWR president) and Carole Shinnick, SSND (LCWR executive director) were already going to New Orleans in October, the board asked them to try to learn more about the sisters' ongoing needs and concerns during their visit. Both the assembly participants and the national board were very clear that it was very important to let the sisters in New Orleans identify their needs before deciding "next steps."

A report of the visit with specific recommendations is available on the public section of the LCWR website. (http://www.lcwr.org/what%27snew/neworleans. htm) Pictures taken during the visit are available there as well in a slide presentation. Members are encouraged to read the report and to check the revised versions of the requests for assistance on the LCWR members' information section of the website. (Please note that some have revised their forms and others are still working on them.) LCWR will continue to be in conversation with the leaders in New Orleans about the best ways the conference can continue to support them.



## LCWR Joins Sisters of Loretto in Honoring Mary Luke Tobin, SL

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In 2003 LCWR honored Mary Luke with its first LCWR Outstanding Leadership Award. She was present at the 2003 assembly in Detroit to accept the award.

Mary Luke chose to donate her body to science. Several representatives of LCWR attended a memorial service for her in Nerinx on October 7 including: Mary Catherine Rabbitt, SL, president of the Sisters of Loretto and former LCWR board member; LCWR presidents Mary Dacey, SSJ (2006); Helen Maher Garvey, BVM (1987); Theresa Kane, RSM (1979); and Margaret Brennan, IHM (1972); and LCWR executive directors Carole Shinnick, SSND (present) and Mary Daniel Turner, SNDdeN (1972-78).





Helen Maher Garvey, BVM

Mary Catherine Rabbitt, SL



Mary Daniel Turner, SNDdeN; Theresa Kane, RSM and Mary Dacey, SSJ at the memorial service for Mary Luke Tobin, SL

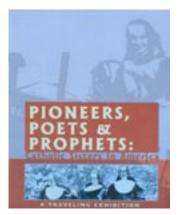
Former president of the Sisters of Loretto Maureen McCormack, SL (left) with Margaret Brennan, IHM

## Hilton Foundation Awards \$1 Million Grant to LCWR Exhibit

September 30 the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation awarded the LCWR exhibit, "Pioneers, Poets and Prophets: Catholic Sisters in America," a grant of \$1 million. This grant will help provide funds for the research, construction, and mounting of a traveling exhibit. The total amount needed is \$3 million of which 1.7 million has been collected.

LCWR is grateful to the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation and to the persons who made the connections with Steve Hilton and the foundation. Many persons contributed to the writing of the 45-page grant.

The exhibit will document the untold story of the leadership and vision of Catholic women religious in the service of the people of the United States. It addresses the critical need for clear and accurate information on the contributions of Catholic sisters from their first coming to the United States in 1727 until the present time. In addition to telling the sisters' story, the exhibit will invite reflection on the spirituality and the mission of prayer, justice, and charity which impelled early members of religious congregations and continues to inspire persons of good will today.





2007 LCWR New Leader Workshop The Retreat Center at St. John's Plymouth, Michigan March 15 -18, 2007

This workshop, offered for leaders who have been in office for two years or less, provides invaluable information on topics of critical importance for religious life leaders. The faculty includes:

> Nancy Schreck, OSF Spiritual Dimensions of Leadership

Simone Campbell, SS and Christine Rody, SC Leaders and Canon and Civil Law

> Hertha Longo, CSA Leaders and Finance

Mira Mosle, BVM Leaders and Communications

Fran Repka, RSM Leaders and Personnel Issues and Holistic Leadership

The workshop will provide multiple opportunities for participants to consider how to employ their new insights once they return home and builds in time for leadership teams to reflect together on what they learn. The experience is set in a context honoring the mystery, grace, and power of God's Spirit, where the faculty and participants share insights in a spirit of mutual learning.

Registration forms are available on the LCWR website at http://www.lcwr.org/lcwrprogramsresources/ newleaderworkshop.htm The deadline for registration is December 8.

## LCWR Initiates New Member Service: The LCWR Resource Sharing Forum

#### What is the LCWR Resource sharing Forum?

The forum is a listserv that is open only to LCWR members. This listserv is a means for LCWR members to communicate with one another online with a question or to share information. When a member posts a message to this forum it will go to all other members who are participating.

#### Why has LCWR initiated an online forum?

The LCWR national office currently uses a one-way messaging system that allows the office to send messages to all members. The forum would allow members to send a message to all other members. The need for this has been seen in the national office since members often call seeking information or suggestions on such topics as speakers and facilitators; sample policies on housing, retirement, transportation, or driver education; consultants on building and property renovation; information on sponsorship; group processes; translation services; and many other needs. Since the national office does not keep this kind of information on hand, it seemed helpful to offer members a way to bring these requests to other members directly.

#### How does the LCWR Resource sharing Forum work?

Suppose an LCWR member wants recommendations of people who do strategic planning for religious congregations. The member posts a message to the LCWR Forum asking for help and also asking that any member with a suggestion reply directly to the person making the request. Members will be asked to respond in this way so that forum participants are not inundated with messages that do not pertain to their interests.

#### *How does one sign up for the LCWR Forum?* Signing up is simple. Instructions are on the LCWR

Signing up is simple. Instructions are on the LCWR Members Information section of the LCWR website: www.lcwr.org.

#### Is there any cost for this service?

The LCWR Resource Sharing Forum is a Yahoo group. This is a free service of Yahoo; therefore, there is no cost to the conference or to the members.

## LCWR and CMSM Anniversaries Commemorated in America Magazine

CWR expresses its gratitude to the Conference of Major Superiors of Men for its efforts to highlight religious life in the media during the anniversary years of both conferences.

The work of CMSM resulted in a contact with *America* magazine which dedicated its October 16 issue to "Religious Life Today." Four of the major articles in this issue focused on religious life:

"Sisters Today" Doris Gottemoeller, RSM

"Double-Crossed or Not?" Patricia McCann, RSM

"Religious Life at the Brink" Donald Senior, CP

"Religious You Will Always Have With You" Richard Rohr, OFM

In addition, the "Portfolio" section pays tribute to St. Theodore Guerin, foundress of the Sisters of Providence of St. Mary-of-the-Woods.





January 14 – 19, 2007 Franciscan Center — Tampa, Florida Directors: María Elena Martínez, OSF and Margaret O'Brien, OSU

There is one opening available for this retreat. Anyone interested is asked to contact Carol Glidden at cglidden@lcwr.org or 301-588-4955 immediately. LCWR is also exploring the possibility of extending the retreat to one additional person if anyone else is interested.

More information is on the members' information section of the LCWR website: www.lcwr.org

### Last Call for Think Tank IX Registrations

ome spaces are available for "Uprising of Hope: Transformation for an Emerging Future," to be held February 26, 4:00 pm to March 1, 10:00 am at Villa del Mar, Santa Cruz, California. Registrations are due to the LCWR office by December 1.

Registrants will receive a confirmation letter, including driving directions and shuttle information from the Oakland or San Jose airport. For registration information contact Carol Glidden: 301-588-4955 or cglidden@lcwr.org.

## Resources Available from LCWR Partners

#### Pax Christi USA Launches Peoples Peace Initiative

"Called to Something New: A Peoples' Peace Initiative" is a collaborative effort of Catholic organizations to articulate "the challenges of Catholic peacemaking, placing at the center the experience and perspectives of those most marginalized in society, particularly communities of color, women, and the impoverished in this country and around the world." LCWR is one of the 20 initial endorsing organizations and had the opportunity to review and provide feedback on draft documents.

Available in both English and Spanish, the booklet contains a process designed to bring together scripture, Catholic social teaching, and lived experience for grassroots reflection in parishes and small faith communities. Eventually, the insights emerging from these reflections will be compiled as input for the writing of a peace document of the people, a natural evolution of church writings on peacemaking following upon Vatican encyclicals and pastorals of bishops.

For further information see www.paxchristiusa.org.

#### Catholics in Alliance for the Common Good

Election Resource:Voting for the Common Good: A Practical Guide for Conscientious Catholics. See www.thecatholicalliance.org.

### CHA Board Visits Post-Katrina New Orleans

The CHA September 21-22 board meeting was held in New Orleans, to provide board members the opportunity to see both the widespread devastation caused by the floods following Katrina, and new cooperative models being developed by Catholic health ministries and Catholic Charities to revitalize the city and its devastated health care infrastructure.

The drive through miles of devastated, uninhabitable houses of all income levels was sobering. Here and there, a few homes that had been gutted and rebuilt on blocks emptied of neighbors and stores offered testimony to the determination and hope of some residents of the ravaged sections of the city. Breached levees are being rebuilt, but only to protect against level three hurricanes for the present.

Board members heard from local religious and civic leaders who described the challenges they are working to address in four major areas of need: housing, health care, schools, and public transportation. In the floods following Katrina, 80% of the city was under water, more than 225,000 residences were flooded, and staffed hospital beds were reduced from 2,269 to 456. Most tragically, 1,800 people died after the levees broke.

But hope lives. Catholic Charities described their Fleur-de-Lis (Flower of Light) Project, a faith-centered, school-based mental health program to provide longterm care and recovery for children and their families. Board members visited the St. Cecilia's PACE program sponsored by the Daughters of Charity Health Center in the upper 7th ward, and the St. Bernard Health Center in the lower 9th ward, the only health care center in the large St. Bernard Parish. The Louisiana-based Franciscan Missionaries of Our Lady Health System and St. Louis-based Ascension Health jointly fund this center to ensure continued health care to this hard-hit region. The center even provides an opportunity to design an alternative approach to providing health care.

### Justice for Immigrants Campaign Releases New DVD

Provide a study guide and will be available with subtitles in Spanish.

Information will be posted on the website, www.justiceforimmigrants.org in November.

#### SHARE Celebrates 25th Anniversary

The SHARE Foundation, established 25 years ago to work for human rights and development in El Salvador, held the first of four anniversary celebrations in Washington, DC September 30 through October 2. Throughout the year, other celebrations will take place in Wisconsin, San Francisco, and El Salvador. Many LCWR congregations have contributed to SHARE financially, and have participated in delegations to El Salvador, the latest being the December 2005 LCWR delegation to commemorate the lives and work of the four North American churchwomen killed in 1980.

Participants heard from Dr. Beatrice de Carrillo, the human rights ombudswoman in El Salvador, whom members of the December delegation had met in San Salvador, as well as from a panel of Salvadorans working for human rights and development in their country. Dr. de Carrillo described the increasing violence in the country, connected to reduced spaces for political dialogue, government policies that fail to promote human rights, and a weakened rule of law. Some of the street violence has its roots in poverty and frustration. There are suspicions that some murders are "social cleansing" attempts to rid society of prostitutes, addicts, and homosexuals and are intended to scare gang affiliates. Dr. de Carrillo and the panel also addressed impacts of trade agreements and migration.

A six-month report on trends following the implementation of CAFTA was distributed along with a "No More CAFTAs" Congressional Pledge for Trade Justice, both of which were shared with congressional representatives during lobby visits on October 2. Congresspersons were also given information about the Millennium Challenge Corporation Letter Campaign to halt metallic mineral mining in El Salvador.

## LCWR Condemns Military Action as a Solution to Nuclear Standoff with Iran

The name of LCWR, executive director Carole Shinnick, SSND joined more than 100 Christian, Muslim, and Jewish leaders in releasing a statement entitled "Words, Not War" calling for direct talks with Iran and condemning military action as a solution to the nuclear standoff.

The statement encourages Congress to let diplomacy work and exercise its power to prevent the administration from making the same mistakes in Iran that were made in Iraq.

The full text of the statement as well as an opportunity to sign on to the statement can be found at www.wordsnotwar.org.

## NCCHCM Discusses Corporate Campaigns by Organized Labor

The topic for conversation at the October 10 meeting of the National Coalition on Catholic Health Care Ministry was: "What is the obligation of Catholic Healthcare Employers When Faced with a Corporate Campaign Mounted by Organized Labor?"

In a slide presentation, Doris Gottemoeller, RSM and Kit Gray, CSJ shared the recent experience of two Catholic healthcare systems. Participants engaged in lively conversation about how employers deal with challenges by organized labor while remaining faithful to principles of Catholic social teaching. The dialogue about lessons learned will continue at the March 2007 meeting with additional input from another healthcare system and a diocese. The group will then determine what insights the National Coalition might bring to this question.

#### LCWR Update — October 2006 — page 8

## From the LCWR Executive Director Did You Ever Thank the Angels in Your Life?

was September 29, the feast of St. Michael the Archangel. I had spent most of my time in prayer that morning trying to decide if I really believed in angels in the first place. I recalled a large print from grade school picturing a little boy and girl crossing a very rickety bridge that dangled over a rocky canyon. As a child I did wonder about the judgment of the adults in these kids' lives who would include this particular bridge in their daily route to school. However, the



Carole Shinnick, SSND

children in the print were just fine because an enormous angel hovered over them, keeping all danger at bay. I hoped that the same angel or one of his buddies would float above me as I walked home and that he or she would pay special attention when I had to pass the yard where Princess lived. Princess was a slightly deranged Doberman. The dangling bridge looked like a piece of cake compared to an encounter with Princess.

So, I drove to work still wrestling with my theological question *du jour*. It was a beautiful morning and the traffic was surprisingly light. I was clipping along at about 45 miles per hour when suddenly all of the cars ahead of me stopped. Without any warning, workers were setting up a construction zone about 500 yards ahead. I hit the brakes but knew that I would plow into the car in front of me if I didn't swerve sharply to the right. With no time to check to see if anyone was coming in the right lane I swerved, missing the car in front by a coat of paint. And there was no one in the lane. Whew! No longer doubting the existence of angels, "I got it," I said out loud, "Ok, I got it!"

I don't know all the words and I don't know who wrote it, but I recall a song from awhile ago entitled "Did You Ever Thank the Angels in Your Life?" The song, as you might expect, was about all the messengers who come into our daily lives and who bring us a glimpse of a loving and provident God. When I think of angels in this way, they are everywhere. I remember a time in O'Hare Airport when – surprise, surprise – my flight was delayed two hours. Grumbling to myself, I headed for a Starbucks hopping that a mocha latte would raise my spirits. I was standing in line, when a little boy about six looked up at me with a big smile and said, "I really like your glasses!" In spite of myself I smiled and my grumpiness instantly lifted thanks to a little angel hanging out in Starbucks. (I have discovered that it's impossible to stay crabby if you laugh out loud or smile broadly.)

If I really pay attention, angels abound. Some hang out in gas stations waiting for me to stop in and get directions when I'm hopelessly lost. Some are dear friends who

call to say hi or who drop notes for no particular reason except to let me know they love me. Some are tall, strong fellow passengers who help put my suitcase into the overhead bin. Some are members of LCWR who send an e-mail saying they really appreciate something the national office has provided.

There is one particularly important angel in my life whose name I will never know. In 1967 two sisters were driving me to Kennedy Airport when our car was hit by a tractor trailer on the Connecticut Turnpike. The car burst into flames and a passing motorist stopped and

## If I really pay attention, angels abound.

pulled the three of us out of the car. There is no question that if he hadn't done so all of us would have been killed. He left the scene and no one got his name. He was an angel with a capital "A."

As we move from October – the month rich with angels and really big saints like Francis and Luke and the two Theresas – and into November, with its harvests and thanksgiving, I want to be especially aware of the angels all around me. Just as I cannot stay crabby if I laugh out loud, I cannot be downhearted or discouraged if I am intentionally, consciously grateful. We all have so much we take for granted including the amazing angels we work with, live with, and play with each day. Family and friends, strangers and neighbors, counter personnel and information desk volunteers – they are everywhere. I'll bet there's one very close to you right now. Make sure you say thank you.

## NATRI Offers Paper on Finances and Reconfiguration

"Finance and the Reconfiguration of Religious Institutes," prepared by Clare Lorenzatti, is the newest white paper from NATRI. In these times of transition, this document provides leadership with an overview of the reconfiguration process with emphasis on the critical area of finance. It provides practical guidance with tasks and timelines for 12 different areas including accounting, finance office staff, healthcare, and legal documents and property.

There are separate charts for absorptions where one religious institute becomes part of another and for the establishment of a new entity that may result from the joining of two or more groups. For any congregation that is contemplating a merger or is involved in one, this 12-page paper is a must-read. The link to the white paper is http://www.natri.org/members/library/ White%20Papers/Finance%20and%20the%20Reconfigu ration%20of%20Religious%20Institutes.pdf

### NCNWR Expands Membership

The National Communicators Network for Women Religious now offers three levels of membership: individual, associate, and corporate. The members ratified changes to the bylaws that took effect Sept. 30 at the annual business meeting.

The expansion provides opportunities for participation in NCNWR for persons other than communicators who could also benefit from this organization's resources. This includes but is not limited to persons working in leadership, vocations, social justice, or development for congregations of women religious; persons employed by men's religious congregations; and persons working for organizations that support religious life. Information on the benefits and costs of the three membership levels is available on the NCNWR website (www.ncnwr.org) under "News."

NCNWR held its 12th annual conference Sept. 28–Oct. 1 in San Antonio, Texas, with the theme "Deepen the Heart in Texas." Presenters included María Elena González, RSM, and Toby Lardie, HM, of the Mexican American Cultural Center; Angela Ann Zukowksi, MHSH, director of the Institute for Pastoral Initiatives

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## **Upcoming LCWR Dates**

LCWR Leading from Within Retreat

Franciscan Center Tampa, Florida January 14 — 19, 2007

LCWR Think Tank

Villa Maria del Mar Santa Cruz, California February 26 — March 1, 2007

LCWR New Leader Workshop

The Retreat Center at St. John's Plymouth, Michigan March 15 — 18, 2007

> **LCWR Assembly** *Kansas City, Missouri* August 1 — 5, 2007

LCWR Leading from Within Retreat

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

LCWR-CMSM Joint Assembly Denver, Colorado August 1 — 4, 2008

> LCWR Assembly New Orleans, Louisiana August 11 — 15, 2009



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

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## The Religious Formation Conference Presents...

#### **Regional Workshops:**

"Theological Reflection and Social Analysis for a Prophetic Way of Life"

A one-day workshop in developing skills for engaging in the world of the 21st century

Invite your members, associates and other laity interested in working with your community in addressing social justice from a faith perspective.

> Medway, MA Nov. 4, 2006 San Antonio, TX Nov. 18, 2006 San Francisco, CA Feb. 3, 2007 Lynwood, CA Feb. 10, 2007 Spokane, WA March 3, 2007 New Orleans, LA March 3, 2007 Yardley, PA March 10, 2007 Mendham, NJ March 24, 2007 Wheaton, IL March 24, 2007 Wila Maria, PA March 31, 2007 Milwaukee, WI April 21, 2007 Adrian, MI May 5, 2007 Leavenworth, KS Oct. 27, 2007

\$50 pre-paid for members of RFC congregations (\$60 at the door), \$85 for non-RFC members (\$95 at the door), includes lunch at most locations. For more information, check the website at www.RelForCon.org or call RFC at (301) 588-4938.

#### NCNWR Expands Membership

*(continued from page 9)* 

at the University of Dayton; and Janice Godwin of Special Audience Marketing.

The 13th annual conference, "Mining the Generations: There's Gold in the Wisdom" will be Sept. 27–30, 2007, at the Rushmore Plaza Holiday Inn in Rapid City, South Dakota.

NCNWR is a professional organization of personnel responsible for communications within religious congregations of women. Its mission is to promote understanding of women religious; enhance their image and advance their mission; and to provide a network of professional support and education for members.

## Next KINDLING to Focus on Charism Families

he upcoming issue of *KINDLING*, the semi-annual publication of the Center for the Study of Religious Life, will feature how charisms are lived in various consecrated and lay forms in the United States today.

The issue will exemplify the diverse ways of sharing charisms by highlighting the following charism families: Benedictine, Franciscan, Passionist, Maryknoll and the Daughters of the Holy Spirit. There is a rich history in the church of charisms having religious, secular, and lay expressions.

The Religious Life Studies Report on the issue will summarize the findings of two studies of associates and religious entitled "Partners in Mission," done by the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate (CARA) for the North American Conference of Associates and Religious (NACAR) in 2000 and 2002.

### LRCR 2007 Annual Legal Seminar

Flowing Waters: Channeling Energy Through Turbulent Waters Adams Mark Hotel — St. Louis, Missouri March 8-11, 2007

#### Highlights of the 2007 Legal Seminar: Two Pre-Assembly Workshops

Civil & Canon Law 101: Concepts & Procedures Civil & Canon Law 301: Procedures for Administration

#### **Keynote Addresses:**

"Immigration: The State of the Issue"

Donald Kerwin, JD Executive Director Catholic Legal Immigration Network, Inc.

"Strategies for Passing on the Charism" Melanie Morey, Ed.D. & John Piderit, SJ, PhD

14 Breakout Sessions on Emerging Topics

| Subscriber Registration Fee | \$450               |
|-----------------------------|---------------------|
| Each Workshop Fee           | \$225               |
| Adams Mark Hotel            | \$100               |
|                             | plus tax/Guest Room |

The LRCR website (www.lrcr.org) will have updates as planning continues.