

Update

A Publication of the
Leadership Conference of Women Religious

May 2007

The Next Frontier: RELIGIOUS LIFE AT THE EDGE OF TOMORROW



The 2007 LCWR assembly will draw participants into an exciting exploration of the uncharted territory of religious life as it moves into the future. The assembly is designed to educate leaders about the new frontiers that lie ahead in the world and church and engage them in conversations about what this unmapped wilderness may be asking of women religious today and tomorrow.

Four outstanding panelists will take part in a conversation about the new frontier, bringing insights from their unique perspectives. The panelists are John L. Allen, Jr., senior correspondent for the *National Catholic Reporter* and CNN's senior Vatican analyst; Simone Campbell, SSS, a lawyer and executive director of NETWORK; Fran Ferder, FSPA, psychotherapist, professor, and author; and Lynn Levo, CSJ, a psychologist and director of education at St. Luke Institute. Together these panelists will probe the questions:

- What are the new frontiers for religious life as you see them?
- What might we need to leave behind as we move into the next frontier?
- What will we find there? What maps can we use?
- What are we waiting for?

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The annual LCWR visit to Rome took place this year during the week of April 16. As always, the trip was a collaborative event with the delegation from the Conference of Major Superiors of Men. This year there were four LCWR members and six from CMSM. While in Rome, the delegations visit a variety of Vatican offices, some jointly, and some separately.

The most important visit is always the one to the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life (CICLSAL). It is this congregation – formerly known as the Congregation for Religious – that recognizes LCWR as an official conference of religious for the United States, and it is to this Vatican

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From the LCWR Presidency **Celebrating Abundance**

by Beatrice Eichten, OSF — LCWR Past President

I recently celebrated the Triduum with my parish community in Winona, Minnesota. It is made up of families and young single adults, people who love to sing, are intent about their spiritual life, and participate in many ways to make the community's worship rich and challenging. The celebrant, the music, the ritual, and the full-throated participation and the quiet attentiveness all made for a deeply reverent and moving experience of God's abundant goodness and loving presence. The image came of all of this together forming the resonance of a church organ – rich, full, and vibrating in my bones. It made me aware of the abundance that surrounds us each day.



The question of abundance and scarcity is explored by Lynne Twist in her book *The Soul of Money*. She reflects

*Is it true that our
“not enoughness”
keeps us from living
fully and wholeheartedly
the commitments that came from
our passion for God?*

that we function out of a mindset of scarcity, spending our lives “hearing, explaining, complaining, or worrying about what we don't have enough of. We don't have enough time. We don't have enough rest. We don't have enough exercise”¹...and on and on. We could add to the list – We don't have enough young members. We don't have enough new members. We don't have enough prayer, or community, or... The scarcity mantra is like a regular motif. We keep hitting the wrong notes and creating dissonance rather than a harmonic melody. Twist says the *not enough* mentality is an expression of fear, causing us to chase after what we don't have. That

chase causes us to “break away from our wholeness and natural integrity. We abandon our soul and grow more and more distanced from our core values and highest commitments.”²

Is it true that our “not enoughness” keeps us from living fully and wholeheartedly the commitments that came from our passion for God?

What would it take for us to move from scarcity to abundance? How can we

live in the awareness that there is enough and that we are enough? Such a stance doesn't change the reality of limitation and challenge, but it gives us a different attentiveness and relationship to what is. When we enter each day with an attitude of sufficiency, we trust who we are, what we have been given, and how we are challenged. And we understand that this is precisely what God has in mind for us, and is what God needs in our world and church.

Our *enoughness*, our sufficiency, enables us to move into each day with hope and trust. We place our hands confidently on the keys of this day's organ and offer our

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and how we are challenged.*

best selves. Together with others, we create a harmony that moves our soul and witnesses to the abundant loveliness and blessing of God-with-us.

¹ Lynne Twist, *The Soul of Money*, W. W. Norton & Company, New York, 2003. p. 44.

² *Ibid*, p. 45

2007 LCWR Assembly Panelists



John L. Allen, Jr.



Simone Campbell, SSS



Fran Ferder, FSPA



Lynn Levo, CSJ



Mary Waskowiak, RSM
Moderator

The Next Frontier: RELIGIOUS LIFE AT THE EDGE OF TOMORROW

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The panelists' conversation will be moderated by Mary Waskowiak, RSM, president of the Institute of the Sisters of Mercy of the Americas.

The panelists will also lead breakout sessions during the assembly in which they will explore more deeply from their own area of expertise the call to religious leaders in the new frontier.

The assembly is offering an open space session as an additional breakout option this year for those members who wish to have dialogue with one another on a topic of particular significance to them.

Another highlight of this year's assembly is the keynote address by Laurie Brink, OP, a member of Generation X who will speak on the personal and corporate dimensions of the challenges facing the world, church, and religious congregations today.

In addition, the LCWR business meetings will attend to some of the key issues of the conference and will provide members an opportunity to voice their thoughts on the next frontier for religious life.



WHEN REGISTERING FOR THE 2007 LCWR ASSEMBLY, REMEMBER:

- This year all members of a council/leadership team are members of LCWR and are, therefore, able to attend the LCWR assembly. Many leaders note that having all members of their team attend an assembly and experience presentations and conversations together is a great benefit to their leadership ministry.
- Registration for the hotel must be done online in order to receive the special rate for LCWR members. The online form can be found on the LCWR website at: www.lcwr.org/lcwrannualassembly/assemblies.htm

LCWR Travels to Rome for Annual Visit with Vatican Officials

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Hank Lemoncelli, OMI; Mary Whited, CPPS; Bea Eichten, OSF; Cardinal Franc Rodé, Archbishop Gianfarnco Gardin, OFM, Conv.; Mary Dacey, SSJ; Sister Enrica Rosanna, FMA; Sharon Holland, IHM

congregation that LCWR is accountable. The LCWR delegation included Mary Dacey, SSJ, president; Bea Eichten, OSF, past-president; Mary Whited, CPPS, president-elect; and Carole Shinnick, SSND, executive director. The LCWR group visited CICLSAL on Tuesday, April 17 from 9:00 until noon. There they met with the prefect of the congregation, Cardinal Franc Rodé, CM, the newly appointed secretary, Archbishop Gianfranco Agostino Gardin, OFM Conv., as well as with canonist Sharon Holland, IHM and staff member Hank Lemoncelli, OMI. The delegation updated the congregation on the programs and projects of LCWR from the past year, and answered questions from the members of the congregation. Some of the topics covered included changes in ministry settings, new expressions of congregational charisms, and innovative vocation and formation programs.

The LCWR delegation also met with Fr. J. Augustine DiNoia, OP from the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, and with Fr. Fecile Ruffini, MI and other staff members at the Pontifical Council for Pastoral Assistance to Healthcare Workers. The delegation enjoyed a delightful visit at the offices of UISG (International Union of Superiors General) where the general secretary, Victoria Gz. de Castejón, RSCJ and the staff described the upcoming UISG assembly.

The delegations of CMSM and LCWR had a very candid conversation with the Honorable Francis Rooney, US ambassador to the Vatican and his deputy Christopher Sandrolini. The group discussed a wide variety of topics including immigration reform, free trade agreements, the crisis in the Middle East, and the war in Iraq. In each case, the CMSM and LCWR delegations presented the conferences' positions and their foundations in Catholic social teaching. The exchange was open and cordial.

CMSM and LCWR also visited the Pontifical Council of the Laity, meeting with the president of the council, Archbishop Stanisław Ryłko. There they learned about the numerous lay movements springing up throughout the church. They shared with the archbishop ways in which religious communities are developing lay associate programs and mission effectiveness programs for sponsored ministries.

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Presidency with Victoria Gz. de Castejón, RSCJ at the UISG offices



Archbishop Gianfarnco Gardin, OFM, Conv; Cardinal Franc Rodé; Enrica Rosanna, FMA

LCWR Travels to Rome for Annual Visit with Vatican Officials

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On the evening of Wednesday, April 18, CMSM and LCWR jointly hosted a reception for a variety of officials and staff working in Rome. The reception was held on the roof of the generalate of the Salvatoran Fathers, a short distance from St. Peter's. About 30 guests attended the reception and were treated to a spectacular sunset behind the basilica's dome.

In addition to the positive effects of face-to-face dialogues at the various offices, the LCWR delegation enjoyed a deepening sense of collaboration with the men of CMSM with whom they prayed, dined, and conversed. It was a full and fruitful week.



The LCWR delegation attended the Pope's weekly audience at St. Peter's Square



At the CICLSAL offices: Bea Eichten, OSF; Mary Whited, CPPS; Mary Dacey, SSJ; Sharon Holland, IHM; Carole Shinnick, SSND



Jerome Kodell, OSB; and Robert Schieler, FSC, of the CMSM delegation with Christopher Sandrolini; Ambassador Francis Rooney

**May 27 is the date of the first reflection
in *So Much is in Bud***

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InterAmerican Committee Builds Solidarity Across the Continents

The presidents and executive directors of the Leadership Conference of Women Religious (LCWR), the Conference of Major Superiors of Men (CMSM), the Confederation of Latin American Religious (CLAR), and the Canadian Religious Conference (CRC) met from March 26 - 30 in Montreal as the InterAmerican Committee.

The meeting days were structured so that the participants could learn of significant events and concerns of the religious leaders in each conference, share stories, and discuss ways to keep alive the collaborative spirit among the religious of the Americas.

LCWR representatives, Mary Whited, CPPS, and Carole Shinnick, SSND, reported on the work and focus of the conference this past year. This included outcomes of the 2006 LCWR assembly, plans for the 2007 assembly, an update on the museum exhibit project, efforts to assist the women religious affected by the 2005 hurricanes in New Orleans, ongoing collaboration with CMSM, and work on various justice issues — particularly immigration and trafficking. LCWR also shared copies of its 2007 reflection book with all participants.

The committee discussed strategies for strengthening ongoing communication among the religious leaders including naming common areas of concern, participation in one another's assemblies, and speaking out on common issues.

In addition to Mary and Carole, those attending the meeting were:

Dinner at the Sugar House in Mirabelle



CMSM: Dominic Izzo, OP, president; Paul Lininger, OFM Conv, executive director; Michael McNulty, SJ, associate director

CLAR: Ignacio Madera Vargas, president; María del Socorro Henao Velásquez, CTSJ, general secretary

CRC: Donna Geernaert, SC, president; Annette Noël, SP, executive director; Alain Abeault, CSV, past president.

The committee continued building relationships throughout the meeting days as they toured the area visiting the Notre Dame Basilica, Bon Secours Chapel, and Mirabelle.

LCWR and CMSM will host the next InterAmerican Committee meeting from March 3 - 7, 2008.



Mary Whited, CPPS and Donna Geernaert, SC



Touring Notre Dame Basilica



NCEA Convention Hosts Pioneers, Poets & Prophets Exhibit Information Table

LCWR provided information at the recent convention of the National Catholic Educational Association on the LCWR museum exhibit, *Pioneers, Poets & Prophets: Catholic Sisters in America*. Dr. Karen Ristau, NCEA president, invited LCWR to exhibit free of charge as a way of heightening awareness of the project and possibly gaining financial support. The event was held at the Baltimore Convention Center from April 9-13.

Approximately 8000 people attended the convention and many visited the LCWR table and took home exhibit brochures. The LCWR table displayed a timeline showing the parallel events occurring in the world and the United States and how they influenced the works of women religious in this country. Helen Garvey, BVM; Honora L. Precourt; and Annmarie Sanders, IHM staffed the LCWR information table throughout the convention.



The historic timeline captured the attention and interest of many NCEA convention participants. Shown here are Helen Garvey, BVM and Honora Precourt, as they staffed the table providing information on the museum exhibit.



LCWR and CMSM Justice Committees Meet in San Antonio

In keeping with the UN International Year of the Child, the LCWR and CMSM justice committees focused on the plight of children at their joint meeting on March 20-21. Around a table filled with photos of loved known children and pictures of suffering children around the world, committee members prayed for children in conflict. Invited guest Judge Peter Sakai, 225th District Court judge for the State of Texas, described his personal experience in dealing with child abuse and neglect due to complex societal issues, most of which are connected to poverty. He noted that while he does what he can with both compassion and holding people accountable, systemic change is needed. In particular, since a broken immigration system leads to divided families, the judge recommends that in the conferences' work for justice for immigrants they highlight the impact on children. Judge Sakai concluded that "what we have is a legal system, not a justice system."

During the joint meeting, committee members also shared respective activities and possibilities for collaboration, especially on the issue of climate change. Hope was expressed that climate change might be addressed in some way during the CMSM/LCWR joint assembly in 2008. In addition to several reports, the Global Concerns Committee members determined roles during the LCWR assembly, topics and writers for future *Resolutions to Action*, identification of potential new GCC members, and possible sites for the October 2007 meeting. During the assembly, the GCC will propose its resolution, "2007 Sabbath Year: Debt Cancellation for Impoverished Countries," with an invitation to participate in Jubilee USA Network's rolling fast in the fall.

JFI Campaign Holds National Gathering at a Critical Time

The USCCB Justice for Immigrants (JFI) campaign held a gathering of representatives from 67 dioceses and several JFI core members, including LCWR, in Washington, DC, April 17-19. More than 120 participants came together to listen, learn, share experiences, and lobby their congressional representatives on comprehensive immigration reform. Speakers with expertise and experience addressed a number of topics including why the church is engaged with this issue,

the status of immigration legislation, messaging on comprehensive immigration reform, educating Catholics in the pews, mobilizing for change, and preparing for legalization. The program included a sharing of best practices, reporting on challenges met by diocesan points of contact, and surfacing ideas for action strategies.

Because immigration legislation is expected to be brought to the Senate floor by the end of May, and the House proposed STRIVE Act (HR 1465) in July, visits to Capitol Hill on April 19 were a crucial part of the gathering. A number of congressional offices indicated that much of their mail was strongly for enforcement and deportation and not for legalization. However, recent surveys indicate that a majority of US citizens, while wanting secure borders, also approve a path to citizenship. The challenge this presents to all who work for comprehensive immigration reform is to generate calls, e-mails, and faxes to all senators and representatives, calling for immigration reform now, as outlined by the US Catholic bishops. More information can be found at: www.justiceforimmigrants.org.



During the past month, LCWR has added its signature to the following:

- A letter to Representative Maxine Waters urging her to take leadership in addressing the crisis of debt and global poverty by re-introducing a 2007 Jubilee Act
- Pax Christi USA's letter to Japan's Prime Minister Shinzo Abe urging him to retain Article 9 (peace article) in Japan's constitution. The letter is to be hand-delivered to the Japanese embassy in DC during the prime minister's visit to Washington, April 27-28. (Individual letters may be sent by going to www.paxchristiusa.org. Click "Save Article 9," click "Action Alert to Save Article 9.")



The LCWR Finance Committee met at the LCWR national office in Silver Spring, Maryland, April 18-19.

The group welcomed Geraldine Hoyler, CSC to her first on-site meeting as a committee member. Geraldine serves as general councilor/general treasurer of the Congregation of the Sisters of the Holy Cross, Notre Dame, Indiana. Previously she spent eight years as the senior vice president of finance and treasury for Catholic Health Initiatives (CHI) in Denver, Colorado, after serving on both the original steering committee and the board of stewardship trustees and playing an important part in the initial formation of CHI.

In fall 2007 Jean Keniry, OSF will be leaving the committee after serving LCWR generously with her time and expertise. The conference and the committee are most grateful for her wisdom and financial proficiency.

Financial Position: As of March 2007, the LCWR financial position is healthy. In order to continue this into the future, the committee is studying the changing face of the LCWR membership as congregations merge and unite in various ways.

Audit: The certified public accounting firm of Linton Shafer Warfield and Garrett, PA met with the finance committee to discuss the LCWR financial statements and accountants' review report for 2006 for both the LCWR and the CMSM/LCWR accounts. In both cases, the review report was positive and encouraging. The finance committee acknowledged the excellent accounting services of Bobbi Besley, the account manager for LCWR and the office building.

Investments: In a conference call, Eileen O'Connell, LCWR's investment advisor from the Christian Brothers Investment Services Inc., reviewed the investment portfolio for the period ending March 2007. The stated purpose of CBIS is "to work in partnership with Catholic institutions to help them achieve their financial goals through the socially responsible management of their investments." At the end of March, the investments had increased in value, and the growth is expected to increase over the next quarter.

Future meetings: October 29-30, 2007 – Silver Spring

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

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

From the LCWR Executive Director

On the Road Again

The flight from Chicago to Rome is about 10 hours. I'm usually able to pass the first two or three hours pleasantly enough. A couple of back issues of *Newsweek* and a good book are essential. Then there's the food service ritual. First the beverage cart, and then the big wait to see what is actually in those little partitioned trays and whether the dressing will be Caesar or ranch.



Carole Shinnick, SSND

Flying to Rome on April 17, after the trays were picked up and we were entering the fourth hour, the attendant announced that our film for the flight would be *Dream Girls*. Great! I had seen the film already, but I wanted to see it again. And I thought it would help pass the next couple of hours. Sadly, after many disconcerting sputters and snaps, we were informed that the video system was down and that *Dream Girls* would not be joining us on the flight after all. Instead for the remaining seven hours of the trip the screen showed that cartoon-like image of a plane flying from point A to point B. At any given time we could check our altitude, our estimated time of arrival, the temperature outside the plane and the local weather in Rome. It was informative, but it was not *Dream Girls*.

When the cartoon plane showed us flying over France I peeked out the window. The sun was coming up, washing the rolling hills below with new light. We were flying over a rural area. I imagined farmers getting out of bed, pulling on their boots and heading out to the barn. I pictured small French children rubbing sleep from their eyes, eating crusty bread for breakfast. Sometimes when I am flying I imagine the span of human activity happening a few miles below. By the time the plane lands I know that I have flown over birth and death, loving and hating, play and labor, joy and despair. If the weather is clear sometimes it's possible to see whole towns from the air – tiny roads weaving past tiny schools and houses and factories – tiny smokestacks puffing out tiny threads of white – tiny cattle in tiny fields. I wonder if this how God sees the world.

The post-Easter readings are full of journeys and travel. Amazing things happen when people are in transit. In particular there are the road stories - the disciples on the road to Emmaus, Philip and his encounter with the

Ethiopian court official, and the classic conversion story of Paul on the road to Damascus. When a story begins with the words, "And she set off for a far distant country," you know you are in for an adventure. Think *Moby Dick*, *The Iliad and the Odyssey*, and *Siddhartha*. Think the Exodus, the Visitation, and the parable of the Prodigal Son. Think T.S. Elliot's "The Journey of the Magi."

To go on a journey – to go on trek as the British say – is to step into transformative space. On the road, we will encounter challenge – something or someone unfamiliar, strange or frightening. And on a cellular level our hearts and our bodies tell us that if we choose to engage this experience it will change us in ways we cannot anticipate. Or, of course, we can avoid it. When Jesus asked the disciples on the road to Emmaus, "What are you discussing?" they could have said, "None of

My absorption with my destination or my preference for the familiar probably keeps me from engaging multiple opportunities for transformation each day.

your business." But they didn't. And when he seemed to be continuing on, they could have said, "Good-bye." But instead they invited him to stay for supper.

Each day you and I go on trek. We gulp our coffee, grab our keys, and head for the office or an airport or a meeting. Each day we, too, encounter the unfamiliar, the odd, the intriguing, or the unwelcome. Sometimes I am so preoccupied that I see these moments only as distractions or annoyances. My absorption with my destination or my preference for the familiar probably keeps me from engaging multiple opportunities for transformation each day. The good news for me – and for you, too, I suspect - is that our God is wonderfully inventive and persistent. Endlessly creative, God will make sure that if we avoid one chance to change, another one will be coming up around the next bend in the road. As Dr. Seuss says, "Oh, the places you'll go!"

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

Cultural Audit Workshop

A workshop to help congregations and orders learn more about using the cultural audit will be held August 16-18, 2007 at Catholic Theological Union in Chicago. "Using the Cultural Audit" was developed by CSRL to provide a language for discussing features of cultures and their impact on religious communities. Presenters are Frances Cunningham, OSF and Gary Riebe-Estrella, SVD. More information at www.religious-life.org/programs/index.html#CulturalAudit. Registration forms available at www.religious-life.org/pdfs/CTUWrkshpRegis21507.pdf.

NATRI Offers Seminar for Financial and Leadership Personnel

The annual Orientation to Financial Management of Religious Institutes, offered for financial and leadership personnel, will be held June 4-8, 2007. Sponsored by the National Association for Treasurers of Religious Institutes (NATRI), the seminar will be held at The Retreat Center at St. John's in Plymouth, Michigan.

The program will begin late on Monday afternoon with a presentation on stewardship roles in religious institutes by Barbara Matteson, OP, NATRI interim director. Barbara has served as treasurer of her own community, prioress and also as treasurer of the Dominican Sisters in Houston. Hertha Longo, CSA will begin the day on Tuesday with tools for planning, budgeting, and financial forecasting. There will be two tracks, in both accounting and investing, to address the varied backgrounds of participants. For anyone with questions about government programs and retirement issues, NATRI will have the experts, Constance Neeson, LSW and Janice Bader, CPPS of the National Religious Retirement Office. Dan Ward, OSB, executive director of the Legal Resource Center for Religious, will address topics in civil and canon law of importance to treasurers and leadership.

The full program and registration materials are posted on the NATRI website (www.natri.org). There are a few places still available.

**Legal Resource Center for Religious
 Fall Workshops**

Sheraton Cincinnati Airport
 Cincinnati/Northern Kentucky International Airport
 Hotel Rate: \$99 plus tax

WORKSHOP 1

**Membership Issues: Canonical, Civil & Psychological
 September 11-13, 2007**

This workshop will provide leadership with information concerning:

- Appropriate civil, canonical, and psychological intervention in difficult situations with members
- Guidelines for "best practices" in dealing with healthcare/mental healthcare practitioners and treatment modalities
- Confidentiality
- Record keeping
- The rights and responsibilities of membership in religious institutes
- The exercise and limits of the authority of leadership in working with members

Presenters: Donna Markham, OP, Ph.D., Lynn Jarrell, OSU, JCD; Daniel J. Ward, OSB, JCL, JD

WORKSHOP 2

**Civil & Canon Law Procedures for Administration
 September 13-14, 2007**

This workshop will provide individuals in administration of a religious institute/society with:

- a hands-on experience with civil and canonical procedures
- a guide and checklist
- sample forms for handling such procedures as: establishment of an institute/society or province; reconfiguration; writing and revising documents; extent and limits of authority; chapters of elections and decisions; finances and real property; ministerial works, patrimony; different types of departure and monetary assistance to the person.

Presenters: Lynn Jarrell, OSU, JCD and Daniel J. Ward, OSB, JCL, JD