

Celebrating This Time -- Our One and Only Time -- As a Time of God's Favor

The 2005 LCWR national assembly is shaping up as an event not to be missed. Registrations are arriving daily at the LCWR national office and members are expressing great enthusiasm for an assembly agenda that promises to be energetic, engaging and creative.

As noted by LCWR executive director Carole Shinnick, SSND in the June 2005 *Update*, this year's assembly



Assembly keynoters Margaret Brennan, IHM and Maria Cimperman, OSU will reflect on some of the luminous moments in LCWR's past in light of what they say for the present and future. In preparation for this presentation, Margaret (left) recently visited the LCWR archives at the University of Notre Dame to research LCWR's history. Shown here with Margaret is LCWR staff member Suzanne Delaney, IHM.



planning committee was one of several LCWR committees exploring the call to vowed religious at this challenging time in the history of religious life. As Carole noted, these committees asked themselves: "What if the very difficulties facing us everywhere were God's gift to us in our time? What if these seeming obstacles were the building blocks of our future? What if we saw this time -- our one and only time -- as a time of God's special favor?"

Fourteen passionate and dedicated women religious will be exploring these questions and more in the keynote address and through a unique process of conversation designed to bring forth the wisdom and insights of all the assembly participants. As Carole noted, the

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From the LCWR Presidency
The LCWR Presidency: A Blessed Time

by Constance Phelps, SCL -- LCWR Past President

*It is wisdom to pause,
to look back and see
by what straight or twisting paths
we have arrived at the place
we find ourselves.*

-- Mother Xavier Ross, Foundress of the Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth

I write this, my last *Update* column, with gratitude, cognizant of the many blessings and opportunities I received these past three years.

You, LCWR members, afforded me the privilege of serving the conference. I am grateful for your confidence. And I have been keenly aware, as I lived into the responsibility of the role, of your prayer, support, encouragement, counsel, and generosity, particularly in some difficult and trying moments. As I began my term, no one envisaged the challenges, the opportunities, and the real dynamic tension of leadership (1) that would face us.

The societal, ecclesial, and congregational events these past three years provide perspective: the Iraq war and its aftermath, the continued plight of the global poor, congregational issues of restructuring and membership, member misconduct issues, the death of John Paul II, the election of Benedict XVI. These events influenced, changed and transformed us in ways even we do not know. These are, however, the circumstances, the signs of the times, which are before us and call us as vowed women of the church in the United States. We stood shoulder to shoulder and out of our prayer and contemplation, we spoke and acted.

We continued to "risk the sacred journey." We walked together experiencing our vulnerability and our strength as we struggled with issues, criticism, accusations, misperceptions, and expectations we could not fulfill. I am grateful for all of you who shared your thoughts, gave advice, suggested alternative approaches, or expressed concern. You were heard.

I am grateful for your deep faith, enduring hope and love, personally and collectively. These tangible attri-



butes were constantly there to guide decisions, to inspire new insights and deep courage, and to energize us as we deepened and remained true to the mission of LCWR.

I embraced the singular opportunity to share in the collaborative leadership style of our conference. Whether visiting Vatican dicasteries, attending the InterAmerican Conference in Brazil, tending a holy world, addressing the implications of living religious life in a violent world, or discussing the issues

raised by NRRO, the shared dialogue and consultation of the presidency, our board, our executive committee, and national staff led us to supported decisions.

This has been a blessed time for me. As I've been led by God's Spirit and companioned by each of you, I embraced my time as holy, my leadership as gift, and the challenges as blessing. (2)

And as my term ends, I know the multiple complexities of our environment remain and challenge us. But all

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the signs of hope that urge us on likewise remain. Yes, the Spirit will ever be with us to inspire us. But, there is nothing that pulsates with more vibrant energy, more hope, than our ability to come together to pray, to relate, to network and to be sister to and for one another in this ever evolving environment.

1. *Leadership in Dynamic Tension: theme of the 2002 assembly during which I was elected.*

2. *Paraphrase of 2004-2009 LCWR Call*

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process is designed with the hope that "a synergy will flame up among us gathered in Anaheim, and that our collective sacred conversation will lead us to a new and unexpected place."

Woven into the assembly days will be prayer and ritual centered on the themes of jubilee as LCWR opens its anniversary year. The prayer is designed to lead LCWR members into a collective experience of jubilee and ready them to live the jubilee spirit into the coming year.

Although registrations are accepted until the time of the assembly, **June 30** is the last day for early registration. Partial scholarships are still available for persons who find it difficult to manage the full cost of the assembly. More information is available from Carole Shinnick, SSND or Suzanne Delaney, IHM at 301-588-4955.

Presenters for the 2005 LCWR National Assembly



LCWR to Honor Mary Daniel Turner, SSNDdeN at its 2005 Assembly

LCWR will present its Outstanding Leadership Award this year to Mary Daniel Turner, SSNDdeN. The award presentation will take place on August 22 at the closing banquet of the 2005 national assembly.

Mary Daniel is an educator, religious leader, administrator, facilitator, retreat director, consultant and author who has a 35-year association with LCWR. Her leadership ministries have included service as executive director of LCWR, national chair of the Sister Formation Conference and executive director of a residence for homeless men with AIDS. Throughout the years she has contributed significantly to the growth of religious life and is widely known as a creative thinker who stretches others to dream beyond present structures to new worlds of possibilities. She is the co-author, with Lora Ann Quiñonez, CDP of the book, *The Transformation of American Catholic Sisters*.



The award ceremony will include a presentation on Mary Daniel as well as remarks from her.

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Cameron 5 Staff Day Focuses on Common Mission of Living Catholic Social Teachings

Cameron 5 refers to the five offices serving religious congregations of women and men which are housed in the 8808 Cameron Street building: LCWR, CMSM (Conference of Major Superiors of Men), NATRI (National Association of Treasurers of Religious Institutes), RFC (Religious Formation Conference), and LRCR (Legal Resource Center for Religious). Once a year there is a Cameron 5 staff day, in which all the staff members of the five organizations gather to interact, strengthen relationships, and sometimes to learn more about the work of the various organizations given a particular focus. On June 1, the focus of this year's staff day was on Catholic social teachings and how efforts on behalf of social justice impact the mission of each of the organizations.

Interesting background on the evolution of religious life since apostolic times, and on the development of Catholic social teachings since 1891 was provided by Simone Campbell, SSS, national coordinator of NETWORK, who then led participants through a participative process. Each organization reflected on its particular mission in light of church social teachings and also gathered in mixed groups to discuss a particular issue or theme of interest to that group. Topics which engendered stimulating conversation included: education, health care, human rights, environmental justice, and peacemaking.

Since LCWR and CMSM each have a staff person and a committee to address social justice, information about this work was provided by the respective staff persons with time provided for questions and responses from the other participants.

At the end of the day, participants expressed gratitude for the learnings of the day, for Simone's energizing input and facilitation, for the rhythm of prayer, presentation, small and large group interaction, and some personal time. Perhaps the strongest message of the day was that all staff members, in whatever position in whatever office, are called to live out the social teachings of the church.



Participating in the Cameron 5 staff day were LCWR staff members: (front) Annmarie Sanders, IHM; Ines Moldiz; (presenter Simone Campbell, SSS); Carole Shinnick, SSND; (back) Eleanor Granger, OSF; Marie Lucey, OSF; Carol Glidden; and Suzanne Delaney, IHM

Mission Congress 2005 Supported by Women Religious

During the meeting of the Catholic Mission Forum on June 3 a report was given on the status of plans for Mission Congress 2005, "Horizons and Possibilities," to be held October 13 – 16, 2005 in Tucson, Arizona. Planners have worked hard to make the program inviting, diverse, and inclusive.

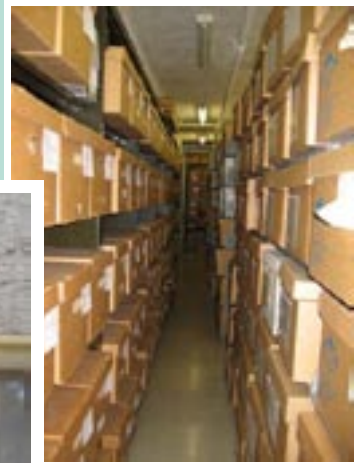
As one of the fundraising activities, letters had been sent to dioceses, foundations, major superiors of LCWR and CMSM member congregations and other groups requesting a donation and encouraging participation of members, especially younger members. Of the 82 responses received as of June 3, 62 donations were from congregations of women religious. Once again, the generosity of women religious was manifested in this response. Deep gratitude was expressed by staff of the US Catholic Mission Association whose responsibility it is to plan the congress with the Catholic Mission Forum.

Preserving LCWR History

The LCWR national office staff has been learning about records management principles in order to design a system for LCWR that is economical and efficient for organizing, maintaining, retrieving and disposing of LCWR records and files. The office has had consultation with a professional archivist and two staff members, Suzanne Delaney, IHM and Annmarie Sanders, IHM visited in May the LCWR archival collection housed in the Theodore M. Hesburgh Library at the University of Notre Dame. There they met with the university's archival staff and explored the LCWR holdings.

LCWR signed a deed of gift in 1987, giving its archival holdings to the Notre Dame archives as a restricted gift. Research in the LCWR archives is open to serious scholars under the supervision of the university archivist and subject to certain conditions. A listing of LCWR holdings can be found at: <http://archives.nd.edu/findaids/ead/html/LCW.htm>.

LCWR holdings at the University of Notre Dame



Theodore M. Hesburgh Library



University of Notre Dame archives staff members who work with the LCWR holdings: Charles Lamb and Peter Lysy



Marie Lucey, OSF Receives Award for Reinvestment Fund Support

The Reinvestment Fund, Inc. (TRF) recently honored LCWR associate director Marie Lucey, OSF at its 20th anniversary celebration in Philadelphia. TRF has created opportunity and choice for low-wealth communities and low- and moderate-income individuals.

Marie served as the director of social corporate responsibility of the Sisters of St. Francis of Philadelphia when both her order and the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament, with the recommendation of Pat Marshall, SBS, decided to invest in TRF, becoming the first religious congregations to support the fund. Marie was involved with the organization for many years, including serving from 1985-95 on its board of directors. In honoring Marie and Pat, TRF said, "The work that they and their orders did at TRF's beginning expresses the very spirit and sense of possibility that has guided the organization ever

since. A large part of what TRF is today is owed to that leadership."

Some of TRF's achievements include creating or sustaining 10,400 homeowner opportunities, 25,000 jobs, 12,200 charter school slots and 200 businesses across Philadelphia and, during the last few years, the mid-Atlantic region.



TRF president and CEO Jeremy Nowak and Marie Lucey, OSF

LCWR National Office Prepares for Office Review



Carole Shinnick, SSND led the LCWR national office staff through a day-long process in May that included reviewing all staff member role descriptions and identifying all the activities of the office. The review will continue throughout the next several months. Shown here are Carole (left) with staff members Eva McCrae; and Carol Glidden.

Participate in National and Global Poverty and Hunger Awareness Activities

Each year, June 7 is National Hunger Awareness Day in the United States. In light of the concerns of religious groups about increasing poverty in the United States accompanied by proposed cuts in many federal poverty and hunger programs, an Inter-faith Convocation, "Hunger No More," was held on June 6 at the Washington National Cathedral (Episcopal) in the District of Columbia. Religious leaders from many faith traditions who sponsored or endorsed the convocation, as well as hundreds of persons who packed the cathedral, committed themselves to work harder for a world in which hunger is no more. Theodore Cardinal McCarrick, archbishop of Washington DC, and Christine Vladimiroff, OSF, president of LCWR, represented the Catholic tradition. On June 7, many religious leaders visited Capitol Hill to speak

with congressional representatives about their serious concerns.

On a global level, the JPIC (Justice, Peace, and Integrity of Creation) Commission of the UISG/USG joined Caritas International in issuing an invitation to religious congregations to participate in the Global Call to Action Against Poverty. Attention was drawn to three significant events in 2005 that have the potential to end hunger and poverty:

- The G-8 Summit held on July 6-8 in Edinburgh, Scotland, where leaders of the world's wealthiest nations will discuss global economic challenges, in particular debt cancellation of the most impoverished countries;
- A high-level session of the UN General Assembly on September 14-16 to evaluate progress toward the Millennium Development Goals set in 2000;
- The Sixth Ministerial Conference of the World Trade Organization (WTO) to be held in Hong Kong December 13-18 to discuss international trade regulations and standards.

Debt cancellation, trade justice, and the MDGs have all received serious attention from LCWR member congregations. In addition, the commission reminds us that these events take place during this Eucharistic Year, and poverty and hunger were addressed by Pope John Paul II in his apostolic letter on the theme, "Mane Nobiscum Domine." The Global Call to Action encourages several activities:

- join in a world-wide day of prayer and fasting on July 1;
- wear a white band on July 1 to show solidarity with those who are impoverished and those who pledge to make poverty history;
- take part in the Fight Hunger Join the Walk event (www.fighthunger.org); and
- reflect on the pope's apostolic letter.

It is with regret that we inform you that Catherine Leary, SSJ has resigned as the secretary of LCWR. We thank Catherine for her service to the conference.

From the LCWR Executive Director

God: The Attentive Gardener

I am a child of the city, a world of cement and asphalt not of pastures and meadows. My early acquaintance with things agricultural was limited to the cows we would see from the car windows each fall when my family drove to New Hampshire "to view the foliage." We had one peony bush blooming in our front yard that seemed to attract the world's largest ants. And there was a rosebush by the side of the house that was alleged to predict how many babies would be born in the neighborhood by the number of its blooms each summer.



Carole Shinnick, SSND

sprouted immediately, grew fast, and now flaunt their big leaves as if to say, "Check me out." Some are small but sturdy – growing at their own pace, not intimidated by their athletic neighbors. Some are late bloomers, emerging into the sunshine like children slowly waking from sleep. And, of course, some didn't make it. Oh, they shot up quickly enough, but having used all their energy to sprout, they gasped, sighed, clutched their little hearts, and collapsed in tiny heaps.

Given my limited background, you can imagine my astonishment last summer when for the first time, I not only grew something, but could eat it as well. I planted some basil in a container in the spring, and it flourished with the help of a newly discovered green thumb and lots of Miracle Gro. I harvested the basil in September, and one evening, using a small food proces-

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sor, I chopped the basil, mixing it with garlic, pine nuts, parmesan cheese and olive oil to make fresh pesto. The result was divine. I was so excited that at 10:00 PM I cooked up some pasta and had a private feast.

This year I planted three large containers of basil along with two window boxes of impatiens. In addition, I planted a packet of seeds that is guaranteed to draw butterflies. Now, each morning - like a watchful neo-natal nurse - I check my plants to see how they are doing. The basil is burgeoning. The impatiens – though occasionally moody and petulant – are doing quite well, too. But it's the butterfly flowers that amaze me.

The seeds in the packet varied widely in size and appearance – some as slight as eyelashes, others as fat as cashews. I planted them all, hoping for the best. Some

I like to think that our God is as excited at the beginning of each new day about us and our efforts as I am about my butterfly flowers. *The Baltimore Catechism* did equip me with a stash of answers to questions that might be tossed my way by a passing pagan once I left the safety of my parish school. But, it also burdened me with some oppressive images of God. Its theology tended to portray God was a kind of hyper-vigilant meter maid who prowled the world with a violations checklist in hand. I did not find this very attractive or reassuring. The God of my youth made me pretty jumpy.

Thankfully, I have gradually discovered that our God is much more like an attentive gardener than a meter maid. Visiting my plants in the early morning, I sense that our God, too, whispers earnest encouragement, cheers us on throughout the day, and doesn't even notice our little stumbles. In fact, I believe that our God is actually proud of us, beams at us, and watches us with

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great curiosity as we navigate the events of our daily lives.

My luscious basil, my temperamental impatiens, and most of all, my amazing butterfly flowers are schooling me this summer in a refreshing theology of encouragement, delight and hope.

Upcoming LCWR Dates

LCWR Assembly

Anaheim, California

August 19, 2005

Registration: 1:00 - 6:00 PM

Opening of Assembly: 7:00 PM

August 22, 2005

Assembly adjourns after LCWR Banquet

August 23, 2005

Departure and Travel Day

LCWR-CMSM Delegation to El Salvador

November 30 -- December 6, 2005

LCWR Leading from Within Retreat

Mater Dolorosa Passionist Retreat Center

Sierra Madre, California

January 15 -- 20, 2006

LCWR Systemic Change Think Tank,

Franciscan Center -- Tampa, Florida

February 12 -- 14, 2006

LCWR New Leader Workshop

St. Mary of the Lake -- Mundelein, Illinois

March 30 -- April 2, 2006

LCWR Assembly

Atlanta, Georgia

August 18 -- 22, 2006

LCWR Assembly

New Orleans, Louisiana

August 2 -- 6, 2007

From the Religious Formation Conference:

New Survey, New Goals

As in 2001, the Religious Formation Conference is in the process of surveying its members, as well as leaders in LCWR and CMSM, about the lifelong learning process traditionally called formation. Fr. Paul Sullins of Catholic University is assisting RFC with the survey, the deadline for which is set at July 15.

The wider the response for the survey, the more reliable the information – so RFC has suggested that the paper copies of the survey already sent out be reproduced and circulated to members of congregations to complete and return.

Given the shortness of time and the busyness of this time of year, two other methods of response are now available:

1. The survey can be filled in online.
 - a. Go to this site: <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.asp?u=266351121576> or to the RFC home page (www.relforcon.org) and click on the link to fill out the survey online.
 - b. The password is “formation,” all lower-case.
 - c. Be sure to click “DONE” at the end of the online survey or your answers will not be recorded.
2. The survey can be printed out on 8 ½ X 11 inch paper and sent in by postal mail by clicking on the links on the RFC home page.

Fill in only one survey per person. If responders mail in a printed version, they should not fill out an online version. If they do the survey online, they should not fill out a printed version.

Congregations or governmental units can have their own responses analyzed for their own use. Contact Fr. Paul Sullins (sullins@cua.edu) for information. If your congregation or group or region is thinking of getting the information analyzed just for your group, each of your members will have to identify your community name in the same way so that your responses can be recognized and grouped.

The survey results will be shared at the RFC Congress in December 2005 and used by RFC as information for strategic planning for the next five years.



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FROM THE
CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF
RELIGIOUS LIFE

Chicago Cultural Audit Workshop

Information and the registration form for the workshop, "Using the Cultural Audit" August 11-13, 2005 at Catholic Theological Union in Chicago is available on the CSRL web site, www.religious-life.org. CSRL members receive a discount on the registration cost for the second (or more) registration if more than one person attends the workshop. Anyone with questions can contact Virginia Piecuch at vpiecuch@visioni.com or 773-752-2720.

Florida Cultural Audit Workshop Dates

"Using the Cultural Audit" will also be held February 5-8, 2006 at Marywood Center in Jacksonville, Florida. The workshop will begin at 3 PM on Sunday and end with lunch on Wednesday. The registration form will be posted on the CSRL web page, www.religious-life.org when it becomes available.

Kindling

Cultural diversity resources will be the focus of the summer issue of *Kindling*, featuring the experience of congregations with the Cultural Audit and information on other resources.

Interdisciplinary Forum

Dates and locations have been arranged for the Interdisciplinary Forum for leaders and scholars on "The Individual and the Common Good."

March 5-8, 2006

King's House Retreat and Renewal Center
St. Louis area

September 24-27, 2006

Bishop Malloy Passionist Retreat House
New York City area

April 15-18, 2007

El Retiro San Inigo Jesuit Retreat House
San Francisco area

The first forum at King's House Retreat and Renewal Center in Belleville, IL, is across the Mississippi from St. Louis. In fact, the St. Louis Metrolink ends within five minutes of King's House.

In each forum leaders will interact with each other and a panel of scholars from various academic disciplines on the topic. Case studies provided by the Center will focus discussion. Further information will be posted on the CSRL web page, www.religious-life.org when available.

NRVC Appoints New Associate Director

Deborah Suddarth, OSF, a Franciscan Sister of the Sacred Heart from Frankfort, Ill, will assume the role of associate director for the National Religious Vocation Conference (NRVC) beginning on August 1.



Deborah is a graduate of St. Francis University, Joliet, Ill, with a BA in religious studies. Her graduate education includes a MA and ED.S in educational administration from Indiana State University, Terre Haute, Ind.

Her past ministerial experience was in the field of education as a teacher, principal and associate superintendent of schools for the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend, Indiana. In 1995 she was appointed the director of new membership and director of development for her religious congregation. Deborah served in this capacity until she moved into full-time vocation ministry time in 2001. She has served on the NRVC board for the past five years and this year was appointed coordinator of the NRVC leadership team.

LRCR Provides Guidance on Medicare D Subsidy

The Medicare Modernization Act (MMA) established a new voluntary Part D Prescription Drug Program effective January 1, 2006. The program includes a new subsidy program that will reduce out of pocket costs paid by those Part D enrollees who have limited income and resources by providing reduced monthly premiums and other cost-sharing assistance.

The Legal Resource Center for Religious has been working with religious communities in applying for this subsidy. LRCR has posted information on applying for the subsidy in its Government Programs Resource website (www.LRCR.org/law_lib/GP/GP.main.htm). The resource is available to all LRCR subscribers.

LRCR is also beginning a new subscription year. Those who have not done so are urged to renew their subscription by July 1, 2005. www.LRCR.org/mission/subscription/subscrip.htm.

NATRI Announces Annual Conference

Houston will be the site of the 2005 NATRI National Conference to be held at the new Hilton Americas from October 12-15. This year's theme of Time, Talent, Treasure, Tradition, Transition for Mission will feature keynote speakers Manuel Williams, CR and Dr. Robert Wicks.

Representatives from Medicare and Social Security will address the new Medicare prescription drug plans and the development office, as an aspect of mission-based stewardship, will be a special focus of one track of workshops. A pre-conference workshop to train finance officers on the TRENDS (new version 3) forecasting program will be held on October 12.

The program packet has been mailed to all LCWR major superiors. Please share the materials with interested members of leadership or other administrative staff with stewardship responsibilities. For further information or packets, contact the NATRI office at (301) 587-7776 or natri@natri.org.