

Springs of the Great Deep Burst Forth: Meeting the Thirsts of the World

2015 - 2016 Annual Report
Leadership Conference of Women Religious

Annual Report of the Leadership Conference of Women Religious

2015 – 2016

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Mystery and Transformation

The journey continues! From our 2015 assembly we move from meeting the thirsts of the world through the springs of the Great Deep bursting forth, those waters of life flowing in and through us, to living the mystery of transformation -- our 2016 theme.

Those waters meeting the thirsts of our world took the shape of a multitude of works, services to the world through our conference's central office, and through the regions' individual members.

We advocated for just immigration laws and we worked directly with immigrants. We worked for awareness of trafficked women, children, and men and we lived through their horrors with them as they moved from slavery to freedom. We actively promoted *Evangelii Gaudium*, the Year of Consecrated Life, the Holy Year of Mercy, and *Laudato Si'*. We actively pursued the work of COP21 and the signing of the document committing nations, including the United States, to curbing climate change.

And perhaps the culmination of all of these works is LCWR's participation in the planning and execution of the Nonviolence and Just Peace Conference held in April that called for an end to the "just war" theory. The conference's clarion call is for a commitment to a global community that needs to "foster creative imagination to build merciful societies where nonviolence is the norm and not the exception." It also called on Pope Francis to issue an encyclical on active nonviolence. We are proud to say that LCWR was a part of the deliberations of that group.

As we move into our 2016 assembly we realize that we do so in the context of this seeming flood of activity, exhortation, and inspiration urging us to continue into the transformation of consciousness, a mystery of becoming and contemplative action, that requires our courageous and persistent prophetic voices.

Marcia Allen, CSJ -- LCWR President

Mary Pellegrino, CSJ -- LCWR President-Elect

Sharon Holland, IHM -- LCWR Past President



Marcia Allen, CSJ; Mary Pellegrino, CSJ; and Sharon Holland, IHM

Those waters meeting the
thirsts of our world
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An Unfolding Charism

The theme of our 2015 assembly, “Springs of the Great Deep Burst Forth: Meeting the Thirst of the World,” speaks to the unfolding experience of LCWR during the past year. As a conference our energy and attention have been focused on en fleshing our mission, call, and initiatives. LCWR is connected with religious leaders by way of the UISG, CRC and InterAmerician.* The formal relationships with each of these organizations has evolved in the past year and we have met together and continued to discern how our relationships with one another can deepen our response to the hopes, dreams, and challenges given voice in our congregations, church, and global community.

The questions we as a conference ask ourselves about what both the present and the future are calling us to be and to do are also being asked by these organizations with whom we collaborate. Religious life is evolving as it has always throughout its long history. We are reminded that God can do “infinitely more that we can ask or imagine.” (Ephesians 3:20)

Contemplative engagement in life and the relationships that form its fabric can transform us so that we can listen deeply, walk in the shoes of another, and trust that God is doing something new even though we cannot perceive it. The Second Vatican Council poignantly reminded us that “The joys and the hopes, the griefs and the anxieties of the men [and women] of this age, especially those who are poor or in any way afflicted, these are the joys and hopes, the griefs and anxieties of the followers of Christ. Indeed, nothing genuinely human fails to raise an echo in their hearts.” LCWR hears this echo in our time and cannot turn away in fear. Ours indeed is a journey of contemplative engagement and it will lead us to places where we will continue to dialogue and discern with integrity, a journey we make together and that may give others hope.

During the years we lived with the CDF mandate I asked myself what is it that LCWR may need to learn and what changes might we need to make, not because of the mandate, but because the charism of religious life is being lived out in an international and inter-cultural reality. Is LCWR being called to widen the “space of our tents” (Isaiah 52:2) and

intentionally build intercultural and international bridges with religious within the United States and globally? We carry an abiding concern for religious who live amidst increasing violence which threatens their lives and the lives of those with whom and to whom they minister.

As we continue to respond to the movement of the Spirit in the signs of the times a new moment of standing on the margins/peripheries will emerge. This has been how the charism of religious life has unfolded over centuries. The discernment about how to respond with integrity to an ever-changing reality is not going to go away. A contemplative stance will keep LCWR grounded, open, honest, and free and as we embrace the future and all its ambiguities.

The structures and processes with which we are familiar have served us well. We are now engaged in a planning process that will call for some changes which we hope will respond to the changing demographics of our conference and enable us to step into the future with energy and creativity. With change there is always a sense of loss and an invitation to “remember the past with gratitude, live the present with passion and embrace the future with hope.” (Pope Francis, “Apostolic Letter to All Consecrated People”)

The charism of religious life is not complete -- it is always unfolding, finding expression among God’s people in the times, places, and cultures where we live and minister - making the Gospel come alive in our current global reality. We are not here for ourselves! Our lives are intertwined with all who long to see the face of God revealed in mercy and compassion.



Joan Marie Steadman, CSC
LCWR Executive Director

* UISG (International Union of Superiors General); CRC (Canadian Religious Conference); InterAmerician (LCWR, CRC, Conference of Major Superiors of Men, Conference of Latin American Religious)

2015 LCWR Assembly

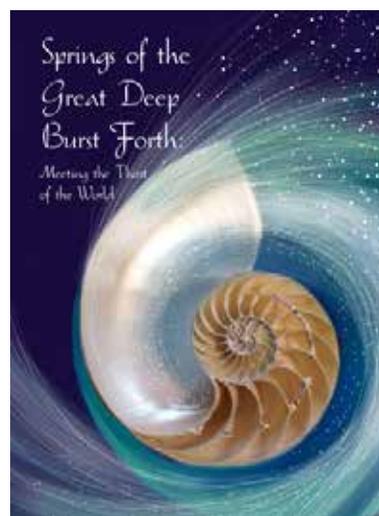
Springs of the Great Deep Burst Forth: Meeting the Thirsts of the World

Approximately 800 LCWR members and associates attended that 2015 assembly held in Houston, Texas under the theme of “Springs of the Great Deep Burst Forth: Meeting the Thirsts of the World.” Highlights of the assembly included:

- Keynote addresses by Janet Mock, CSJ and Stephen Bevans, SVD
- The presidential address by Sharon Holland, IHM
- Presentation of the 2015 LCWR Outstanding Leadership Award to Janet Mock, CSJ
- Elections of Mary Pellegrino, CSJ as president-elect and Mary Beth Gianoli, OSF as secretary
- Updates on the events leading to the conclusion of the CDF mandate to LCWR
- A sharing by 10 former and current LCWR presidents and executive directors on the suffering and the graces they experienced while working through the doctrinal assessment by and mandate of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (CDF)
- A presentation on the plight of families seeking refuge in the United States from violence in their own countries, an action to communicate with President Barack Obama urging him to end the practice of family detention, and the collection of \$6,150 to assist families in securing bonds for their release from detention
- An expression of gratitude to and standing ovation for Archbishop J. Peter Sartain for his work in helping build bridges of understanding between CDF and LCWR.

Many leaders were able to continue membership with LCWR and attend the assembly due to generous assistance by the ASC Foundation (a work of the Adorers of the Precious Blood), as well as other congregations that contributed to LCWR’s scholarship funds.

As we live the years ahead,
we remain inspired by the radical call of the Gospel,
filled with hope,
and committed to discerning together the leading of God’s Spirit.
-- LCWR Call 2015 - 2022



2015 LCWR Assembly



Keynoter and 2015 LCWR Outstanding Leadership Award recipient Janet Mock, CSJ: "The quest for God remains central to the call to religious life – this life-long attraction to the strangest attractor of all – God – beyond us – with us – within us – God who keeps breaking in on our lives despite our disbelief and resistance. The world is thirsting for spirituality."



Keynoter Stephen Bevans, SVD: "What are these thirsts that God's Holy Spirit gives to the world through grace?"



The LCWR current and former presidents and executive directors who worked with the CDF doctrinal assessment and mandate share personal reflections on the experience at the assembly.



The assembly blesses the LCWR national board as its members begin a new year of service. Show here are Jan Renz, ASC; Pat Cormack, SCSC; Maria Hughes, ASC; and Ginger Downey, OLVM

Governance of LCWR

The LCWR national board met twice this year in person, and twice via videoconferencing. Both of its in-person meetings were designed as contemplative experiences in which business was conducted, as well as reflection on some of the important questions facing the conference. In its meeting following the assembly in August in Houston, these matters included: planning for LCWR's future and its sustainability, its relationship with the Association of Hispanic Women Religious in the United States, its development efforts, and an exploration of the LCWR Call 2015-2022 and how it may lead the conference into the future.

At its meeting in February in Tucson, the board discussed the following: the impact on the conference of the changing numbers of LCWR members, the need to plan for and design initiatives to support an emerging sense of religious life, services for congregations in their last generation, ensuring the accessibility of LCWR programs and resources for all members, reimagining the structures of LCWR so that they are appropriate for the immediate future, and interacting with the growing number of women religious living and ministering in the United States who come from other countries.

At the February meeting the LCWR regional chairs reported items of good news as well as their members' questions and concerns, and later reported on ministries and projects being carried out collaboratively across congregations. These reports surfaced several concerns among regions which include: the declining pool for LCWR regional leadership, the large geographic spread of some regions, connecting with religious from other countries who do not have leaders in the United States, and the challenge of conducting both national and regional LCWR business at the regional meetings.

Because of the desire to conduct regional meetings in a contemplative manner, the board spent time reviewing possible ways in which to effectively plan for and execute gatherings in a slower, more intentional manner.

The February national board meeting was held in conjunction with the meeting of the board of the Conference of Major Superiors of Men (CMSM). Both boards participated in prayer, Eucharist, socials, and meals together, and held one joint session where they shared how the encyclical *Laudato Si'* influences the ministry of religious life leadership.



The LCWR national board and staff meet in Tucson, Arizona in February

Collaborating with the Global Church

LCWR at Latin American Religious Events

The Confederation of Latin American Religious (CLAR) invited representatives from LCWR to attend both its Congress on Consecrated Life (attended by more than 1300 women and men religious) and CLAR's triennial assembly of delegates, both of which were held in Bogota, Colombia. LCWR president-elect Marcia Allen, CSJ and communications director Annmarie Sanders, IHM attended the events, and were invited by CLAR to serve on a panel at the congress where they spoke about the doctrinal assessment of LCWR by the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. Both events provided insights into the difficult situations in which religious are ministering in Latin America, as well as their dreams for religious life, which resonate closely with those held by US women and men religious.



Former LCWR president Pat Farrell, OSF (left), a presenter at the CLAR congress, joins Marcia Allen, CSJ and Annmarie Sanders, IHM at one of the congress events



LCWR Representatives Visit Rome

LCWR president Marcia Allen, CSJ; president-elect Mary Pellegrino, CSJ; past president Sharon Holland, IHM; and executive director Joan Marie Steadman, CSC journeyed to Rome for LCWR's annual meetings with representatives of various Vatican offices, as well as with other religious and officials. Present in Rome at the same time were the officers from the Conference of Major Superiors of Men, who joined LCWR in some of the meetings. The LCWR visits included time with the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life, the Pontifical Council for Promoting the New Evangelization, the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, the Pontifical Council for Social Communications, the Congregation for Catholic Education, the Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Immigrants, the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, and the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples. In addition, the officers met with the US ambassador to the Vatican, the leadership of the International Union of Superiors General, and the leaders of religious institutes with members in the United States.

The LCWR representatives also attended the general audience in St. Peter's Square and had an opportunity to greet Pope Francis afterwards.



Pope Francis greets Marcia Allen, CSJ after the general audience during LCWR's visit to Rome

LCWR representatives meet with the prefect and staff of the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life

Collaborating with the Global Church

LCWR Executive Director Attends UISG Plenary in Rome

Among the more than 850 women religious who participated in the 20th plenary assembly of the International Union of Superiors General in May 2016 were directors of many continental and national conferences of religious, including Joan Marie Steadman, CSC who represented LCWR. She joined many LCWR members who were also in attendance at the gathering in Rome which drew people from 80 countries.



Joan Marie Steadman, CSC (left bottom) at the UISG plenary assembly

LCWR Participates in Papal Visit to the United States

LCWR coordinated the participation of 53 major superiors, 45 novices, and 12 novice directors from across the country, as well as members of the LCWR staff, at the Basilica of the National Shrine in Washington, DC where Pope Francis celebrated a Eucharistic liturgy during his September 2015 visit. The LCWR staff also received invitations to attend the welcoming reception for the pope on the White House grounds, and to join the crowd outside of the Capitol when he addressed Congress.



Connecting with the European Church

Among the visitors welcomed to the LCWR offices were members of a delegation from Austria and Luxembourg who joined the staff for an exchange on what is happening in the Catholic Church in Europe as well as in LCWR.



Visitors interested in learning more about LCWR and women religious have come from several countries and across the United States

Advocacy for a More Just World

Priorities and Public Witness

LCWR's commitment to social justice is grounded in its 2015-22 call which claims the moral imperative of the Gospel and pledges its collective voice in solidarity with others to establish economic justice, abolish modern-day slavery, ensure immigrant rights, promote nonviolence, and protect Earth. LCWR authored or signed 70 letters and made seven public statements outlining its position on these issues.

Assembly Resolutions

At the 2015 national assembly, LCWR members passed a resolution affirming the interrelatedness of the justice concerns and committing members to examine the root causes of injustice and their own complicity and to work to effect systemic change.

Resolutions to Action

The Global Concerns Committee published *Resolutions to Action* (RTA) examining the incarceration of immigrant mothers and children and the progress on climate change which was achieved at the COP21.

Action for Justice

In preparation for Pope Francis's address to Congress, LCWR and its partners in the Justice for Immigrants (JFI) coalition sponsored briefings in the House of Representatives and the Senate. The two meetings drew more than 100 congressional staffers.

Representatives of the Global Catholic Climate Movement (GCCM), including LCWR, delivered to the White House 20,000 signatures from Catholics all over the country asking world leaders at the Paris Climate Summit (COP21) to take bold action on climate change.

LCWR co-sponsored the SHARE El Salvador pilgrimage of 115 delegates to attend the December 2 commemoration of the 35th anniversary of the assassination of the four church women.

Faith-based organizations, including LCWR, filed an amicus brief in support of the Obama administration's executive action to protect immigrants by expanding Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) and to implement Deferred Action for Parents of Americans (DAPA).

LCWR was party to an amicus brief in support of 21 young plaintiffs in their landmark constitutional climate change case brought against the federal gov-

ernment and the fossil fuel industry in the Federal District Court in Eugene, Oregon.

The Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace and Pax Christi International, with help from LCWR and other Catholic organizations, convened the "Non-violence and Just Peace" conference in Rome. The outcome document called for continued development of Catholic social teaching on nonviolence, including an appeal to Pope Francis to share an encyclical on nonviolence, integration of gospel nonviolence into the life of the church, and rejection of the just war theory.

LCWR associate director for social mission Ann Scholz, SSND coordinated the efforts of US Catholic Sisters Against Human Trafficking (USCSAHT) to organize a month-long campaign to build support among women senators for S. 1968, Business Supply Chain Transparency on Trafficking and Slavery Act.

In collaboration with other DC-based Catholic organizations, LCWR published *Revolution of Tenderness: A 2016 Election Values Reflection Guide* to help voters engage the important issues facing the nation as they make faith-filled decisions about elections.

LCWR/CMSM Justice and Peace

The Justice and Peace Committee of the Conference of Major Superiors of Men joined LCWR's Global Concerns Committee for their joint meeting in May. Members discussed how religious might help implement the recommendations from the April conference on nonviolence and just peace.

External Partners

The LCWR associate director for social mission serves on a number of USCCB staff committees including: the Justice for Immigrants Core Group; the Catholic Climate Covenant Core Group; the Catholic Organizations Coalition against Trafficking Core Group; and the core groups of US Catholic Sisters Against Human Trafficking, and the Justice Conference of Women Religious (JCWR). She also serves on the boards of NETWORK Lobby and NETWORK Educational Programs.

LCWR continues to collaborate with the interfaith community including the Heads of Faith-Based Washington Offices, Interfaith Immigration Coalition Steering Committee, and Faiths United to Prevent Gun Violence.

Assisting Religious Institutes in Transition

Throughout this year the recognition of need for assistance during times of transition has grown in congregations throughout this country and beyond. Such assistance takes many forms. Some of the ways in which LCWR has endeavored to respond through the work of Mary Hughes, OP, LCWR director of transitional services are:

- Regions have continued to invite presentations for their members. Such presentations essentially outline the kinds of questions and issues that congregations need to attend to and the kinds of models that are developing in response to such needs. At the same time some attention is given to the role of associates in this process, attention to grieving, and self-care of leaders.
- As an outgrowth of these presentations, a number of congregations have reached out for specific assistance with their own institute. Such assistance might involve working solely with the leadership. It might involve working with leadership and a planning committee. It also might involve organizing presentations for the membership of the institute. In each case there is a desire to develop a plan that allows life and mission to continue for as long as possible and which leaves room for the surprises of the Spirit.
- International congregations are asking that the work being done in this country be shared with their general councils. When the council is in the United States, they may request that the work being done here be shared with this international governing body. One international community is hosting an event at which sisters from more than 14 countries will be present. Such invitations often include the need to submit written material well in advance of the event so that translations can be prepared.
- Some contemplative communities have asked to be included at specific LCWR regional gatherings so they can be attentive to the needs of

their monastery. There are times when one's presence is requested at the monastery by the monastic leader. At other times, it might be the local vicar for religious who invites the conversation.

- Apart from the initial presentations, communities or regions have requested assistance in working with specific topics. Among such topics are: having hope in a future during this time of transition, legacy planning, and handling grieving—both personal and communal.
- Through the outreach of LCWR's executive director, the Council of Major Superiors of Women Religious (CMSWR) shared a letter inviting their congregations to avail themselves of the various services offered. There are congregations that belong to no conference that have requested assistance.

The collaboration between the LCWR staff and the staffs of the Resource Center for Religious Institutes (RCRI) and the National Religious Retirement Office continues to be strong and fruitful. Opportunities for lunch time conversations will again be offered during the LCWR annual assembly. A portion of the New Leaders' Workshop was devoted to the topic of future planning. The RCRI toolbox, an online resource for leaders, has come into being through this collaborative work. In order to further support congregations that have made the decision to come to completion, Fidelity to the Journey, an invitational workshop, was offered in May.

While the demands are great and achieving a balance between planning and presence is challenging, the ministry is both needed and holy. LCWR is grateful to the GHR Foundation for their financial and thoughtful support.



Mary Hughes, OP (left), shown here at Region 15, has addressed numerous LCWR regions and individual religious institutes on future planning.

While the demands are great and achieving a balance between planning and presence is challenging, the ministry is both needed and holy.

Exploration of Living and Leading from a Contemplative Center

LCWR has continued its study and exploration of the desire expressed by its members and women religious around the world to live both personally and communally from a deeper contemplative stance.

To this end, the members of the LCWR Contemporary Religious Life Committee dedicated a three-day period in December 2015 to probing how LCWR might best assist its members to lead in a contemplative manner and live from a spirituality equal to the demands of these times. The committee asked Liz Sweeney, SSJ, a spiritual director whose ministry includes the development of integral spirituality and consciousness transformation, to guide the days, and Constance FitzGerald, OCD, who has devoted her intellectual life to interpretation of the writings of the great Carmelite mystics, to participate in the reflection and conversations.

Using processes of contemplative dialogue, the committee raised ideas about how LCWR might live out of a contemplative consciousness, ground itself in the mystical tradition, hold more intentionally the suffering of the world, and explore various ways LCWR members may companion one another on the journey. The committee also worked on shaping the 2016 LCWR assembly, "Embracing the Mystery: Living Transformation," to be an experience of contemplative engagement. The new assembly design will equip participants with contemplative engagement skills that they can apply to their own leadership ministry.

In response to the increasing interest in understanding contemplative dialogue as a tool for commu-



The LCWR Contemporary Religious Life Committee meets with Liz Sweeney, SSJ (standing, second from right) and Constance FitzGerald, OCD (seated, left) to probe how LCWR might best assist members to live and lead in a contemplative manner

nal transformation, LCWR also created an online resource that demonstrates this practice, showing an actual session with eight women religious. *Contemplative Dialogue: Unleashing the Transformative Power of Communal Wisdom* is a one-hour film that includes an introduction to the process, as well as commentary on the filmed session. A transcript of the introduction, as well a document providing additional information on the practice are available on the LCWR website as downloadable files. The video is also available with Spanish-language captioning of the introduction and concluding commentary.

We claim our prophetic role and inherent responsibility in the church by grounding all we are and all we do in a contemplative stance

-- LCWR Call 2015 - 2022



The new video, Contemplative Dialogue: Unleashing the Transformative Power of Communal Wisdom, allows viewers to watch an actual session of dialogue led by Liz Sweeney, SSJ

Resources for Leadership Development

During the course of the past year, members of LCWR took advantage of a number of offerings aimed at strengthening their capacities as transformational leaders and assisting them in accessing the depths of their own inner wisdom. Throughout the year, 26 members of LCWR have been participating in learning cohorts, engaging with one another around the materials offered in **Leadership Pathways**. Participants report deep appreciation both for the quality of material offered and for the experience of having others with whom to share the joys and struggles of their ministry of leadership. LCWR is deeply grateful to the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation for funding this program.

In January 28 members gathered at the Redemptorist Renewal Center outside Tucson for the annual **Leading From Within Retreat** facilitated by Janet Mock, CSJ; Marie McCarthy, SP; and Annmarie Sanders, IHM. The retreat experience invited the participants to spend time accessing their own inner



The 2016 Leading from Within Retreat in Tucson, Arizona

wisdom and their deep desires, exploring the path of transformation, and saying “yes” to the activity of God in their lives. Retreatants returned home renewed and refreshed by the experience as well as strengthened for the journey ahead.

In early March a group of 50 elected leaders and justice promoters gathered for **Imagining Justice** at Bethany Center in Lutz, Florida to explore the deep grounding of their work for justice and to imagine new, more sustainable models, for congregations to work together for a just world. Carol Zinn, SSJ led the group in reflections on the interrelationship between *Evangelii Gaudium*, *Laudato Si*, the LCWR Call 2015 – 2022, and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, as well as conversations about new models for engaging in the work for justice.

In April LCWR once again offered the **New Leaders Workshop** for members who have undertaken the ministry of elected leadership sometime within the past two years. Eighty-three LCWR members from 28 different congregations participated. Several members took advantage of scholarship support so that their teams could participate together. The workshop focused on both the practical challenges of leadership and staying mission-grounded and hoped-filled. It incorporated contemplative structures and processes as well as significant opportunities for participant interaction with resource personnel and with one another. Engagement throughout the workshop was both lively and profound. Throughout the days together participants were invited to reflect on the gift that religious life has to offer to the world at this particular time in history.



2016 Imagining Justice in Lutz, Florida



2016 New Leaders Workshop

Resources for Leadership Development

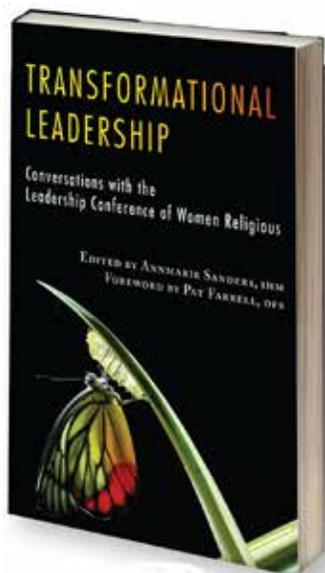
LCWR continues to provide a number of print and online resources for education, spiritual growth, inspiration, and leadership development. Members, associates, and subscribers receive a monthly newsletter, quarterly *Resolutions to Action*, the bi-annual journal, *Occasional Papers*, and an annual reflective journal. These resources are available as well to others, and many congregations purchase these resources to share with their members, associates, and staff. This year, LCWR also made it possible for people to subscribe to or purchase a gift subscription for *Occasional Papers* and it has made out-of-print editions of this publication since 2009 available for purchase as downloadable PDF files.

The LCWR website also hosts a number of resources including a growing collection of articles and resources translated into French and/or Spanish. These resources are made available through the generosity of congregations that translate LCWR materials for their own members and then share them with LCWR so that they can be used by a wider audience.



We lead congregations faithful to the call of the Gospel that attempt to bridge the tradition which grounds us and the future which calls us forward.

-- LCWR Call 2015 - 2022



Transformational Leadership Book Wins First-Place Award

Orbis Books released a new publication entitled, *Transformational Leadership: Conversations with the Leadership Conference of Women Religious* in 2015.

The book, edited by LCWR communications director Annmarie Sanders, IHM, is a collection of interviews with 18 theologians, psychologists, educators, and religious leaders from various disciplines. The interviews cover a wide range of topics related to a way of leadership designed to meet the challenges of these times.

Transformational Leadership won a 2016 first-place award in the category of professional books given by the Catholic Press Association.



White House Invites LCWR for Presentation of Clean Power Plan

The White House invited LCWR executive director Joan Marie Steadman, CSC to an August 2015 press conference where President Barack Obama presented his clean power plan. The president publically thanked Joan Marie for her leadership in rallying Catholic sisters across the United States to take on the issue of climate change.

Planning for the Future

For several years, LCWR has been reviewing the structures and operational practices of LCWR. The board and staff have continued to explore the shifting demographics of the organization's membership and the members' anticipated needs in the immediate future, as well as the impact of changing realities in the world and church today, especially the availability of new communication technologies. In December 2015 and April 2016, the staff held one-day planning sessions with a consultant that are laying the foundation for the next stages of planning for the organization. Planning is made possible by a generous donation from The Greer Foundation.



LCWR staff meet with Marisa Guerin (seated, right) of Guerin Management Consultants, Inc.

Standing on the rich history of our past and the communion present among us, we, the Leadership Conference of Women Religious, commit ourselves to seeking God who beckons to us from a future abundant in grace, full of challenge, and rich in possibility.

-- LCWR Call 2015 - 2022

Springs of the Great Deep Burst Forth: Meeting the Thirsts of the World

Region 1

The 15 LCWR regions
respond to the questions:

- How has your region experienced the wisdom of the Great Deep?
- What thirsts of the world has your region attempted to meet this year?

The theme from the 2015 LCWR assembly, “Springs of the Great Deep Burst Forth: Meeting the Thirst of the World,” wove its way through our Region 1 fall and spring region meetings. Our times together allowed for some much-appreciated contemplative space which led to heartfelt conversations and shared wisdom. At our fall meeting we spent time with Pope Francis’ encyclical *Laudato Si’* and enjoyed viewing Joanna Macy’s film *The Great Turning*. “The Great Turning” is a name for the essential adventure of our time: the shift from the industrial growth society to a life sustaining civilization.

At our spring meeting, mindful of the current political climate, we valued viewing a video presentation by Simone Campbell; SSS entitled “Politics, Faith and Prophetic Witness.”

The thirsts of the world that our region attempted to meet during the year were to stay faithful to educating on the issue of human trafficking as well as continuing to support the safe house sponsored by the Boston LCWR unit. There was a renewed dedication to Region 1’s long-standing commitment to the issue of affordable housing through our relationship with the Institute for Community Economics, a national housing trust. Members of the region also celebrated the wonderful work of the Wisdom’s Way Project which was established by the region in 1998. Wisdom’s Way assists women with limited financial resources in achieving their educational goals. All in all it was a grand year in Region 1.

Region 14



Region 5



Region 9

Region 2

Region 2 continues to embrace contemplative silence and deepening dialogue and to open our hearts to the wisdom of the Great Deep inside each of us, our communities, and in our founding charisms and mission lived out collaboratively as women religious throughout New York state. During our fall 2015 meeting, Margaret Mayce, OP led a reflective process on “Things That Make for Peace,” focusing on our commitment to protect Earth and its biosphere, as well as on climate change. Our spring 2016 gathering with Jean Holsten deepened our dynamic dialogue skills, as we addressed difficult and challenging issues leaders face today.

What thirsts do we experience? Region 2 thirsts for justice, which turns into action and advocacy, as justice leaders unite, raising our collective voices in Albany, Washington, and at the UN, lobbying to address immigration reform and to abolish modern day slavery. NY CRC- STOP opened a second safe house for victims of human trafficking, as we continue public education events to address systemic change. As we thirst for truth and reconciliation in El Salvador, two region members on the SHARE El Salvador trip engaged us in deepening dialogue and commitment to women and children living just south of our US border. A mosaic is evolving, we are all one, called to evangelical daring.



Region 2

Region 3

The practice and blessings of a contemplative stance in prayer, dialogue, and action in response to the cries of those who are poor nurtured a depth of wisdom in the members of Region 3. We recognize that our contemplative and Gospel-based passion for justice is a source of wisdom that guides our understanding of and response to the unmet needs that surround us.

The 2015 national assembly and the 2016 Region 3 meeting afforded us the opportunity to remember that the charisms and ministries of our congregations are expressions of “the Great Deep” that shape our decision-making and future planning. Janet Mock, CSJ and Stephen Bevans, SVD inspired hope and energy for the transformative times in which we live. Terry Moran, CSSR and Liz Sweeney, SSJ reminded us that the systemic causes of injustice can be addressed by contemplative processes.

In solidarity with those longing for a silence that widens hearts, opens minds, and extends open hands, sisters in Region 3 responded to the thirsts of the world through a contemplative stance of deep listening and respectful dialogue. Spirit-led and mutually engaged we focused on the world’s thirsts for freedom from exploitation; the needs of immigrant persons and those seeking refuge; women, men and children living in material, spiritual, and educational poverty as a result of systemic injustice. Several communities in Region 3 participated in efforts against human trafficking at the time of the Super Bowl and are preparing for an anti-trafficking campaign during the Democratic Convention.



Region 3

Region 4

At our fall 2015 meeting, Janet Mock, CSJ broke open the prologue of the LCWR Call for 2015-22. She invited us to reflect on what we found affirming, inspiring, and challenging. Marie McCarthy, SP spoke about “Transformational Leadership in an Evolving Universe” at our spring 2016 meeting. She made practical connections to recognizing God’s invitation to transformation in our daily realities as leaders. The presenters led us to deeper conversations and new insights that renew us for leadership ministry.

In responding to the request for nominees for the Outstanding Leadership Award we proposed revisiting and broadening the criteria for future awardees to include individuals and groups whose leadership may not have direct impact on, or association with women religious, but whose leadership reflects the values, mission, and leadership style of LCWR.

Because of the geographic spread of Region 4 our activities are typically by our congregations, often in local collaborations. We have been active as congregations on the justice issues in the resolutions, including human trafficking and immigration. We provided funding for two sisters to join the delegation to El Salvador and sent additional sisters from our congregations. We shared a letter to bishops urging them to speak out against gun violence.



Region 4

Region 5

As we reflected on this past year, we felt that the thirsts that our region attempted to address are economic disparity and racism through both our common Lake Providence ministry and our speakers. Walter Bonam spoke to us of racism as a cancer in our society that affects all of us that we cannot ignore. Our ministry at Lake Providence is committed to addressing racism through example and economic disparity through programs. At each meeting we have embraced the work of those involved in this ministry increasing our economic commitment and our personal involvement. Mary Hughes, OP, speaker at the fall meeting, helped us see opportunities and choices for us as women religious to move forward into the future. Equal opportunity and respect and care for the whole Earth community underlie the thirsts that have been a part of this year’s journey.

As we shared each congregation’s events, we realized that we are becoming more like our foundresses/founders meeting the needs of our time, often through prayer, presence, and collaboration.



Region 5

Region 6

Region 6 gathered in October 2015 and April 2016. The attendance at the regional meetings is usually between 60-70 members.

In fall 2015 the executive team asked the attending leadership teams to provide a “challenge question” about a topic with which the team was presently dealing. We then drew a question at certain times during the meeting. The response to this process was very favorable as the wisdom of the members was shared. The process was repeated at the 2016 spring meeting. This was our experience of the “Wisdom of the Great Deep.”

In 2015 we had lively discussion around the 2014 LCWR assembly presentation by Nancy Schreck, OSF: “What is a Leader to Do.”

At our spring 2016 meeting we were pleased to have Mary Hughes, OP present “Planning for the Future: Questions to Ponder.” Mary’s presentation was well received and the members were very grateful for the input and discussion. Another highlight of this meeting was a report from Janet Peterworth, OSU and Louise Lear, SC on their experience at the SHARE El Salvador event.

Region 6 attempted to address the “thirsts of the world” in a presentation by Gemma Doll, OP where she asked the region to support a resolution to bring the message of *Laudato Si’* to hear the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor in Ohio and Kentucky through our ministries and spheres of influence. The resolution passed unanimously.



Region 6

Region 7

The title of the Gustavo Gutierrez book, “We drink from our own wells,” came to mind as many of us mentioned that we draw on the knowledge and expertise of our own members when we prepare for our gatherings. We see this in our contemplative approach, our prayer and ritual, along with the presentations, especially Mary Hughes, OP on transition, Amata Miller, IHM on economics as a root cause of injustice, and our own SHARE El Salvador representatives on their trip last December. All these have given us the opportunity to learn together as well as pause to drink from the wells of one another’s experience. We have grown in our relationships that congregational lines are blurred, collaboration, and networking are evident, and we can share our own thoughts, feelings, and insights with freedom, knowing we will be listened to, respected, and challenged to deeper thinking.

We also have great fun together where we can laugh and play and share in ways that are not always available in other situations.

We are very supportive in one another’s social justice outreach. This year we are financially supporting two congregations’ effort to be present to the people of Flint, Michigan, as well as financially supporting two members to make the trip to El Salvador.



Region 7

Region 8

Region 8 has experienced the wisdom of the “Great Deep” through many and varied springs. In the fall we explored “Transformational Leadership” with Marie McCarthy, SP. We celebrated this graced time in which we lead together. We have come to understand this as a time of abundance and transformation. We treasured time for contemplative dialogue and engagement of our challenges and gifts. Much of our experiences this year have highlighted the gift of collaboration.

Our region will provide collaborative support for an educational component on social analysis for World Youth Day in the Archdiocese of Chicago. Through Project IRENE (Illinois Religious Engaging in Nonviolent Endeavors) we collaborate in meeting the thirsts of women, children, and families through systemic change around issues of immigration, human trafficking, and economic justice. This spring, we gave attention to petitioning our state leaders to pass a responsible budget which has been at an impasse for almost a year. Members set aside time to explore critical issues with Project IRENE director Rose Mary Meyer, BVM and move to action through a letter-writing campaign to end the budget impasse and restore services for the economically poor, the elderly, and mentally ill.



Region 8

Region 9

Thirsting to be grounded in our spirituality to help inform our actions, Region 9 contemplated Holy Scripture, *Vita Consecrata*, and Mary’s compassionate presence through her Seven Sorrows during the Year of Consecrated Life (“Living and Leading in Communities of Consecrated Life for Mission: Stories Around a Well in the Company of Mary” with Mary Ann Zollmann, BVM).

During this Year of Mercy, we have reflected on God’s mercy as sinners, mercy as a way of life, and being the face of God’s mercy to others (“Mercy: The Heart of Faith-The Reason for Hope” with Dan Crosby, OFM Cap).

We revisited the cost of discipleship as three sisters shared their experience in El Salvador on the 35th anniversary of our four murdered missionaries — carrying their legacy forward.

We have helped address the thirst for human dignity through our inter-congregational collaborative actions: an anti-human trafficking project -- billboards, ads on buses, educational tool kits to all the parishes in Wisconsin -- and establishing a house of hospitality. The first meeting of “Sisters without Borders” helped quench the thirst to be forward-thinking among our post-conciliar vocations. A collaborative project to look at our present realities and plan for the future as congregations has begun.



Region 9

Region 10

In last year's assembly, we heard the call to continue to experience the wisdom of the Great Deep. We have become even more aware of the power of collective wisdom at meetings and gatherings, deepened through reflective listening and sharing. We come as we are and leave enriched and changed because of the sharing among us. A deeper awareness of the inter-relatedness of justice issues as well as understanding the need for contemplation/reflection has helped us to clarify the "whys" and the "whats." It calls us to greater collaboration with others and to deepening relationships among us which strengthens the bonds of friendship and energizes us for our ministry of leadership.

Although there are many needs in the world, members of Region 10 have particularly collaborated on issues related to human trafficking, immigration, racism, violence in our neighborhoods, and care of the earth. Activities include monthly prayer services at a nuclear waste site, community initiatives to eradicate homelessness, education of hotel managers and staff about human trafficking, sponsorship of programs that improve the quality of life for populations at risk, and on-going contact with our state and federal officials on issues of immigration and human rights.



Region 10

Region 11

Recognizing our scattered locations, members of Region 11 look for ways to partner with like-minded people and organizations to educate, create awareness, and take positive action. We have experienced the wisdom of the Great Deep as spoken to our members by Mary Hughes, OP on planning for our communities' futures; Pat Prunty, PBVM, on her experience in El Salvador; Kathleen Cahalan on vocation through our lifespan; and by one another. We anticipate hearing more wisdom this summer from Nancy Schreck, OSF in her presentation, "Midnight to Dawn," and from the authors of *New Generations of Catholic Sisters*.

From this wisdom we have responded to the thirsts evident in human trafficking, climate change, inter-religious dialogue, refugee resettlement, immigration, and the needs of international women religious. In our response we have engaged in contemplative listening, celebrated and dialogued with local priests and bishops during the Year of Consecrated Life, lobbied on life issues, modeled respect for persons of the Muslim faith, advocated for and assisted those experiencing poverty and seeking affordable housing, and recognized and explored our own deep fears and prejudices. With all our neighbors we strive to share God's mercy.



Region 11

Region 12

During fall meetings Region 12 enjoyed the wisdom of local member speakers Yolanda Tarango, CCVI; Gina Geraci, STJ; and Theresa Sironi, FMA sharing on cultural diversity and COPS Metro Jorge Montiel on family detention centers and opportunities for involvement. At the spring meeting Mary Hughes, OP broadened our vision with questions and parameters in planning for transitions in the future of religious life and shared many resources. The contemplative process has helped us to take time and be attentive to one another. We really enjoy getting together.

The region has addressed the “thirsts of the world” issues (immigration, detention of women and children, trafficking, the death penalty, and hydro-fracking of the earth) by educating the members, sensitizing institutions, circulating and signing petitions, sharing articles and web links, as well as supporting, collaborating, and volunteering with local centers offering literacy, citizenship, and support for immigrant families. The members generously contributed to RAICES and the Mennonite House for refugee mothers and children in San Antonio. Our Region 12 border project fund awarded assistance to six projects this year with an average of \$3,000 given to each project.



Region 12

Region 13

We have found the regional meetings to be a time to share our wisdom and to support one another as we meet the thirsts of our world in each of our locations. We believe the LCWR Call 2015 - 2022 provides the guidance and direction for the next several years.

Region 13 has committed our communities/congregations to continue to work on ending modern-day slavery, insure immigration rights, promote non-violence, and protect the Earth and its biosphere. Because of the geographic distance between our congregations each community is utilizing our personnel, resources, and facilities to collaborate with existing social justice organizations in our specific locations to address these issues. Every congregation has developed and provided education/workshops to raise awareness, create understanding, and provide opportunities to take action to stop human trafficking. The congregations who have members on the border have provided opportunities for volunteers to work with immigrants. They have provided experiences for education and learning about the systemic causes of immigration and economic injustices so many face. Others have worked directly with immigrants and migrants in our locations. Some of the communities have addressed reducing their carbon footprint by making energy conservation, protecting the earth and water, and incorporating renewable energy in the remodeling or construction of new facilities. In addition some have worked on fire mitigation, land conservation, and opposing fracking.



Region 13

Region 14

We have experienced the wisdom of the Great Deep this year through speakers at our regional meetings. In the fall, Dr. Eran Talitman of Southdown, shared wisdom for care of ourselves and our sisters. In the spring, Joyce Meyer, PBVM; Marcia Sichel, SHCJ, executive director of the Hilton Fund for Sisters; Linda Haydock, SNJM, executive director of the Intercommunity Peace & Justice; Margaret Graf, Esq, legal counsel, archdiocese of Los Angeles and board chair of LAMP; inspired and challenged us around our desire for region-wide, deeper collaboration on aiding refugees and other justice issues.

We continue to explore ways to collaborate and partner, to address the issues of dignity and peace in the LCWR Call, to develop a global consciousness, and address the transitions within older and newer communities.

The thirsts of the world which we attempted to meet include collaboration and individual congregation actions in anti-trafficking of humans, immigration and refugee needs, environmental issues, and climate change. Because of California's four-year drought, many have addressed issues of conservation of natural resources and waste.

We partnered with other nonprofit, church, and civic entities as we addressed these thirsts through education, direct actions, advocacy, and contemplative engagement.

Region 14



Region 15

The Intercommunity Peace and Justice Center (IPJC) is collaboratively sponsored by women's congregations in Region 15 plus the Jesuits. Under the umbrella of IPJC is the monthly anti-trafficking vigil in downtown Seattle, women's justice circles, Northwest Coalition for Responsible Investing, education on *Laudato Si'* and much more. Through its website (www.ipjc.org) and word of mouth, IPJC outreach has reached 20 different nations around the globe. This outreach of Region 15 is strong, viable, and far-reaching.

Co-sponsored by LCWR Region 15 and local NRVC and RFC regions, Mary Johnson, SNDdeN was invited to present to sisters across the Northwest in February 2016. With the use of technology, 134 sisters representing 14 congregations plus one bishop were able to attend in Renton, Seattle and Spokane, Washington; as well as Portland, Oregon. Mary used statistics gathered when writing her latest book, *New Generations of Catholic Sisters: The Challenge of Diversity*, as the foundation of her presentation. A major shift in diversity is happening within the US Catholic Church and is reflected in the diversity of women in initial formation around the country. She reminded those present that "God is inviting women who will be able to serve the new church in this country ... cross-generational dialogue is essential, as is receiving and honoring the cultures and traditions of all."

Hosted by the Sisters of St. Mary of Oregon, the annual spring meeting was held in Beaverton. A major section of the meeting was the presentation by Mary Hughes, OP on transformation and transition. Mary was able to lead the group into a deeper understanding of congregational needs and multiple options for the future of religious life in the Northwest and elsewhere.

Region 15



Stewardship of LCWR's Financial Resources

During 2015, the LCWR Finance and Audit Committee and the office staff have continued to work diligently to ensure the careful stewardship of LCWR's resources. The decrease in membership is slowing and re-configurations will continue to affect membership. For the last three years, the average membership has been 1369. The same trend is true for units. However, the finance and audit committee is aware of the significant changes that will occur in the next five years and is working collaboratively with NRRO to project more accurate figures.

Auditor's Report

Linton, Shafer, Warfield and Garrett, PA completed an audit of LCWR's financial statements and issued an unqualified opinion, noting that they present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of LCWR, the changes in net assets and cash flows in accordance with accounting principles as of December 31, 2015 and 2014.

Investments

The LCWR Finance and Audit Committee met with the representative of Christian Brothers Investment Services (CBIS) to review investment performance and the Socially Responsible Investment (SRI) Guidelines which were reviewed and updated by the finance and audit committee and approved by the national board. In 2015 the mutual fund investments decreased in value from \$6,886,865 to \$6,780,909, about 1.6% lower comparing 12/31/2014 with 12/31/2015 values. The realized and unrealized loss was \$202,012. Net purchases of investments in 2015 were \$96,057.

Audited Revenues

Revenue from operations was \$1,993,804 in 2014 and \$1,790,213 in 2015. Major decreases in operating revenue were assembly (\$15,268), contributions (\$74,061), publications (\$23,776), grants (\$94,078) and interest and dividends (\$5,131). Workshop revenue increased by \$6,710 and other revenue was up by \$2,251.

Audited Expenses

There was a decrease of 5.2% in expenses in 2015 over 2014 expenses. Expenses decreased by the following amounts: assembly (\$98,247), history project (\$4,721), committees (\$1,670), special projects (\$19,736), national office (\$54,266) and development (\$9,449). Expenses that increased significantly: grant expenses (\$99,1140), liaison activities (\$4,122), and national board (\$12,084).

Net Assets

In 2015 LCWR net assets increased by 2.3% due to the items mentioned above and a gain in the building fund account.

Budget 2015 to Actual 2015

Budget targets for expenses and revenue were carefully monitored on a monthly basis. Operating revenues were 1% under budget and expenses were under budget by 18%, resulting in a positive operating variance to budget for the year.

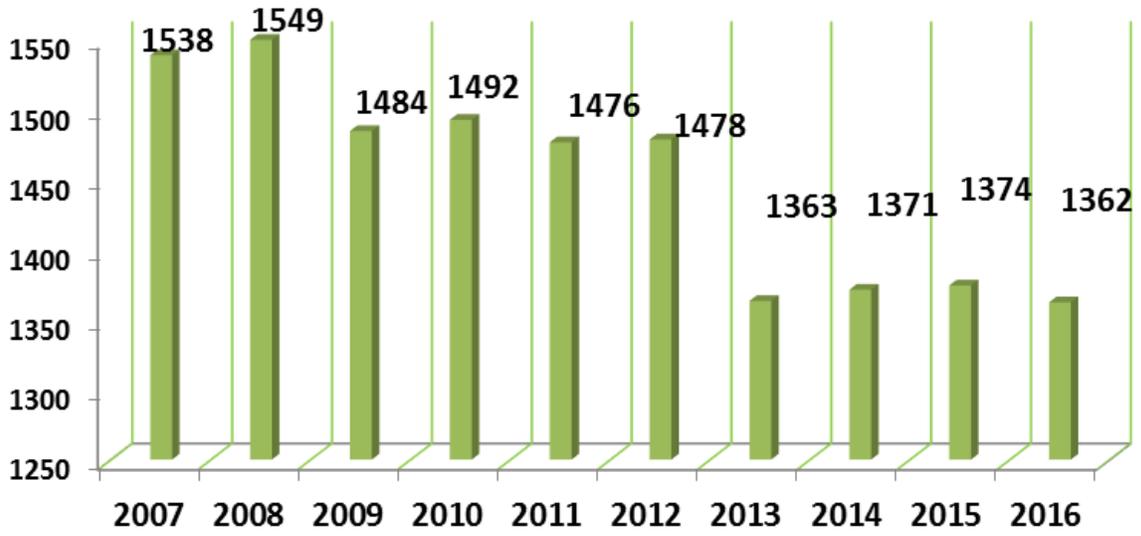
LCWR Building

The Cameron Street building, jointly owned by LCWR and CMSM, includes offices for their own staffs as well as for the Resource Center for Religious Institutes. The income from rents covered 2015 expenses and provided necessary capital improvements. For calendar year 2015, LCWR's portion of the building fund increase was \$29,775.

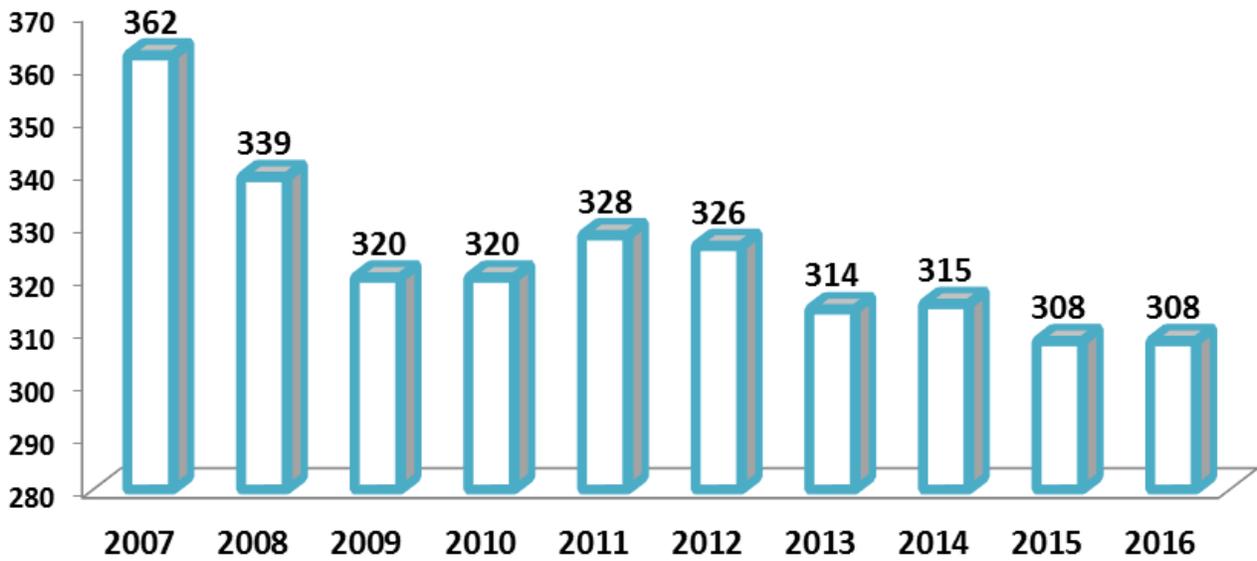


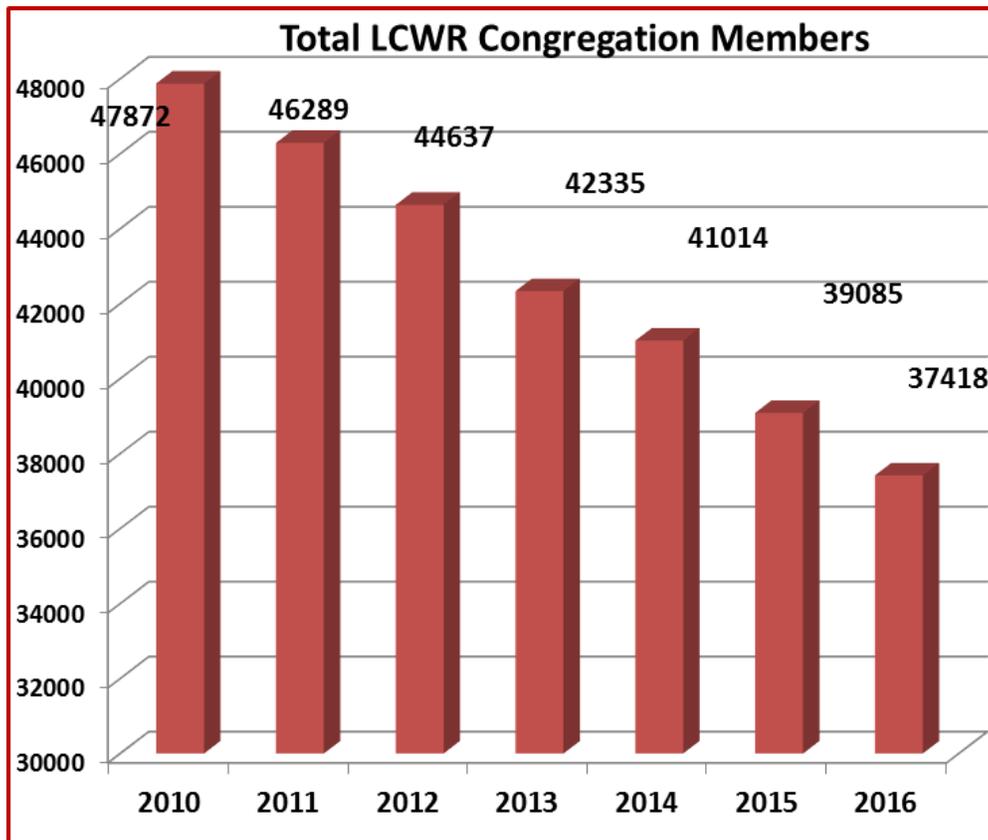
Attending a recent LCWR Finance and Audit Committee meeting: LCWR executive director Joan Marie Steadman, CSC; Karin Dufault, SP; Julia Lanigan, GHSH; Leora Linnenkugel, OLVM; Judith Frikker, RSM; LCWR associate director Grace Hartzog, SC; LCWR treasurer Pat Eck, CBS; and RCRI associate director Larry Lundin, SJ

Members



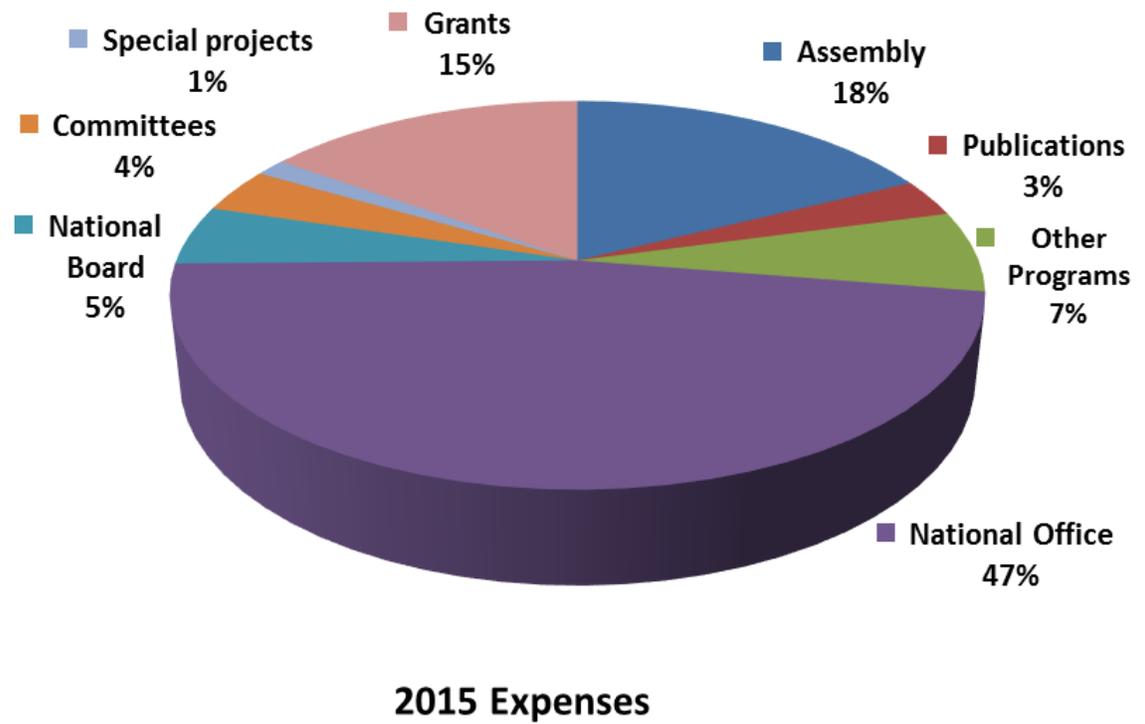
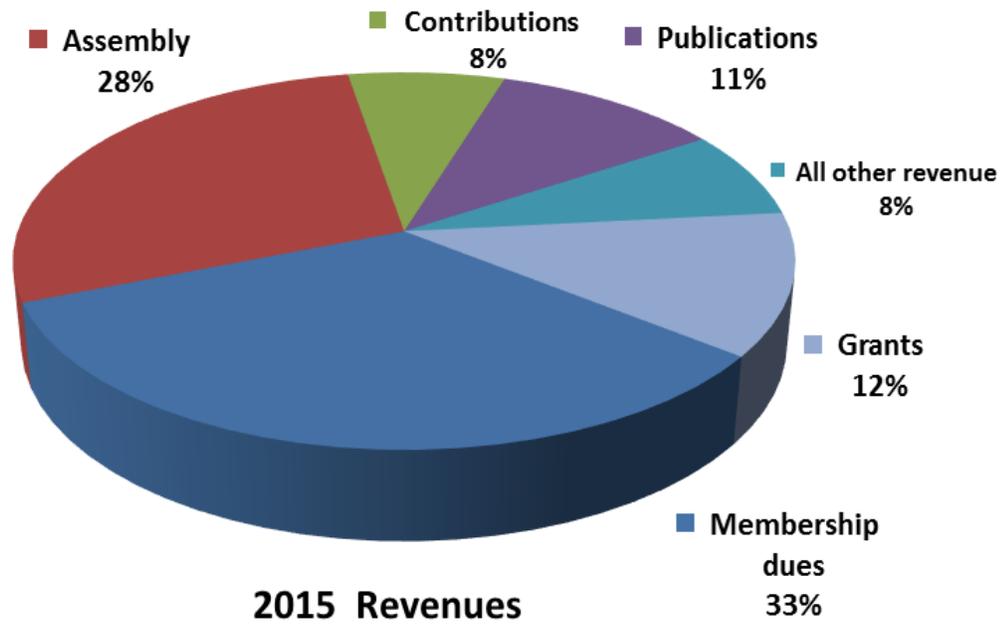
Congregation Units



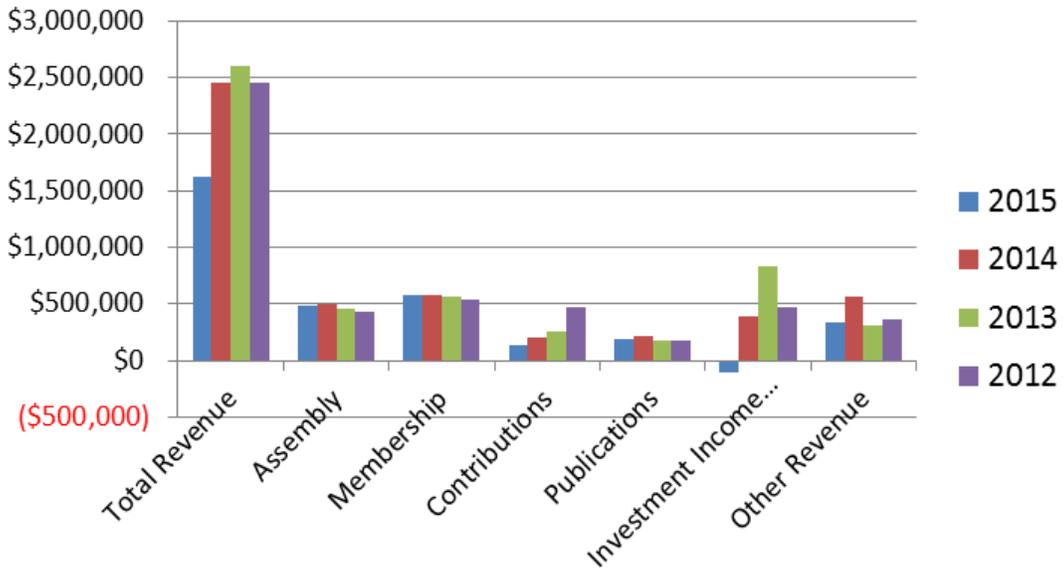


LCWR tends the evolution of religious life
by attending to the internal organizational changes
necessitated by shifting demographics.

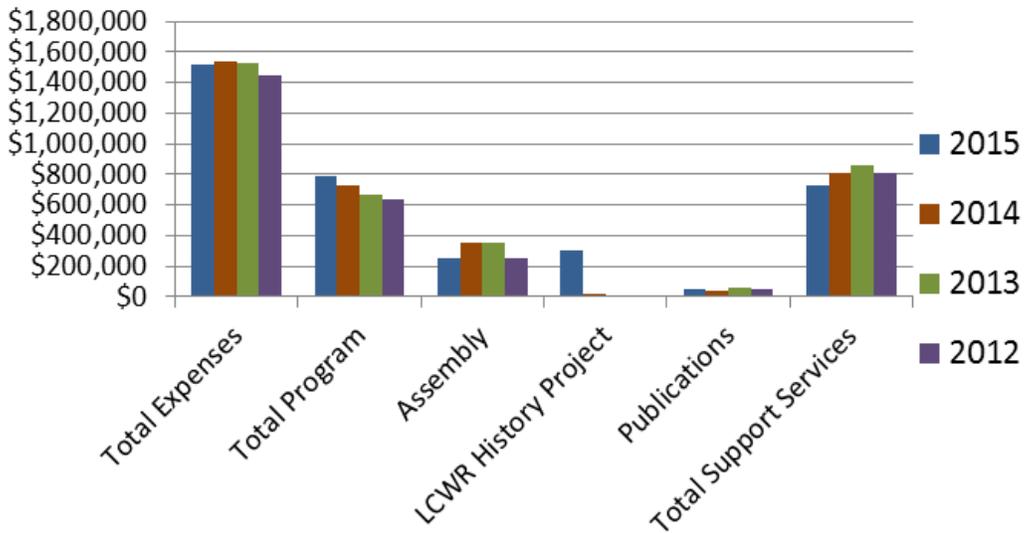
-- LCWR Call 2015 - 2022



Revenue Trends



Expense Trends



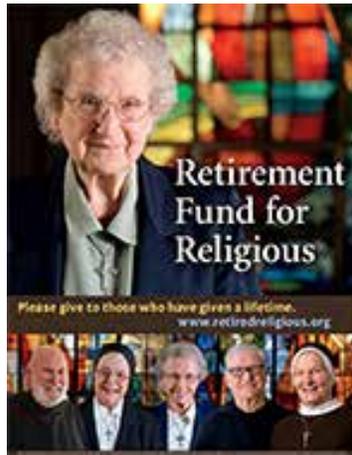
Collaborating for the Mission of Religious Life

LCWR works closely with other organizations
serving women and men religious in the United States.
These organizations describe how, since the summer of 2015,
their activities and initiatives have been "meeting the thirsts of the world."

National Religious Retirement Office

Janice Bader, CPPS
Executive Director

God's goodness, springing from the great deep, was again evident in the NRRO's work with religious institutes. NRRO completed an evaluation of its Planning and Implementation (P & I) process. The results are very encouraging: Eighty percent of P & I participants improved their institute's level of retirement funding compared to 33% of non-participating institutes. Hard work, willingness to make difficult decisions, and support from the NRRO volunteer consultants contributed to this success. Participants also reported improved quality of life for elders and increased availability of leadership to focus on mission. The NRRO encourages all eligible institutes to access the consultative and financial assistance of the P & I process.



Another major project of 2015 was Tending the Vineyard, an effort to assist religious with property-planning questions. A workshop held in March 2016 was oversubscribed and well received; another workshop is planned for September 2016 along with development of print and electronic resources.

The above projects are funded through a grant from the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation. The foundation's generosity and the continued munificent response to the annual Retirement Fund for Religious make possible the NRRO assistance which we hope will free communities to continue to meet the thirsts of the world. Please hold all of the generous donors in prayer.

National Religious Vocation Conference

Paul Bednarczyk, CSC
Executive Director

Major efforts were made by NRVC to commemorate the Year of Consecrated Life. In addition to the parish resources we developed, NRVC established the Misericordia Fund to offer membership and workshop scholarships to congregations in financial need. NRVC sponsored Catholic Sisters: Who They Are and Why We Need Them at four universities around the country sponsored by women's congregations. These symposia were intended to raise awareness of the importance of women religious to the church and the world. A summary of the symposia is posted on the NRVC website, nrvc.net.

NRVC coordinated the vocation expo at the National Catholic Youth Conference (NCYC), where 20% of our member institutes participated as exhibitors, vocation team members, story tellers, and animator mentors. For the Year of Consecrated Life special attention was given to the congregations' spirituality and charisms.

The National Fund for Catholic Religious Vocations issued its inaugural grants to offset the student debt of 10 women in eight religious institutes. A new set of grants will be given in the spring. For more information go to www.nfcrv.org.

The NRVC/CARA Study on the Role of the Family in Nurturing Vocations to the Religious Life and Priesthood was released in September in conjunction with Pope Francis's visit to the United States. The complete study is posted on the NRVC website.



Conference of Major Superiors of Men

John Pavlik, OFM Cap
Executive Director

Since August 2015, the Conference of Major Superiors of Men (CMSM) has addressed the following concerns on behalf of and in concert with our members:

- The conclusion of the Year of Consecrated Life – we encouraged our members to not miss the opportunity to make known their charism's presence in local churches.
- The observance of the Year of Mercy – even preparations for the national assembly 2016 have focused on identifying and moving towards those standing on the periphery so that men's institutes would act boldly to carry Jesus' compassion to those in need.
- The first Vatican-issued document on the Vocation and Life of the Religious Brother in the Church – members of the collaborative Brothers' Think Tank cooperated on the composition of a reflection guide for the document. Plans for a national symposium on the vocation of the brother to be held in March 2017 at the University of Notre Dame are nearly complete.
- The National Advisory Council for the CMSM – These highly qualified professionals have completed their review of a dozen years of commitment by men's religious institutes to the protection of minors. A report will be released to members in August 2016.
- Another revision of the Standards for Accreditation – Both an ad-hoc committee and members meeting in regions reviewed the 2012 standards to ascertain that the standards reflect the best practices in child protection compliance.
- Assessment of candidates for religious life – the Formation Committee along with the National Advisory Council for CMSM have gathered information on practices for assessing the suitability of those joining religious life with a goal to increasing the overall wholesomeness and health of our institutes.
- Office staffing – Because terms of service are concluding for staff members this year and next, CMSM has addressed both the structure of the office and staffing. As we seek to hire, the absence of religious applicants points out the diminishment of numbers and resources in our institutes.



Resource Center for Religious Institutes

Sharon Euart, RSM
Executive Director

Gratitude is what I experience for the collaboration and support we receive from the LCWR leadership and its staff. 2015 was a busy year for RCRI. Our 2015 annual conference in Orlando was by all accounts very successful. The program, speakers, and opportunities for networking were well received by the participants. The implementation of the GHR grant on Planning for the Future has enabled us to connect with many institutes moving toward completion or in their last generation of leadership. We have developed a toolbox on the RCRI website as a resource available to LCWR members as well as members of CMSWR and CMSM with each organization having its own user name and password. We also sponsored a workshop on Fidelity to the Journey: Finding Our Way in Uncharted Territory in May 2016, not only to provide resources and information, but also to tap the reservoir of wisdom given by the Spirit and available to us for this important transition.

The board of RCRI completed development of the 2016-2020 strategic plan with Dr. Marisa Guerin as our consultant. We have begun implementing the four strategic priorities that resulted from the process. Our new website is up and running enabling us to improve our ability to connect more effectively with our members. We are excited about the possibilities and the efficiency in obtaining helpful and accurate information quickly and easily.

This is our fifth year hosting monthly webinars and we continue to produce written publications on legal updates and topics of interest to leadership and finance personnel.

During this Year of Mercy, we join LCWR members as together we work to "meet the thirsts of the world."

Religious Formation

Conference

Ellen Dauwer, SC
Executive Director

The theme of RFC's 2015 congress was entitled, "Rejoice! God's Tomorrow Beckons!" It has proven to be a prescient phrase for us as the year ushered in a multitude of changes for the conference. In January 2016 the national office welcomed its new executive director, Ellen Dauwer, SC. This time of transition was led by Carol Regan, SUSC who served as interim executive director for a year and a half.

In addition to new faces, there are also new places for RFC as the national office prepares to move to Chicago in late June. The new offices will be located at Catholic Theological Union, a site that will provide ample opportunities for collaboration with other religious organizations, including many houses of formation. This will build on the strong relationships RFC enjoys with a variety of organizations, including LCWR.

Change brings both upheaval as well as many avenues of new life. To a certain extent, these organizational transitions are but a microcosm of the cataclysmic changes taking place in religious congregations, the church, and society. In the midst of transitions, everyday life continues. For RFC this included celebrating our 19th annual congress, offering such signature programs as ForMission, Orientation to Formation, Life Commitment, and several webinars.

God's tomorrow beckons us daily. Sometimes we follow with a confident stride, other times with a hesitant step, and at times with a bit of a stumble. Yet, we are reminded in the theme of this LCWR annual report that there is a great reservoir of wisdom in the great deep given to us by the Spirit. May it meet our thirsts and those of the world and sustain us on our journey where God's tomorrow beckons.



Friends in Solidarity

Joan Mumaw, IHM
US Regional Development Director

The theme of this LCWR annual report aptly describes the transformation that has occurred for the US office of Solidarity with South Sudan. In November 2015, a new tax-exempt organization, Friends in Solidarity, Inc. was incorporated in the State of Maryland and all documentation requesting a letter of determination was submitted to the IRS. The new logo was adopted in early 2016 and work on the website initiated.

The members of the corporation include major superiors from Bon Secours of Paris, Comboni Fathers and Brothers, Missionary Franciscans of the Immaculate Conception, Maryknoll Fathers and Brothers, Religious of Jesus and Mary, School Sisters of Notre Dame (Atlantic-Midwest Province) and Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary (Monroe).

The board of directors appointed by the members includes: Ann Oestreich, IHM (chair); Nuala Mulleady, MFIC; Geraldine Hoyler, CSC; John Sivalon, MM; Mary Beth Hamm, SSJ; and Thomas Tiscornia, MM. Joan Mumaw, IHM, was appointed president and chief administrative officer.

We are grateful to LCWR for its continued support of our work. Friends in Solidarity seeks to slake the "Thirst of Our World" as experienced by the people of South Sudan who suffer the ravages of an ongoing civil war. We continue to support the capacity-building work of Solidarity with South Sudan.

Generous Service to the Leadership Conference

LCWR thanks all who have contributed their time and talent to the conference through service on its national board and committees and as liaisons to other organizations.

National Board

Officers

Marcia Allen, CSJ* -- President
 Mary Pellegrino, CSJ* -- President-Elect
 Sharon Holland, IHM* -- Past President
 Mary Beth Gianoli, OSF* -- Secretary
 Pat Eck, CBS* -- Treasurer

Regional Chairpersons

Rosemary Brennan, CSJ* -- Region 1
 Carol Wagner, RDC -- Region 2
 Kathryn Clauss, IHM -- Region 3
 Rose Marie Jasinski, CBS* -- Region 4
 Greta Jupiter, SSF -- Region 5
 Marian Durkin, CSA -- Region 6
 Ginger Downey, OLVM -- Region 7
 Maria Hughes, ASC -- Region 8
 Pat Cormack, SCSC -- Region 9
 Jan Renz, ACS -- Region 10
 Marilyn Geiger, OSF -- Region 11
 Lourdes Leal, CDP -- Region 12
 Jan Ginzkey, OSB -- Region 13
 Stephanie Still, PBVM -- Region 14
 Jo Ann Showalter, SP -- Region 15

Executive Director

Joan Marie Steadman, CSC*

**Members of the Executive Committee*

Committees

Advisory Committee for Leadership Pathways

Cathy Bertrand, SSND
 Ellen Dauwer, SC
 Kate Hendel, BVM
 Alba Letelier, SP
 Teresa Maya, CCVI
 Marie McCarthy, SP, (LCWR staff)
 Sharlet Ann Wagner, CSC

Assembly Resolutions Committee

Catherine Darcy, RSM (Chair)
 Janet Folkl, CDP
 Maureen Irving, OSF
 Ann Scholz, SSND (LCWR Staff)

Contemporary Religious Life Committee

Mary Ann Buckley, SHCJ
 Maria Hughes, ASC
 Ana Lydia Sonera Matos, CDP
 Marie McCarthy, SP (LCWR Staff)
 Patricia McDermott, RSM
 Annmarie Sanders, IHM (LCWR Staff)
 Joan Marie Steadman, CSC (LCWR Staff)
 Miriam Ukeritis, CSJ
 Catherine Bertrand, SSND (Facilitator)

Finance and Audit Committee

Karin Dufault, SP
 Pat Eck, CBS (Treasurer)
 Judith Frikker, RSM
 Grace Hartzog, SC (LCWR Staff)
 Kate Katoski, OSF
 Julia Lanigan, GHSH
 Leora Linnenkugel, OLVM

Global Concerns Committee

Danielle Bonetti, CSJ
 Anne Curtis, RSM
 Marilyn Geiger, OSF (Chair)
 Alice Gerdeman, CDP
 Patricia McCluskey, IHM
 Kathleen Phelan, OP
 Ann Scholz, SSND (LCWR Staff)

Nominations and Elections Committee

Kathryn Clauss, IHM
 Mary Ann Daly, SC
 Barbara Dreher, CSJ
 Grace Hartzog, SC (LCWR Staff)
 Mary Rathert, OP (Chair)
 Anne Shepard, OSB

Occasional Papers Advisory Board

Eileen Campbell, RSM
 Nancy Conway, CSJ
 Rebecca Ann Gemma, OP
 Teresa Maya, CCVI
 Mary McKay, CSJ
 Annmarie Sanders, IHM (LCWR Staff)

Outstanding Leadership Award Committee

Grace Hartzog, SC (LCWR Staff)
 Jeannie Masterson, CSJ
 Dawn Tomaszewski, SP
 Marlene Weisenbeck, FSPA
 Mary Ann Zollmann, BVM

Liaisons to Other Organizations

Catholic Health Association Board

Joan Marie Steadman, CSC (LCWR Staff)

Commission on Religious Life and Ministry

Marcia Allen, CSJ

Mary Beth Gianoli, OSF

Sharon Holland, IHM

Mary Pellegrino, CSJ

Joan Marie Steadman, CSC (LCWR Staff)

Communicators for Women Religious

Annmarie Sanders, IHM (LCWR Staff)

National Religious Retirement Office Assistance Review Committee

Maryanne Fitzgerald, SC

National Religious Retirement Office Management Committee

Joan Marie Steadman, CSC (LCWR Staff)

NETWORK Board

Ann Scholz, SSND (LCWR Staff)

Resource Center for Religious Institutes

Joan Marie Steadman, CSC (LCWR Staff)

USCCB Accounting Practices Committee

Maureen Geary, OP

Leora Linnenkugel, OLVM

USCCB Committee on Consecrated Life and Vocations

Joan Marie Steadman, CSC (LCWR Staff)

USCCB Committee on Domestic Justice and Human Development

Joan Marie Steadman, CSC (LCWR Staff)

USCCB Committee on International Justice and Peace

Joan Marie Steadman, CSC (LCWR Staff)

USCCB National Advisory Council

Theresa Sandok, OSM

Rita Cammack, OSF

LCWR accompanies leaders
in initial and ongoing development as they navigate critical issues
in the world, the church, and their religious institutes
by partnering with organizations that strengthen women religious
nationally and internationally.

-- LCWR Call 2015-2022

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