

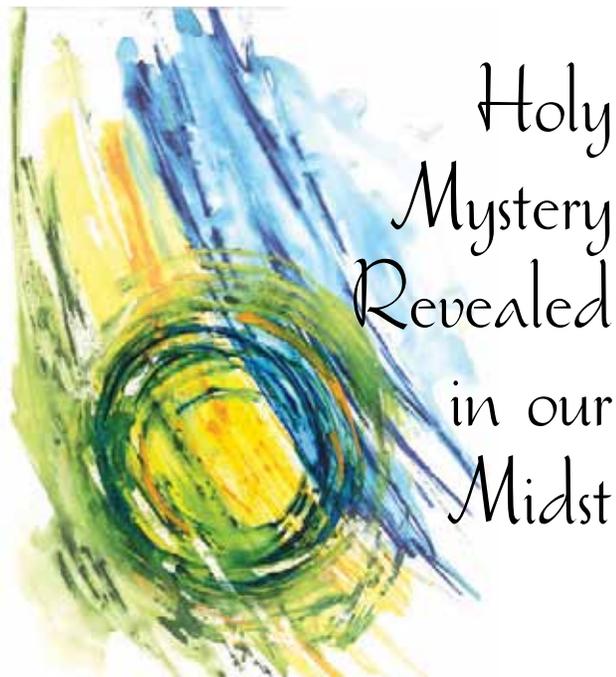
Update

A Publication of the
Leadership Conference of Women Religious

April 2014

2014 LCWR Assembly

Nashville, Tennessee --- August 12 — 16, 2014

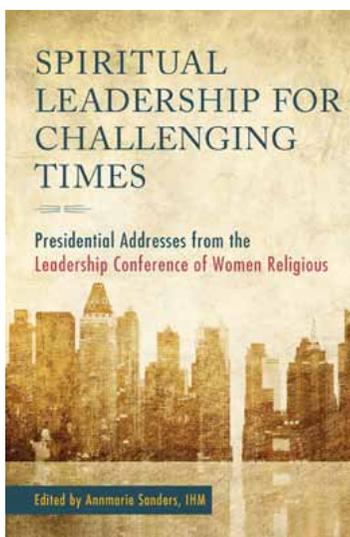


This assembly will be a unique experience of exploring the most critical matters facing women religious leaders. Set in a context of contemplation, and drawing upon the beauty of the arts, Participants will be led through a process to more deeply explore how Holy Mystery is being revealed in the midst of the concrete realities of US religious life as LCWR and its members plans for their future.



Nancy Schreck, OSF will provide the context for this exploration based on her experience as a biblical scholar, and her years of leadership for her own congregation, the Sisters of St. Francis of Dubuque, as well as for LCWR as a past president, board member, retreat leader, workshop presenter, and member of several committees.

Additional information and registration materials will follow. LCWR encourages attendance at this assembly of as many members as possible so that US women religious leaders can together explore the present and plan for the future.



Orbis Books Releases Collection of LCWR Presidential Addresses

Orbis Books has just released *Spiritual Leadership for Challenging Times*, a collection of 10 addresses delivered between 1977 and 2012 by the presidents of LCWR.

Prefacing each address is a brief summary of the key events that significantly impacted the world and the Catholic Church at the time the address was delivered at the LCWR assembly. The addresses speak to the challenges these events posed to leaders at that time, as well as to the call to exercise leadership that was pastoral, discerning, and at times, exceptionally courageous.

(continued on page 3)

From the LCWR Presidency

The Paschal Mystery: Our Way of Life

by Carol Zinn, SSJ — LCWR President



During these 40 Lenten days we journey, together, through a time of formation. The biblical number “40” conveys a time of formation—a time to step back, reflect, assess, and re-focus our lives towards the life, death, and resurrection of the Word-Made-Flesh, the Incarnate One, Jesus Christ. We recall that we carry in our hearts and minds, thoughts and actions, our deep belief in the rhythm of the Paschal Mystery in our very lives. No wonder we need time each year to be re-formed and re-turned and re-directed to the way of Jesus, the message of the Gospel, the vocation of religious life -- for the life of the world.

One of the many Lenten/Easter hymns that captures my attention anew each year is “Jerusalem, My Destiny” by Rory Cooney (1990):

*I have fixed my eyes on your hills, Jerusalem,
my Destiny!
Though I cannot see the way for me, I cannot turn away.
We have set our hearts for the way;
this journey is our destiny.
Let no one walk alone, the journey makes us one.*

I went looking for the words to this hymn online and found several YouTubes of various choirs singing it. I

was touched by the wholeheartedness with which each choir sang as well as some of the profound comments in each YouTube. I encourage you to take a few quiet minutes at your computer and google “Jerusalem, My Destiny” and just let your heart and mind take a “long, loving look,” at our sisters and brothers singing this hymn. What is it in this hymn that catches the depth of the Lenten season? How is it that diverse peoples are drawn into the Paschal Mystery journey by the music and the lyrics? Why do the People of God find themselves in the experience of singing/listening to this hymn?

Perhaps it is because this hymn is the hymn of Jesus as he lived through the rhythm of the Paschal Mystery we celebrate each year. Perhaps it is because it is the hymn of each of us as we live through our own rhythm of the Paschal Mystery in our daily lives. Perhaps it is because the lyrics describe the deepest desires of human hearts in love with God and one another. Perhaps it is because the music draws us into the power of God’s transforming grace present in our lives inviting us to conversion, time and time again.

As we journey through the most holy season of our faith and celebrate these sacred days of prayer, ritual, sacrament, and symbol, may we find ourselves yearning for a deepening of the rhythm of the Paschal Mystery unfolding in our own lives. May we, as women religious, walk the road to Jerusalem, tread the path to Calvary, stand at the foot of the Cross, find our way to the empty tomb, and race to tell the world that “He is Risen”! May our lives become the Journey and the Journey be our Witness. Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!



Orbis Books Releases Collection of LCWR Presidential Addresses

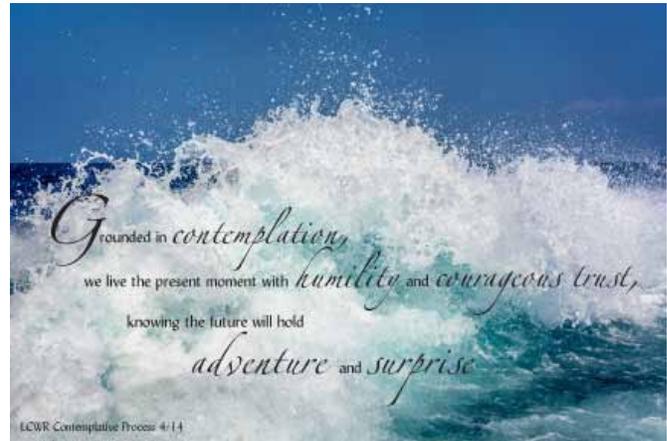
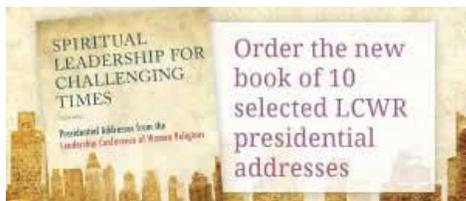
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The collection demonstrates how LCWR's presidents, experienced in a variety of professional fields and grounded in a deep spirituality, drew upon insights from theology, the sciences, the arts, and many other disciplines to illuminate their understandings of the leadership their era demanded and needed. Well-practiced in reading the signs of the times, these women spoke from their experience of leadership as they grappled with the impact of ecological devastation, war, human trafficking, terrorism, injustices leveled against women, and many of the other pressing issues of the post-modern culture. They demonstrated how to help others draw from their own spiritual depths and find hope in troubling times. They modeled how to be peace-builders and reconcilers. They showed how to live and lead with an integrity and humility for which the world-at-large yearns and hungers.

The book sells for \$20.00 and may be purchased through Orbis (www.orbisbooks.com/spiritual-leadership-for-challenging-times.html), Amazon, or Barnes & Noble. A 40% discount is available for LCWR members (information on ordering with the discount is available in the members' section of the LCWR website (www.lcwr.org)).

Members may consider purchasing copies (with their discount) for their sisters, associates, benefactors, boards of their sponsored ministries, and others. Persons who are interested in leadership, and particularly spiritual leadership, as well as those concerned with women's issues, religious life, advocacy, justice, or the Catholic Church will find much to ponder in this collection of addresses.

The 10 LCWR presidents whose addresses are included are: Joan Chittister, OSB; Therese Kane, RSM; Nadine Foley, OP; Doris Goettemoeller, RSM; Nancy Schreck, OSF; Mary Ann Zollmann, BVM; Marlene Weisenbeck, FSPA; and Pat Farrell, OSF; as well as the late Margaret Cafferty, PBVM and Mary Whited, CPPS.

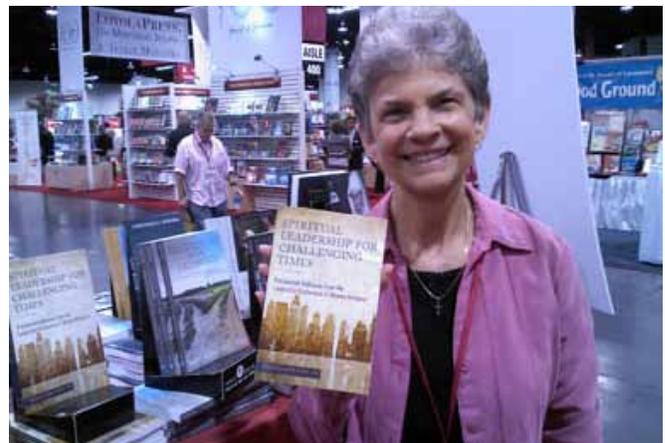


LCWR Members Encouraged to Reflect on Emerging Insights

A new LCWR contemplative insight card is now available for downloading. The April 2014 card (pictured above) is available at: lcwr.org/resources/leadership-pathways/ behold.

The insights on these cards are drawn from the responses submitted from the 15 LCWR regions after completing the "Behold, I am Doing Something New" contemplative process. Members are using these cards in ways such as the following:

- Placing the card in their own personal prayer space
- Placing the card in the leadership team prayer and/or meeting space
- Forwarding the card to their members and associates and inviting them to pray with the insight
- Including the graphic in their institute's publications



LCWR member Kathy Stein, CSJ purchases a copy of *Spiritual Leadership for Challenging Times* at the Los Angeles Religious Education Conference in March.

Imagining Justice: Transformational Change through Evolutionary Eyes

From March 3-6, 42 leaders and justice promoters gathered at Bethany Center in Lutz, Florida to explore how to engage their work for justice through the lens of evolutionary consciousness. Through the use of song, poetry, and presentation, Nancy Sylvester, IHM offered the group some tools and processes for imagining the work of justice in the 21st century.

Using the song, "Consciousness Waking," by Jan Novatka and the poem, "A Sleep of Prisoners," by Christopher Fry, Nancy led the group in reflection and sharing on the realities of the world in which we live, on the shift in vision and understanding that occurs when looking through the eyes of evolutionary consciousness, and on the possibilities created through the practice of exercising contemplative power in engaging impasse.

The days together were structured so as to provide time for input, small and large group sharing, individual time for reflection and integration, and time for communal contemplation. Participants expressed deep appreciation for the content offered, for Nancy's thoughtful and prayerful presence, for the opportunity to share with others engaged in the ministry of justice, and for the time and space to explore, reflect on, and integrate ways in which to contemplatively ground the ministry of justice.

Participants left with the words of Christopher Fry ringing in their ears and hearts:

*Affairs are now soul size.
The enterprise
Is exploration into God.*



▲ Nancy Sylvester, IHM



Leaders and justice promoters gathered in Lutz, Florida for LCWR's Imagining Justice





LCWR Welcomes Solidarity with South Sudan to its Office Building

While so much of the world is in turmoil and South Sudan is engulfed in civil unrest, good news has come from this newest country in the world. Eighty-one teachers attended the in-service program at the Solidarity Teacher Training College in Yambio and 84 in program in Rumbek during January and February. Ninety-nine students, 40 of whom are women, are studying in the nursing and midwifery programs at the Catholic Health Training Institute (CHTI) in Wau, also a ministry of Solidarity with South Sudan. Given the challenges facing students and staff in this country, which has suffered from two long civil wars in the past 60 years and is now engaged in another period of civil unrest, this is a “miracle” and a blessing.

The teacher training college in Malakal has, however, suffered the ravages of war and been looted and damaged. The staff was evacuated in early January and is working in other projects of Solidarity. The town of Malakal, with a population of 250,000, has been totally destroyed in battles among Sudanese military, opposition forces, and the White Army, a band of hundreds of marauding Nuer youth who have killed, raped, and abducted civilians, even those taking refuge in hospitals, churches, and the UN camp. The bishops have made a special plea for missionaries to come and serve in the area which includes the three states most convulsed in the civil strife. Currently all work in this diocese is suspended for three months or until greater peace is restored. There is no church presence in the area, the last to leave being three Comboni Sisters who no longer had people to work with as all had fled the area.

Solidarity with South Sudan is a project of the UISG/USG and a response to a request from the bishops of South Sudan for assistance in rebuilding the healthcare, education, and pastoral ministries of the country which has virtually no infrastructure. Solidarity has opted to build local capacity and since 2008 two teacher training colleges have been built and staffed, the health training center has been renovated after sitting empty for more

than 20 years, and pastoral and agricultural training programs have been initiated. Currently there are 33 men and women religious from 19 congregations and 20 countries living and working in five communities around the country.

In February 2014, at the invitation of LCWR, Joan Mumaw, IHM (Monroe) opened the Solidarity with South Sudan Office in the office building in Silver Spring, Maryland owned by LCWR and CMSM. Joan was asked by Solidarity to initiate a not-for-profit organization in the United States in support of this work. She spent three months in South Sudan immersing herself in the work of Solidarity. She envisions herself raising awareness of the situation in South Sudan and the commitment made on behalf of all religious to support the work of Solidarity. Currently, seven men and women religious from the United States are engaged in the work of Solidarity. Some of these persons have been featured in the “Letters from South Sudan” blog of the *National Catholic Reporter*. The hope is that the South Sudanese will be trained and able to assume leadership in these institutions within the next 15 years. Currently, Solidarity is seeking staff with skills in accounting and computers to work in South Sudan. Joan is available to meet with regions, congregations, and other interested persons and can be reached at jmumaw.solidarity@gmail.com or 734-731-3726.

NRRO Accepting Applications for Planning Workshops and Processes

The National Religious Retirement Office (NRRO) is accepting applications for the September 2014 planning and implementation process and for any of the 2015 planning workshops. Significant consultative assistance and funding are available through this program for any religious institute with more than 25 members and an under-funded retirement liability of 40% or greater. NRRO also welcomes participation by institutes that have a higher level of funding. These institutes are eligible for the educational component and for consultative assistance, but they are not eligible for financial assistance through the program.

A recent participant wrote, “The process got us moving in a way that nothing else could have.” More information and a list of previous participants are available at: www.usccb.org/about/national-religious-retirement-office/planning-and-implementation-assistance.cfm.



Creating Contemplative Meeting Experiences

Leadership Team of the Dominican Sisters
of Mission San Jose, California
*Gloria Marie Jones, Diane Bridenbecker, Alicia Lucy,
Reina Perea, Carolyn Marie Monahan*

Over the past few years as the number of agenda items and weight of the issues kept escalating, our leadership team has focused on how to slow things down and tap into a deeper wisdom and more expansive vision. A few helpful practices have emerged:

- Beginning each meeting with 15 minutes of contemplative sitting followed by naming for one another who we are bringing to the meeting, what we are noticing. We end the meeting with another contemplative pause and then sharing on what we hold as we conclude our day together.
- Creating space for a different kind of presence/focus by taking a day once every other month to go to a place in the mountains. The morning is spent in personal reflection/prayer/study. We share a contemplative sitting followed by a check-in before lunch. After lunch we focus on conversation about an article to enhance our leadership or explore an area or issue together from a more expansive/visionary stance. We have found new creativity and insight emerges in these conversations that helps move us to a different place! It is always renewing and never feels like “more business.”

All of this led us to a truly radical change in our annual extended planning experience -- one that took a great deal of courage from a group of “J”s on the Myers Briggs. As we approached our six-day extended planning time in the summer, we found ourselves resisting our practice of creating an agenda for the days related to topics we wanted to cover. Instead we decided to approach these planning days from a more contemplative stance. To help us hold the whole of who we are as

a congregation in this moment, the first day we created a visual that captured the major movements of which we were aware. We left each morning completely free for our own prayer/reflection/study including prayer on the scripture of the day. The night before the sister leading the day provided a question flowing from the scripture that related in some way to our leadership. We began the afternoon with sharing on the scripture and focus question. Rather than have an assigned topic for the day, we allowed the topic to emerge or flow from that sharing. What emerged from our reflection and conversation was always a surprise leading us to new and unexpected places. We ended the day with reflection on our experience and preparation for the next day.

As the days unfolded we found ourselves covering all of the areas that we had identified in our visual. We did so grounded in a different space that opened up creativity and new insight. Much to our amazement, at the end of the week we found ourselves rested, renewed, energized, and inspired by what had come to birth among us. The direction of that week has continued to bear much fruit as we have moved through the year! Our extended planning time will never be the same again!



Any team that has discovered a helpful practice is invited to submit a brief description of the practice to the Contemporary Religious Life Committee via LCWR associate director for communications Annmarie Sanders, IHM at asanders@lcsr.org.



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Upcoming LCWR Dates

LCWR New Leader Workshop
Conference Center - University of St.
Mary of the Lake
Mundelein, Illinois
March 27 — 30, 2014

LCWR Assembly
Nashville, Tennessee
August 12 — 16, 2014

Leading from Within Retreat
Bethany Retreat Center
Lutz, Florida
January 11 — 16, 2015

LCWR New Leader Workshop
Conference Center - University of St.
Mary of the Lake
Mundelein, Illinois
March 19 — 22, 2015

LCWR Assembly
Houston, Texas
August 11—15, 2015

Applications Being Accepted for Leadership Development Program

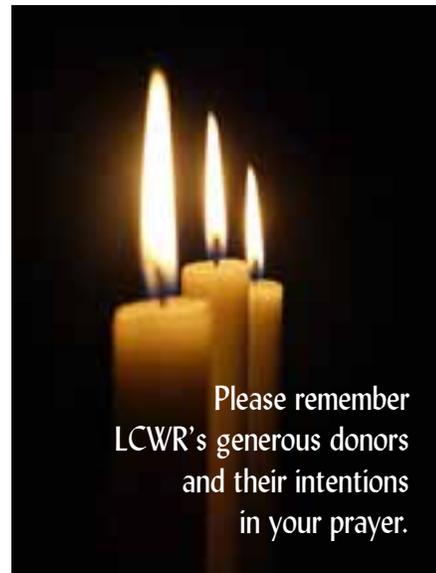
The Collaborative Leadership Development Program (CLDP-2), sponsored by a coalition of religious congregations of women in partnership with LCWR, will begin a new session in summer 2014.

The CLDP is an integrative process designed to prepare women religious, associates, and co-members 60 years of age or younger with the skills, knowledge and confidence to assume leadership positions in community and ministry. Its forward-thinking approach broadens perspective and awareness in our changing church and global society. One participant wrote: "How good it is to share our hopes, fears, doubts and dreams together. I knew the program would be good...I didn't realize it would be life-changing!"

2014 Applications Due: April 15, 2014. This popular program filled up quickly in its first offering in 2013. More information as well as the applicant criteria and application form are available at www.TheCLDP.org or from program director Kathy Wade (kwade42@gmail.com 301-587-0423, x 2314) or Rita Waters, RSM (rwaters@sistersofmercy.org 301-587-0423, x 2310).

French Translation of Occasional Papers Article Available

Due to the generosity of LCWR associate Anne Bayart, SU and the Society of St. Ursula in France, the article "Sophia: Source of Creative Union," by Kathy Duffy, SSJ has been translated into French. The translation of the reflection, which was published in the Winter 2014 edition of LCWR's *Occasional Papers*, is available on the LCWR website at: lcwr.org/sites/default/files/page/files/sophia-fr.pdf.



Please remember
LCWR's generous donors
and their intentions
in your prayer.



- Statement of Conscience affirming the view of many religious authorities that nuclear weapons are inherently immoral because of their horrific and indiscriminate effects on civilians and on the environment. Carol Zinn, SSJ (2/7/14)
- Letter from faith leaders to members of Congress in support of increasing the federal minimum wage to \$10.10 per hour and indexing it to inflation and raising the tipped wage to at least 70 percent of the minimum wage. Janet Mock, CSJ (2/20/14)
- Letter to the Senate Intelligence Committee requesting that they release their report on CIA torture. Carol Zinn, SSJ (2/25/14)
- Letter from faith leaders thanking President Obama for his inspiring words in support of international development and life-saving programs at the National Prayer Breakfast. LCWR (2/25/14)
- Letter to the leadership of the Senate and House Committees on Appropriations thanking them for their support of life-saving humanitarian and poverty-focused development programs in the FY14 omnibus spending package. LCWR (3/3/14)
- Letter to the chairs of the House Foreign Affairs, Judiciary, and Education and the Workforce Committees in support of H.R. 3344, the Fraudulent Overseas Recruitment and Trafficking Elimination Act of 2013 Act. LCWR (3/4/14)
- Letter to Defense Appropriations Committee asking them to end the practice of funding the Pentagon through Overseas Contingency Operations. LCWR (3/4/14)

Is Your Leadership Term About to End?

If your leadership term is ending this month, we ask you to submit a change of leadership form found in the LCWR Members Information section (password-protected) of the website at lcwr.org/members/lcwr-membership-information.

Gun Violence Sabbath Mobilizes Faith Communities across the Country

Faiths United to Prevent Gun Violence and the Washington National Cathedral convened religious leaders, policy makers, victims of gun violence, first responders, and people of faith to launch the second annual March 14-16 Gun Violence Prevention Sabbath.

Cathedral dean Gary Hall welcomed participants to the March 13 opening and introduced civic and faith leaders who reflected on the more than 30,000 lives lost each year to gun violence and the responsibility of people of faith to act to end the violence. Following their remarks the clergy blessed the first responders and the t-shirt exhibit honoring the 103 Washington, DC residents killed last year in gun violence.

The evening included a panel of faith leaders, experts, and activists moderated by Right Rev. Mariann Edgar Budde, bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Washington.

The panelists addressed the complex challenges facing local communities. While all agreed that long-term solutions must address poverty, education, and employment they reminded participants that there are relatively simple strategies that work. Background checks are already saving lives. In 16 states and the District of Columbia where a background check is required for all handgun sales, there are 38 percent fewer women killed by an intimate partner; 49 percent fewer suicides with a gun; 64 percent fewer “crime guns” exported to other states.

Throughout the weekend more than 60 communities of women religious joined congregants at places of worship across the nation to remember those who have lost their lives to gunfire, pray for those whose lives have been forever changed because of the loss of a loved one, and to continue the discussion on how communities of faith can work together to help reduce gun violence. More information is available at www.marchsabbath.org.



Bishops to Celebrate Mass of Remembrance at the Border

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops' Committee on Migration will travel to Nogales, Arizona, March 30-April 1 to tour the US-Mexico border and celebrate mass on behalf of the almost 6,000 migrants who have died in the US desert since 1998.

The purpose of the trip is to highlight the human suffering caused by a broken immigration system, an aspect of the national immigration debate too often ignored.

"What we fail to remember in this debate is the human aspect of immigration — that immigration is primarily about human beings, not economic or social issues," said Bishop Eusebio Elizondo, auxiliary bishop of Seattle and chair of the USCCB Committee on Migration. "Those who have died – and those deported each day – have the same value and innate God-given dignity as all persons, yet we ignore their suffering and their deaths."

The trip is reminiscent of the journey Pope Francis made to the Italian island of Lampedusa to remember African migrants who died attempting to reach Europe. During that trip, Pope Francis spoke about the "globalization of indifference" toward migrants and decried the "throwaway culture" that disposes of human beings in the pursuit of wealth.

"The US-Mexico border is our Lampedusa," Bishop Elizondo said. He continued: "We exhibit our own indifference when we minimize or ignore this suffering and death, as if these people are not worth our attention. It degrades us as a nation."

Members of the USCCB Committee on Migration will be joined by Cardinal Seán O'Malley of Boston, and

several border bishops. Bishop Gerald Kicanas of Tucson, Arizona, will host the delegation.

"Hopefully by highlighting the harsh impact the system has on our fellow human beings, our elected officials will be moved to reform it," Bishop Elizondo said.

The 9:00 AM public Eucharistic liturgy will be celebrated April 1 at the border wall along International Street in Nogales, Arizona.

Cardinal Bernardin Young Leader Award Applications Due

The Catholic Campaign for Human Development is now accepting nominations for the 2014 Cardinal Bernardin Young Leader Award. This is given annually to a Catholic young adult between the age of 18 - 40 who is actively engaged in challenging unjust structures that keep people trapped in the cycle of poverty in the United States.



The award recipient will receive a \$1,000 cash award and be honored at a reception held June 11 in New Orleans at the annual meeting of the US Catholic bishops.

The deadline for nominations is April 30, 2014. Nomination and eligibility information can be found at tinyurl.com/8aln98u.

USCCB Compiles Pope Francis Quotes

The US Catholic Conference of Bishops is compiling quotes from speeches, messages, homilies, and audiences of Pope Francis. They represent a sample of his prolific words about poverty, economic justice, care for creation, and human rights. Pope Francis' words point to the church's long tradition of Catholic social teaching. The compilation is available in both English: tinyurl.com/kgbb8qw and Spanish: tinyurl.com/krrln6w. The compilation is not meant to be comprehensive, but it is hoped it will be helpful. The links will be updated as they continue to add quotes.

News from the UN

UNESCO Chief: Girls' Education Deserves More Attention Globally



According to a report by the UN Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) titled Education for All Global Monitoring Report, more than 15 million young girls out of school are never expected to enroll for classes. In many countries girls are less likely to receive an education than boys, an “unacceptable” imbalance, says Irina Bokova, director-general of UNESCO. The report from the agency says, “If recent trends in the region continue, the richest boy will gain universal primary completion in 2021, while the poorest girl will not be able to catch up until 2086.” The UNESCO report can be found at tinyurl.com/obaydrm.

CSW Reviews Progress for Women and Girls

The 58th session of the Commission on the Status of Women took place at United Nations Headquarters in New York, March 10-21 2014. Representatives of member states, UN entities, and ECOSOC-accredited non-governmental organizations from all regions of the world attended the session to consider the challenges and achievements in the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals for women and girls.

Established in 1947, the CSW has been instrumental in promoting women’s and girls’ rights, documenting the reality of their lives throughout the world, and shaping global standards on gender equality and empowerment. More information is available at www.unwomen.org/en/csw/csw58-2014.



USCSAHT Ad Earns a Golden ADDY

US Catholic Sisters Against Human Trafficking (USCSAHT) teamed with the staff of Bailey Lauerman, an ad agency in Omaha, Nebraska, to draw attention to modern day slavery with its ad in the December issue of US Airways in-flight magazine.

The ad recently won the only gold ADDY given in the public service category at the America Advertising Nebraska state competition. It will now advance to regionals completion. If the ad wins there, it will go on to nationals.



JFI Calls for Lenten Fast for Families

The core organizations of Justice for Immigrants (JFI), a campaign of the US Catholic Conference of Bishops, has invited people of faith to make the concerns of immigrant families a focus of their Lenten prayer, sacrifice, and action. They have created a toolkit which includes suggested weekly readings, reflections, prayers, and actions designed to help participants reflect on the biblical call to welcome the stranger and act to make immigrant justice a reality.

The kit contains a Lenten prayer calendar which includes an invitation to pray for elected Catholic members of Congress and then to pick up the phone to share one’s prayer and own hope for just immigration reform with that legislator. The calendar also includes an invitation to fast each Wednesday in solidarity with Fast for Families www.fast4families.org. There are also seven weekly suggestions for prayer which include scripture readings, stories, and questions for reflection and sharing. All designed to uncover the heart of God’s dream for immigrant families.

NETWORK has posted the toolkit on its website at tinyurl.com/k35lz2n.