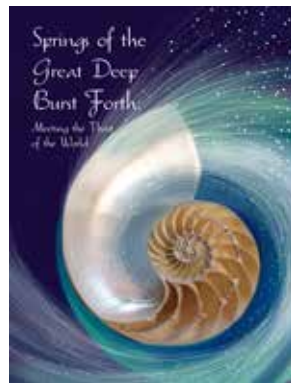


August/September 2015

Preparing for the LCWR Assembly

To date, more than 800 LCWR members and associates have registered for the 2015 LCWR assembly -- "Springs of the Great Deep Burst Forth: Meeting the Thirsts of the World." This important assembly will explore what is being accessed these days from the Great Deep by women religious, as well as what may be drawn from it to meet the many urgent thirsts experienced throughout the world.



As preparation for the assembly, all participants are encouraged to do the following:

- ✓ Read the LCWR 2014-2015 annual report available online at lcvr.org/sites/default/files/publications/files/lcwr_annual_report_2015.pdf
- ✓ Read the Summer 2015 issue of LCWR's *Occasional Papers* entitled "Exploring the Great Deep."
- ✓ Read the information on the candidates for LCWR president and secretary on the private side of the website under Assembly (www.lcwr.org).
- ✓ Review the LCWR assembly resolution on the private side of the website under Assembly (www.lcwr.org).
- ✓ Read the summaries of the regional reports on the implementation of the 2014 assembly resolutions (Doctrine of Discovery and Renewable Energy) in the members area on the private side of the website under Assembly (www.lcwr.org).
- ✓ Consider ordering CDs or DVDs of the assembly

(continued on page 3)

LCWR Participates in CLAR Events in Bogota, Colombia

LCWR president-elect Marcia Allen, CSJ and LCWR associate director for communications Annmarie Sanders, IHM attended two events in Bogota, Colombia to which the Confederation of Latin American Religious (CLAR) invited LCWR. The first was CLAR's Congress on Consecrated Life held from June 17-21, planned as part of the continent's commemoration of the Year of Consecrated Life, and the second was CLAR's triennial assembly of delegates held from June 21-24.

The congress on consecrated life, which was open to all consecrated persons in the church and was attended by approximately 1340 people, was based on the theme "We Listen for God Where Life Cries Out." Among those present were LCWR members from the Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word of both Houston and San Antonio, and the Missionary Guadalupanas of the Holy Spirit, as well as former LCWR president Pat Farrell, OSF who presented a workshop on leadership by women in consecrated life.

(continued on page 3)



Annmarie Sanders, IHM and Marcia Allen, CSJ (3rd and 4th from left) address the CLAR congress

From the LCWR Presidency

A Life of Contemplation for the Life of the World

by Carol Zinn, SSJ — LCWR Past President

As we prepare for our 2015 assembly in Houston, with its theme, “Springs of the Great Deep Burst Forth: Meeting the Thirsts of the World,” it is increasingly clear that we have heard the promptings of Spirit calling us deeper and deeper into the very Heart of God. This call to contemplative prayer, contemplative space, contemplative processes, contemplative stance, and contemplative decision-making creates both a hunger and a home in us. We fed our hunger time and time again, especially these past few years as we embraced the many challenges set before us, and we found our home, together, as we returned again and again to the person and place of Holy Mystery, God-With-Us. It was this hunger and home that grounded, graced, and freed us to be faithful. And it is this hunger and home that continues to guide, gather, and fashion us to remain faithful.

In the book, *The Prophet*, by Kahlil Gibran, there is a section of prose on the theme of prayer that I find myself returning to time and time again, finding it new each time:

“You pray in your distress and in your need; would that you might pray also in the fullness of your joy and in your days of abundance. For what is prayer but the expansion of yourself into the living ether? And if it is for your comfort to pour your darkness into space, it is also for your delight to pour forth the dawning of your heart. And if you cannot but weep when your soul summons you to prayer, she should spur you again and yet again, though weeping, until you shall come laughing.



May we enter
the temple of contemplation
invisible, together, and
open to the graces
our good and generous God
provides.

When you pray you rise to meet in the air those who are praying at that very hour, and whom save in prayer you may not meet. Therefore let your visit to that temple invisible be for naught but ecstasy and sweet communion. For if you should enter the temple for no other purpose than asking you shall not receive; And if you should enter into it to humble yourself you shall not be lifted; Or even if you should enter into it to beg for the good of others you shall not be heard. It is enough that you enter the temple invisible.” (pp. 67-68)

We find ourselves in a transformational and transitional moment as we approach the 2015 assembly. The 2015-2022 LCWR Call charts a path of prophetic leadership; the conclusion of the CDF mandate provides a space with prophetic leadership; the shifts within and among religious institutes create a need for prophetic leadership; and the realities of our church and world prompt a response from prophetic leadership.

May we enter the temple of contemplation invisible, together, and open to the graces our good and generous God provides. May we remain faithful to the call of the Gospel in living our religious life for the life of the world.

LCWR Participates in CLAR Events in Bogota, Colombia

(continued from page 1)

As representatives of LCWR, Marcia and Annmarie served on a panel where they spoke about the doctrinal assessment of LCWR by the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, since there was such great interest among Latin American women and men religious in this matter. Repeatedly, men and women religious expressed their gratitude to LCWR for the way in which the conference worked through the CDF mandate. They shared stories of how closely they followed this story from Latin America and how much solidarity they felt with LCWR. Some spoke of how after hearing how LCWR approached this challenge, they came away with new ideas for working through difficult tensions in their own settings. Perhaps most heartening was the enthusiasm and hope expressed by young women and men religious that they experienced after hearing the conference's hopes for how all in the church may work together in the future.

Of particular note during the congress was the frankness and honesty with which people spoke about the urgent and indispensable need for an infusion of new life, ideas, and energy into religious life. Repeatedly, presenters and attendees spoke of their dreams for a religious life that:

- incarnates mysticism, prophecy, and hope
- values the presence and the questions of its young members, referred to as the "New Generations"
- constantly looks ahead to the horizons to observe what is new and innovative
- is marked by communion, openness, and a welcoming spirit
- works consciously to strengthen its intercultural nature and its inter-congregational collaboration
- is characterized by mercy and compassion for those living in poverty
- lives in harmony with creation (The congress participants celebrated with great hope the release during the congress of Pope Francis' encyclical *Laudato si'*)
- relates to a church that is characterized by servant leadership, is a community of communities, and is poor and belongs to those who are poor.

Marcia and Annmarie also represented LCWR at the CLAR assembly, a gathering of approximately 80 men and women religious that brought together delegates

from 19 Latin American and the Caribbean countries. During those days the delegates and CLAR's team of theologians engaged in further reflection on the congress and its call to CLAR as it moves into the future. The time included presentations on the realities of the national conferences represented in the assembly, providing insight into some of the grave situations in which men and women religious are ministering throughout Latin America and the Caribbean. Many delegates spoke of increasing violence and crime, destruction of land and natural resources, intensifying poverty, and critical healthcare needs.

A fuller report and photos are available on the LCWR website at lcwr.org/calendar/2015-clar-congress-and-assembly.



LCWR member Ana Gabriela Castro, MGSpS; Annmarie Sanders, IHM; Marcia Allen, CSJ; and LCWR member Frances Aldama, MGSpS at the CLAR congress

Preparing for the LCWR Assembly

(continued from page 1)

presentations and inform community members about the possibility of ordering them as well (www.networkcommunicationsaudio.com/lcwr2015.html).

All attendees are encouraged to visit and support the more than 80 exhibitors who will be present at the assembly, and to especially thank the exhibitors who are sponsors for the assembly. Their participation in this event significantly assists LCWR financially.

All are reminded to check and be sure they have registered for the assembly and made hotel reservations.

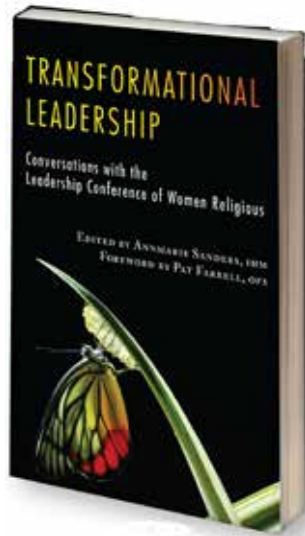
Orbis Publishes Book of LCWR Occasional Papers Interviews

Orbis Books will soon release a new book entitled, *Transformational Leadership: Conversations with the Leadership Conference of Women Religious*. Copies may be ordered at www.orbisbooks.com/transformational-leadership.html. Orbis describes the book as follows:

"In 2009, the Leadership Conference of Women Religious (LCWR)—an organization representing 300 orders of sisters in the United States—suddenly gained wide attention following a critical doctrinal assessment issued by the Vatican's Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. Many became interested in the way the LCWR and its members exercised leadership. One of their members described it as "transformational leadership"—a "way-of-being-in-in-the-world." To better understand this way of leadership, LCWR regularly conducts interviews with some of the most engaging and passionate of contemporary thinkers.

In this volume of interviews, 18 theologians, psychologists, educators, and religious leaders from various fields and disciplines share their wisdom about a way of leadership able to meet the deep challenges of today's world. *Transformational Leadership* offers the opportunity to learn from notables such as Walter Brueggemann; Judy Cannato; Joan Chittister, OSB; Constance FitzGerald, OCD; Donald Goergen, OP; Lynn Levo CSJ; Marty Linsky, Nancy Schreck, OSF; and Margaret Wheatley.

Transformational Leadership, although originally addressed to American Catholic sisters, provides thoughtful and practical suggestions for living a Gospel-centered life and its unique collection of personalities and insight makes it of interest to all men and women seeking to live and lead with purpose and depth."



The book is edited by LCWR associate director for communications Annmarie Sanders, IHM and includes a forward written by former LCWR president Pat Farrell, OSF.

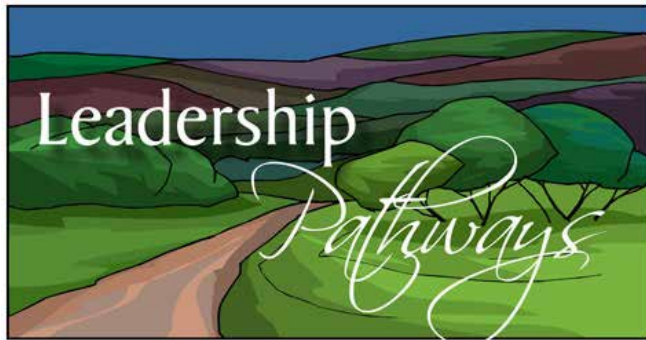
Orbis will be selling the book at a discounted price during the LCWR assembly. A portion of all sales goes toward supporting LCWR's operating budget.

Pope Francis Seeks Forgiveness of Indigenous Peoples of the Americas

In his July 9 address to a social justice summit in Bolivia, attended by many from the indigenous community, Pope Francis asked forgiveness for sins committed by the Catholic Church during the conquest of the Western Hemisphere. He said: "I humbly ask forgiveness, not only for the offenses of the church herself, but also for crimes committed against the native peoples during the so-called conquest of America." The full text of his remarks is available at: tinyurl.com/net8kq9.

A little less than a year earlier, LCWR members gathered in assembly, took time to reflect upon the gifts and struggles of the indigenous peoples of the Americas and to acknowledge their own complicity in the many indignities and injustices they continue to suffer. Members adopted a resolution asking Pope Francis to formally repudiate the period of Christian history that used religion to justify political and personal violence against indigenous nations and peoples.

Over the course of the past few years, many congregations of women religious have appealed to Pope Francis urging him to seek pardon and reconciliation with the indigenous peoples of the Americas. Joan Marie Steadman, CSC, executive director of LCWR, sent a personal appeal to Cardinal Peter K.A. Turkson, president, Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace and to the Most Reverend Bernardito C. Auza, permanent observer of the Holy See to the United Nations to the Organization of American States, asking each to bring the matter to the attention of the pope. The text of the letters are available on the members section of the LCWR website (www.lcwr.org). Whether there is any direct link between the actions of women religious and Pope Francis's recent apology to the native peoples of the Americas is unknown. However, what is clear is that the Holy Father's action during his first papal visit to his native Latin America was historic.



At the LCWR assembly in Houston there will be a brown bag lunch on Wednesday, August 12. Anyone interested in learning more about Leadership Pathways and about opportunities for participating is invited to attend. This will also offer an opportunity for any members who have participated or are participating in one of the segments of Leadership Pathways to gather and connect in person with other members of their learning cohort.

In September new learning cohorts will be forming for two different Leadership Pathways modules. This is an opportunity for interested members to join an online learning cohort, facilitated by a group mentor, to explore and integrate more deeply the dispositions and skills need to be a transformational leader.

The module, *Becoming the Leaders We Hope To Be: The Foundations of Transformational Leadership*, focuses on developing the dispositions, skills, and knowledge that are needed by elected leaders today. The module explores the role of self-knowledge and vulnerability in effective leadership; the art of seeing things whole and thinking and acting from a systems perspective; how to lead from a contemplatively grounded place; and how to build a collective, collaborative congregational vision.

The module, *Rooted in God's Mission: The Foundations of Mission-Grounded Leadership*, focuses on the knowledge, skills, and dispositions needed to assist leaders in keeping mission at the heart of the ministry and fostering the sense of mission among those serving in congregation ministries. It includes materials and reflection on the theology of mission, Catholic identity, sponsorship, the development of specific competencies needed to lead from a mission grounded consciousness and contemplative, ethical decision-making.

Group members work at their own pace and on their own time. All materials are available online. At the end

of each of the major sections, the group meets together online for in-depth conversation and sharing. It generally takes a group anywhere from 9 to 12 months to work through the material.

Members may sign up as individuals or as teams to participate in this experience. Thus far three pilot groups have completed the module on *Becoming the Leaders We Hope to Be* and another five groups are working with the material. Three pilot groups are currently working with the module, *Rooted in God's Mission*, and are about half-way through the process.

Feedback from the participants in each of the modules indicates that the experience is genuinely helpful to them in their ministry of leadership.

Anyone interested in participating in the learning cohorts that will be forming in the fall can find further information and a registration form at lcsr.org/resources/leadership-pathways.

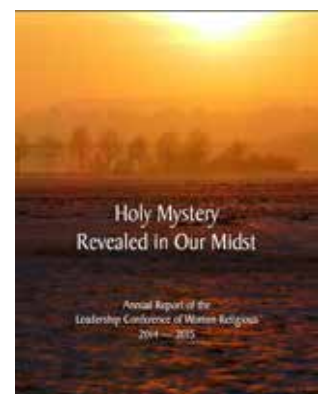
LCWR Occasional Papers Article Available in French and Spanish

Translations into French and Spanish of the article from *Occasional Papers* by Marie McCarthy, SP entitled, "Tending the Gifts in Dark Places," are now available on the LCWR website at lcsr.org/articles-pertinent-religious-life.

The translations have been made available to LCWR through the generosity of the Sisters of Providence of Montreal.

2013-2014 LCWR Annual Report Available

All LCWR members are encouraged to read the conference's annual report at lcsr.org/sites/default/files/publications/files/lcsr_annual_report_2015.pdf.



Leading from Within Retreat

Leading from Within is a retreat for LCWR members and LCWR associates who are serving in congregation leadership



January 17 — 22, 2015

Redemptorist Renewal Center at Picture Rocks
Tucson, Arizona

www.desertrenewal.org

Join with other women religious leaders for a five-day retreat that will provide opportunities to reflect on the blessings and challenges of religious life leadership today.

The days will include input, contemplative space, a variety of ritual experiences and some opportunity for individual spiritual direction and sharing in small wisdom circles for those who choose.

Retreat Directors



Marie McCarthy, SP



Janet Mock, CSJ

Space is limited to 30 persons.

More information and registration materials will be sent soon to all LCWR members

Laudato Si' Calls All to Live in Right Relationship

Reaction to the release of the much-anticipated papal encyclical *Laudato Si': On Care for Our Common Home*, has been overwhelming positive.

Addressing every person living on this planet, Pope Francis insists that it is essential to “hear both the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor;” in order to enter into a profound “dialogue which can help us escape the spiral of self-destruction which currently engulfs us.” His is a call to dialogue that can restore the fundamental, intertwined relationships upon which life itself is grounded, “. . . relationship with God, with our neighbor, and with earth itself.”



The Conference of Major Superiors of Men and LCWR issued a joint statement welcoming the Holy Father’s call to embrace the moral responsibility to care for one another by caring for all of God’s creation. LCWR also took the occasion to release its most recent *Resolution to Action: “Climate: A Common Good.”* This theological reflection by Marianne Comfort is available at: lcwr.org/sites/default/files/publications/files/rta7-15.pdf.

Several Catholic organizations have produced materials to encourage prayer and reflection with the encyclical:

- Global Catholic Climate Movement offers resources and the chance to join the movement. catholicclimatemovement.global
- USCCB resources on environmental justice and the encyclical are available at: tinyurl.com/ndlyf3l
- Catholic Climate Covenant offers resources at: www.catholicclimatecovenant.org
- Interfaith Power and Light has created an action kit which can be downloaded at: tinyurl.com/oxklcc8
- The Columban Center for Advocacy and Outreach has published a study and action guide: tinyurl.com/oetub8d

LCWR Assembly Lunch Time Discussions

Throughout the assembly, attendees are welcome to bring their lunches to any of the three gatherings that will be held for conversation on a specific topic.

Wednesday, August 12

Transition Services: *Window Box Room*
or
Leadership Pathways: *Arboretum*

Friday, August 15

Family Detention: *Imperial Ballroom*

Climate Symposium Planned for November

Catholic Climate Covenant, USCCB, and Catholic University of America's Institute for Policy Research and Catholic Studies are hosting a climate symposium at CUA from November 12-14. The meeting will explore the theological implications and practical applications of *Laudato Si'*. More information will be available soon at: www.catholicclimatecovenant.org.



CMSM to Offer Poverty-Care for Creation Immersion in Appalachia

The Conference of Major Superiors of Men (CMSM) is offering an immersion experience which provides myriad opportunities for encounters with people intimately involved in the struggle for integral ecology.

The experience, planned for October 25-28, will provide opportunities to visit organizations working closely with those on the margins to provide healthcare, housing, sustainable food, and alternative schools. They will explore the integral connection between environmental destruction and endemic poverty and include regular times for group prayer and reflection on the encounters

Upcoming LCWR Dates

LCWR Assembly

Houston, Texas
August 11—14, 2015

LCWR Leadership Pathways Online Learning Cohorts Forming

Deadline: September 15, 2015

Leading from Within Retreat

Redemptorist Retreat Center
Tucson, Arizona
January 17 — 22, 2016

Imagining Justice

Bethany Center
Lutz, Florida
March 7 — 10, 2016

LCWR New Leader Workshop

Conference Center
University of St. Mary of the Lake
Mundelein, Illinois
April 7 — 10, 2016

LCWR Assembly

Atlanta, Georgia
August 9—13, 2016

LCWR Assembly

Orlando, Florida
August 8—12, 2017

LCWR Assembly

St. Louis, Missouri
August 7—11, 2018

to deepen insights and build relationships. Additional details are available at: tinyurl.com/noxbs83. Registration may be made through Brian McLaughlin SVD at bmclauch62@aol.com or 847-431-8145. The deadline is September 1.

Women Religious Leadership Development Program Graduates Gather

Approximately 100 women religious who have recently completed any of the various leadership development programs offered throughout the country for women religious and associates ages 60 and younger gathered in Chicago from July 15-20. The event was sponsored and planned by the Leadership Collaborative, a network of seven congregations as well as representatives from LCWR and the Religious Formation Conference, and funded by the GHR Foundation.

The gathering sought to address the current realities for women religious, particularly of this age cohort, and the emerging future of religious life. Facilitated by Debbie Asberry and guided by speaker/reflector Mary Ann Zollmann, BVM, the event provided opportunities to further integrate and deepen the transformative experiences initially nurtured through the leadership development programs. Throughout the days, the attendees participated in facilitated dialogue and contemplative processing all focused on helping them vision for the future and expand relationships.

Those attending the program came from 15 countries, and a variety of congregations. Several of the participants are now serving in elected leadership and are LCWR members. LCWR was represented at the event by associate directors Marie McCarthy, SP and Annmarie Sanders, IHM.



Artist Martha McGinnis listened to and created graphic recordings of all the proceedings in order to assist the participants in integrating key concepts and images into their own reflection and conversations.

Catholics Respond to Call to End Modern Slavery

Women religious were well represented among the more than 300 Catholic leaders from across the country gathered at Catholic University in Washington, DC to discuss labor and sex trafficking in the United States and to search together for solutions. Keynote speakers included Terry Shields, MSHR co-founder and president of Dawn's place, a Philadelphia-based residential and rehabilitation facility for survivors of sex-trafficking and Margaret Nacke, CSJ, founder of the Bakhita initiative which strives to connect Catholic sisters across the country in their fight against trafficking. Participants also heard from survivors, academics, practitioners, and legal experts.

Together, these representatives of Catholic Charities agencies, Catholic healthcare networks, parishes, state Catholic conferences, and men's and women's religious communities reflected on Pope Francis's call to create a world where the vulnerable are "slaves no more, but brothers and sisters" and committed to continuing to act together to end modern slavery. More information can be found at: tinyurl.com/ploxcc3.

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.



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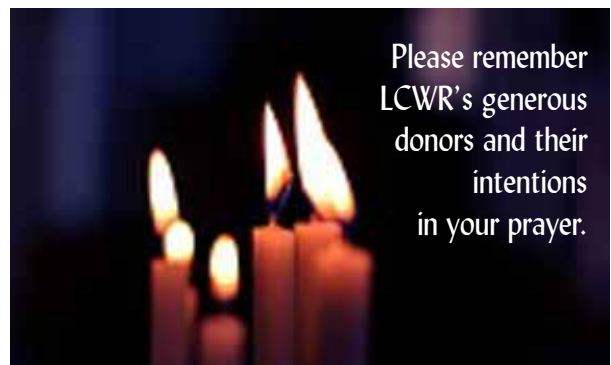
- Letter of thanks to the co-sponsors of the Child Poverty Reduction Act of 2015 (HR 2408) which would establish a national child poverty target with the goal of cutting child poverty in 10 years and eliminating it within 20 years. LCWR (6/10/15).
- Endorsed Representative Chris Van Hollen's CVH Handgun Purchasers Licensing Act 6.4.15. LCWR (6/11/15)
- Letter to members of the House of Representatives from faith-based organizations and religious bodies, urging them to oppose all three trade bills currently being considered in the House: the Customs bill; the Trade Adjustment Assistance bill; and the Trade Promotion Authority bills. LCWR (6/12/15)
- Father's Day letter to President Obama and Secretary Jeh Johnson in support of immigrant fathers whose families are being unjustly torn apart by our broken immigration system. (6/20/15)
- Letter to members of Congress expressing serious concerns about language in the House of Representative's State and Foreign Operations Appropriations bill for FY16 that would further endanger Central American refugees and risk violation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. LCWR (7/8/15)
- Faith-based groups' statement on death of Kathryn Steinle offering sympathy and calling on the community to resist the inclination to allow grief and despair to turn us against one another or to blame an entire community for the actions of one individual. LCWR (7/8/15)
- Letter from faith-based organizations letter to the conference committee expressing deep moral concerns related the "Trade Facilitation and Trade Enforcement Act of 2015" (H.R. 644) and asking them not to accept the amendments to the Trade Promotion Authority (TPA) law that are contemplated in Section 912 of the House version. LCWR (7/9/15).
- Letter urging Congress to act this year to save critical provisions of the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) and refundable Child Tax Credit (CTC) before they expire. LCWR (7/10/15)

- Letter to Attorney General Loretta Lynch expressing concern with the ongoing criminal prosecution by US attorneys of refugees who have fled their countries seeking safety and migrants who wish to reunite with their families in the United States and urging DOJ to end prosecutions for illegal entry and re-entry at the southern border. LCWR (7/13/15)
- Letter from CMSM and LCWR to President Obama asking him to use his influence with the leaders of East Africa to halt actions by neighboring states that support the warring parties in South Sudan. Ann Scholz, SSND (7/13/15)
- Endorsed two bicameral bills—the Summer Meals Act of 2015 (S. 613 / H.R. 1728) and the Stop Child Summer Hunger Act of 2015 (S. 1539, H.R. 2715) have the potential to dramatically reduce hunger during summer vacation. LCWR (7/14/15)

Justice for Immigrants Coalition to Meet in Chicago

Justice for Immigrants, a campaign of the USCCB, is planning a November 11-13 national convening, *Moving Forward: Immigration in 2016 and Beyond*, in Chicago to assess the prospects for immigration reform and organize to advocate for immigration justice. Chicago Archbishop Blase Cupich will deliver the key note address. Planners anticipate conversations around issues such as championing pro-reform policies; messaging and communications; and advocacy for immigrant justice at the local, state, and national levels.

The cost for the conference, which will be held at the Four Points Sheraton Hotel at O'Hare Airport, is \$250 for a shared room; \$350 for a single and includes two nights lodging, all meals, conference materials, reception, and airport transfers. Questions may be directed to Tony Cube acube@usccb.org with questions. Registration: bit.ly/1LrZ6Vg.



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

Pope to Challenge Political Leaders in Washington and New York

Pope Francis's September visit to the United States is expected to be full of encounters that will both bless and challenge.

The pope's official time in Washington will begin Wednesday, September 23 with a meeting with President Obama at the White House. His address to a joint session of Congress is scheduled for 9:20 AM on Thursday, September 24. While no one ever knows exactly what Pope Francis will say, his friend and advisor Cardinal Oscar Rodríguez previewed some themes the pope is likely to raise on Capitol Hill in an April 29 address of his own at Georgetown University. Cardinal Rodríguez expects the pope to call upon US political leaders and citizens alike to welcome immigrants; battle economic inequality and support struggling families; protect the environment and address the dangers of climate change; and fight partisanship and promote dialogue, not ideology.

From Washington the Holy Father will travel to New York City where he will address a high-level plenary meeting of the General Assembly during the UN Summit for the Adoption of the Post-2015 Development Agenda.

UN Secretary-General Ban ki-Moon has said that he is confident that Pope Francis' visit will inspire the international community to redouble its efforts to achieve human dignity for all through ensuring greater social justice, tolerance, and understanding among all of the world's peoples. More information about the summit is available at: tinyurl.com/q9e6wfr.

On Saturday the pope departs for Philadelphia where he will visit the World Meeting of Families and celebrate mass at the conclusion of the family festival.

As is his custom, Pope Francis is scheduled to make a number of visits to places where he undoubtedly hopes to encounter those so close to his heart and the heart of the church. During his time in Washington he will visit St. Patrick in the City and Catholic Charities. In New York he will visit Our Lady Queen of Angels School in East Harlem and participate in a multi-religious service

at the 9/11 memorial. His trip to Philadelphia will include a visit to Curran-Fromhold Correctional Facility.

USCCB has published the pope's schedule at: tinyurl.com/new8unv.



9th Religious Formation Conference

Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

November 5-7, 2015

Keynote Speakers:

Daniel Groody, CSC and Janet Mock, CSJ

Pre-Congress: November 5, 2015

Registration: www.relforcon.org/congress-2015

Advent Retreat

Learning to Live and Pray in Joyful Hope

(Jointly offered by RFC and NRVC)

Addie Lorraine Walker, SSND

December 14-17, 2015

Redemptorist Renewal Center, Tucson, Arizona

Registration: www.relforcon.org/advent-retreat

Webinar on the Use and Impact of Information Technology/Social Media on Formation Ministry and Community Life

Tuesday September 15, 2015, 3:00 pm EDT

Presenter: Susan Pontz, SSCC

IT director and faculty at the Oblate School of Theology
San Antonio, Texas

More information will be posted soon on the RFC website.



NRVC/CARA Study on the Role of Family in Nurturing Vocations to Religious Life and Priesthood

In August 2015, NRVC and the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate (CARA) will release the results of the Study on the Role of Family in Nurturing Vocations to Religious Life and Priesthood. The study includes survey responses from more than 2,500 perpetually professed religious and those in religious formation, and newly ordained priests and seminarians, as well as responses from more than 1,000 of their family members. The results of a random survey of Catholic parents and of two focus groups of family members will also be included. The study is being released prior to Pope Francis' visit to the United States and the World Meeting of Families in September.

NRVC Sponsors Today's Catholic Sisters Symposia

Through the generosity of the GHR Foundation, NRVC and four universities sponsored by women religious communities will host a series of special symposia, Today's Catholic Sisters: Who they are and why we need them. Each symposium will feature the three authors of *New Generations of Catholic Sisters: The Challenge of Diversity* as well as a panel of young and newly professed Catholic sisters who will share their perceptions of their lives and mission today. Registration is not required and the symposia are free and open to the public. The symposia are scheduled for:

- September 12, 2015 at University of the Incarnate Word, San Antonio, Texas
- September 20, 2015 at Dominican University, River Forest, Illinois
- October 10, 2015 at Immaculata University, Immaculata, Pennsylvania
- January 23, 2016, Mount Saint Mary's University, Los Angeles, California.

Additional information is available at nrvc.net, or by calling the NRVC offices at 773-363-5454, or emailing Julie Montague at jmontague@nrvc.net.

Special Program at the NRVC Fall Institute

In commemoration of the Year of Consecrated Life, NRVC is offering a special workshop as part of its 2015 Fall Institute. Vocation Ministry within the Year of Consecrated Life: Trends, Issues, and Best Practices will be held October 23-25, 2015 at the Marillac Center in Leavenworth, Kansas. The workshop will feature three professionals treating the topic of religious life and its implications for vocation ministry with and among the young church today. More information on this workshop and others can be found at nrvc.net.

National Vocation Awareness Week

National Vocation Awareness Week is dedicated to the promotion of vocations to the priesthood, diaconate and consecrated life through prayer and education, and the renewal of prayers and support for those who are considering one of these particular vocations. This year's celebration is November 1-7, 2015.



Follow LCWR on Facebook: www.facebook.com/lcwr.org
 Twitter: [@LCWR_US](https://twitter.com/LCWR_US) and [@LCWRjpic](https://twitter.com/LCWRjpic)



SOLIDARITY with South Sudan

by Joan Mumaw, IHM
US Regional Development Director

Women in South Sudan have a very harsh life right from birth and throughout their lives. Society, which is based largely on a pastoralist way of life, gives girls a ranking that is lower than that of cattle. So, it is hardly surprising that so few girls are sent to school or that families consider education of any value for the girl child. Only 40% of girls are enrolled in primary school and 8% finish grade 8 with most dropping out after grade 4. Even when girls become women, their inferior status continues with a lack of basic health care. Few pregnant women benefit from prenatal care. This has the secondary effect of high mortality rates due to childbirth; at 14% it is the highest rate in the world with only 10% attended while giving birth by a skilled professional.

Yet women in South Sudan are resilient and resolute even in the face of armed conflict and violence. Their strength makes them the pillars of society in South Sudan with a real hope that the future can be better than the present. For this reason, the role of women as caregivers of the family and individuals who can create lasting positive relations in society is seen by many as the way forward. The focus is on women to create strong and lasting bonds that lead to reconciliation, lasting peace, and stability.

Solidarity actively promotes the education of girls and young women with activities that range from learning to farm to be able to contribute to the family income to recognized training as teachers, nurses, and midwives. 50% of the students at the Catholic Health Training Institute are now women, up from 20% in 2010. Workshops and seminars offered to women as well as men provide a concrete way to empower women and a much needed opportunity to form the leaders of the future.

Support of the work of Solidarity with South Sudan is helping to build the capacity of women and men in this war torn country. More information on how to support the work of Solidarity may be obtained by contacting jmumaw.solidarity@gmail.com.

