

Update

A Publication of the
Leadership Conference of Women Religious

December 2020

LCWR Leadership Community Meets to Further the Mission of the Conference and Religious Life

The LCWR board, region chairs, and staff recently engaged in a variety of meetings focused on the work of the conference, religious life, and the church. These meetings included an LCWR national board meeting and then various other virtual gatherings with other religious life and church leaders.

Three members of the board report below on highlights of these events.

LCWR Board Meeting

by Elise Garcia, OP

The 34-member LCWR leadership community -- composed of the LCWR board, region chairs, and national office directors -- spent the lion's share of our time together on November 10, 2020, engaged in a process of unpacking personal and systemic racism and white supremacy. Led by Dr. Kathy Obear, educator and organizational change consultant, the process invited the members of our predominantly white leadership community into deep soul-searching and honest conversation with one another over a nearly four-hour timeframe. Kathy was recommended by Robin DiAngelo, author of *White Fragility*.

During a feedback period following the experience, the group agreed that participating as LCWR's leadership community in this kind of rigorous reckoning process at the personal, group, and institutional levels is a critical element of LCWR's response to *A Spirit Call Within a Call*. Members of the group were invited to discern continuing this intensive engagement, which requires a commitment of three hours per month during the next 10 months. We hope the experience of this core learning



We give thanks for you,
the members, associates, friends, and supporters of the
Leadership Conference of Women Religious.
-- The presidents, board, regional chairs, and staff of LCWR

community among LCWR's three leadership groups will reverberate through the work of the board, regional meetings, and national office as we go forward.

The leadership community discussed the complex, multi-layered, enduring legacy of racism and white supremacy and how it calls for LCWR to implement multi-layered responses during this five-year journey -- a journey that we all know will continue well beyond this timeframe. One of the layers that clearly calls for conference-wide engagement is to probe our church's deeply entwined role in racism and white supremacy. A related conference-wide call is to learn our Black Catholic history and raise up the remarkable Black women and men whose enduring faithfulness has so much to teach us all today. We have been reaching out to Black scholars and others who have dedicated themselves to these areas of study to help us frame a course forward.

(continued on page 3)

From the LCWR Presidency

Be the Light in Our World

Jane Herb, IHM — LCWR President-Elect

With the pandemic, my morning ritual of going to the gym has changed; now I walk in my neighborhood.

Early in the spring, one of the sisters with whom I live offered me her headlamp since my walk was often in darkness. The light it provides ensures that I can maintain my balance when there are cracks or other irregularities in the sidewalk. I have noticed that when I turn my head, I see things that would have been hidden in the darkness. In early spring, I noticed buds on the bushes and trees; in the fall, I saw the ground covered by the beauty of colored leaves and the barren trees. I would have missed all this without the light of my headlamp.

The charisms and missions of our congregations are our headlamps and have guided us from the founding of our communities. They have given light to our paths as we served in our ministries.

Now, we find ourselves at a unique time in history. The global pandemic and systemic racism we face have confronted us with new realities. After some waiting, we know the election results and realize that there is work ahead of us. This is a time to not only have the light focus ahead but to turn our heads and notice what our call is today, considering our new realities.

As we look beyond our path, we realize that the pandemic has awakened our *global consciousness* in a



new way. Somehow, this deadly virus has connected us in new ways to our brothers and sisters around the world. Our five-year commitment to the Spirit's call within a call to address systemic racism and our white privilege invites us to widen our tent, to recognize the call to more *porous boundaries*. The national board, regional chairs, and office ministers are committed to this. Our conversations about chapters and COVID and discerning our emerging future call us to *integrative partnerships* in new ways.

Our *mission in the public square* has never been clearer as we look to our country's future. While the result of the election is important, what is more important is how we shape the next four years. The divisiveness of our country over the past six months cannot continue. We need to turn and look at what is visible in these dark times. It is up to us to sow seeds of compassion, kindness, a listening presence, peace, reverence, and justice for all our brothers and sisters.

You may have an image of what I might look like as I walk in the morning. I may encounter one or two others who see my headlamp and know I am coming! Isn't that the prophetic role of religious today – to light the path ahead, to be a sign of God's presence in our world? During the late spring or early fall, I often saw the hint of the sunrise and knew that the sun would rise on a brand-new day. Let us be that light in our dark world.

Isn't that the prophetic role of religious today
– to light the path ahead,
to be a sign of God's presence in our world?





The LCWR board, regional chairs, and staff in a virtual session on racism led by Kathy Obear

LCWR Leadership Community Meets

(continued from page 1)

Another layer in our journey involves LCWR’s renewed commitment to advocacy addressing the intersectionality of racism, climate, and migration. This urgent justice work remains a priority, inviting new understandings and opportunities to advocate for effective policy change in the coming year.

During our November meetings, the LCWR leadership community took a small but significant step forward into the deep soul work called for by this transformative journey.

Reappointment of the LCWR Executive Director

At its November 11 meeting, the LCWR board unanimously approved the appointment of Carol Zinn, SSJ, to serve another three-year term as LCWR executive director. In making the appointment, LCWR president Elise García, OP shared the view of the presidency that “the conference would be richly blessed to have Carol continue as executive director for another term.” She noted that Carol was widely recognized as an “exceptional leader whose gifts are uniquely suited to the needs of the conference at this extraordinary time.” Carol accepted the three-year reappointment with a whole-hearted “Yes!”

(continued on page 4)



Members of the LCWR national board and staff in virtual meeting on November 11

LCWR Leadership Community Meets

(continued from page 3)

Referencing the service LCWR has provided during the pandemic, the national board also issued a resolution recognizing "the exceptional leadership and service rendered by the national office ministers during this extraordinarily challenging time." The board noted that on behalf of all LCWR members, it extended its "deep gratitude and heartfelt appreciation to executive director Carol Zinn, SSJ; associate directors Christine Beckett, SCN; Mary Hughes, OP; Marie McCarthy, SP; Annmarie Sanders, IHM; and Ann Scholz, SSND; and administrative assistants Janette Cahill Houhoulis, Bianca Louis, and Carol Glidden Minovitz."

In compliance with the mandate of the resolution, its full text is included in this newsletter on page 14.

Joint Executive Committee Meeting of CMSM, CMSWR and LCWR

by Michelle Marie Stachowiak, CSSF

A meeting of the executive committees of the Conference of Major Superiors of Men (CMSM), Council of Major Superiors of Women Religious (CMSWR), and LCWR took place via Zoom on November 12. The atmosphere of camaraderie and open-heartedness was palpable as we shared introductions and prayer. In small groups, we discussed the challenges of nurturing robust conference leadership for the sake of serving religious life and the church. Subsequent conversations yielded a recognition that while there are differences in how we serve, these



Meeting of the joint executive committees

can no longer separate us nor prevent us from offering diverse witness in our church.

Among the questions the group posed for consideration were:

- What does working remotely make available to us that was not available before?
- How do the experiences of 2020 invite us to think/work differently together?

As the meeting concluded, participants voiced a desire to continue developing relationships and deepening conversations.



Participants in the Commission on Religious Life and Ministry meeting

Commission on Religious Life and Ministry

by Anna Marie Reha, SSND

The Commission on Religious Life and Ministry (CRLM), made up of leadership members from CMSM, CMSWR, LCWR, the National Vicars for Religious Conference, and the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), gathered on Zoom November 13 for its annual meeting. The commission is the space where the members meet to engage in true dialogue on the co-essential nature of diocesan life and religious life in the local church.

This year the group dialogued on the topic of evangelization during this pandemic, political unrest, and the demand for racial justice. The exchange and sharing reminded us of the importance of being a witness of unity with all our diversity. In these challenging times, we are called to bring hope to those who are suffering from illness, loss, and racial injustice. Though this has been difficult to do, we find that creativity and technology provides new ways of sharing the Good News.



by Mary Hughes, OP

LCWR is grateful to members who have participated thus far in the recent Discerning Our Emerging Future listening sessions. Three brief updates on the national discernment efforts are below:

Listening Sessions

Listening sessions, focused on communities of differing sizes and realities, are providing rich exchanges among participants. The ideas, thoughts, and concerns members have shared in looking toward the future of religious life have been helpful to the Discernment Initiative Planning Group (DIPG). Members are welcome to register for sessions by emailing [Janette Cahill](#) and indicating the session(s) preferences. It is suggested that each member of a leadership team use personal/separate devices, even if registered for the same meeting, to provide an opportunity for each person to meet in a different breakout session with other participants.

Process for Members of Religious Institutes

All LCWR members received a suggested process to be used to introduce this LCWR initiative to the members

of their own communities. While many expressed appreciation for the process, some have also indicated the inability to engage members in the process and offer feedback by December 15. Leadership teams who wish to use the video process and resources of interest at another time with members should feel free to do so. The DIPG would welcome feedback following the meeting. **Also, anyone who would like an mp4 video file of the assembly presentation may contact Janette.**

Ongoing Discernment Activity

During weekly meetings of the DIPG, time has been scheduled to meet with community leaders who have created or are creating more viable futures. These include communities forming associations, collaborative endeavors, or those making changes that simplify their future. The DIPG members are also beginning to meet with other organizations serving religious life to gain their perspectives and wisdom from the discernment process.



Participants in one of the listening sessions for leaders

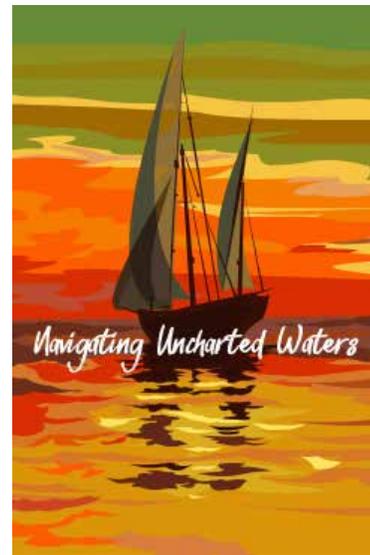
2021 LCWR Annual Membership Renewal Reminder



All LCWR members are encouraged to promptly renew their 2021 membership. Since renewal opened October 2, 2020, many congregational leaders have responded.

Any congregation that needs financial assistance for membership is asked to contact [Christine Beckett, SCN](#) as soon as possible. Because of the generous gifts of LCWR members, the conference has a membership assistance fund that can be used for such requests. The conference encourages any congregation needing assistance for the 2021 membership to take advantage of this opportunity.

Webinar
**Accepting and Embracing
Sexual Diversity**
Presenter: Lynn M. Levo, CSJ
Thursday, February 18, 2021
Time: 1:30 - 3:00 PM ET
Additional information will be in the
January 2021 LCWR newsletter



Orders Begin for 2021 LCWR Reflection Book

The focus of the 2021 LCWR reflection book is **Navigating Uncharted Waters**, which draws from the theme of the 2020 presidential address of Jayne Helmlinger, CSJ. In her address, Jayne invited people to consider what type of vessels they need as they set “sail into deep, uncharted waters that await us.” Sea navigation is an apt metaphor for living in the world today when so little in life is clear, simple, or risk-free. Reference points, landmarks, and navigation tools that may have been helpful resources for traversing life in the past often seem much less effective today as people face complex choices and decisions in life and in leadership.

In this reflection book, 40 LCWR members explore what it means to be in uncharted waters. Their writing will be accompanied by artwork by women religious as well as questions and suggestions for deepening the reader’s own prayer.

The cost of each book is \$6.00, plus shipping and handling. Discounted prices are available for orders larger than 10 copies. Revenue from this LCWR project helps defray the costs of the resources and programs the conference provides its members. [Orders may be placed here](#) and are due by February 16, 2021.

The dates below are tentative due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Members will be kept up to date on plans as they progress.

At this time, all LCWR activities will take place virtually through the end of May 2021.

Upcoming LCWR Dates

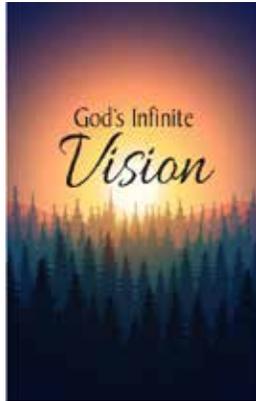
LCWR Webinar:
Accepting and Embracing Sexual Diversity
February 18, 2021
1:30 - 3:00 PM ET

LCWR Assembly
Orlando, Florida
August 10 — 13, 2021

Leading from Within Retreat
Redemptorist Renewal Center | Tucson, Arizona
January 16 — 21, 2022

LCWR New Leaders Workshop
Location to be determined
March 31 - April 3, 2022

LCWR Assembly
St. Louis, Missouri
August 9 — 12, 2022

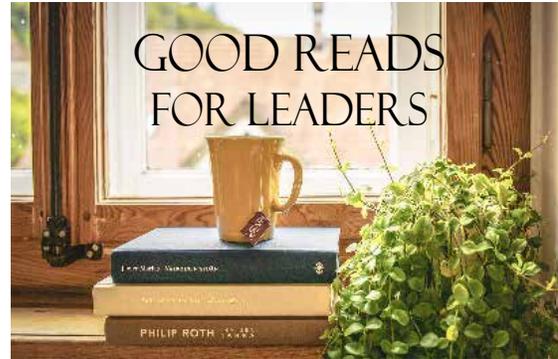


Order Winter 2021 Occasional Papers

The Winter 2021 issue of LCWR's journal, *Occasional Papers*, entitled **God's Infinite Vision**, explores how religious might look upon this time of upheaval in almost every aspect of society as a moment for transformation.

Highlights of this issue are an interview with theologian **Douglas Christie**, author of *The Blue Sapphire of the Mind: Notes for a Contemplative Ecology*, as well as an interview with theologian **Barbara Holmes**, author of *Joy Unspeakable: Contemplative Practices of the Black Church*. In addition, the issue features an array of interesting articles that probe how religious might courageously enter into the invitation the chaos and uncertainty of these times offer. [Orders must be made by December 15.](#)

[Subscriptions for Occasional Papers](#) are also available and make great Christmas gifts for only \$15 per year. Questions about orders may be directed to [Bianca Louis](#).



On the Border, The Way of the Cross

by Evangeline Salazar, OSB

Recommended by [Clare Carr, OSB](#)

The first time I read *On the Border, the Way of the Cross*, I was so touched by Sr. Evangeline's love for these very broken yet resilient men, women, and children. Each of them coming to the border dreaming of a better life. Courageously leaving a home they knew. Venturing into the unknown. Each of them hanging on to their longing for a better life for their children. A home of safety, from all the violence they left behind. They came here and found confusion and fear. Would they be admitted? Would they be turned back? Would they find respite?

One of the most telling stories is that of a father who had given his only shoes to his son, who had worn thin his own shoes from all the walking; the father wore plastic bags.

Or the story of a child who received a piece of bread and was so grateful that Sister Evangeline turned her gaze away because of the tears in her own eyes.

Evangeline's book speaks of the many immigrants that many sisters of differing communities met at the border. Although the stories are captured against the background of the stations of the cross, they are applicable any time of the year for prayer and reflection.



LCWR exercised its voice in the public square through the following actions:

- Letter objecting to the so-called Survivors' Agenda calling for laws that decriminalize the entire sex trade. Ann Scholz, SSND (10/12/20)
- Bipartisan, multi-denominational faith statement calling for free and fair elections. Ann Scholz, SSND (10/19/20)
- Statement by Pax Christi International and colleagues marking the 75th anniversary of the United Nations (UN) asking UN member states to renew their commitment for an enhanced UN system in the post-COVID-19 era. LCWR (10/24/20)
- Open letter from human trafficking organizations expressing their alarm and dismay at the intentional spread of conspiracy theories and disinformation about sex trafficking with the aim of sowing fear and division to influence the 2020 election. LCWR (10/21/20)
- Letter to OmniAirline CEO Jeff Crippen asking him to end his company's cooperation with the deportation of asylum seekers from Cameroon who will face persecution and torture upon their return. LCWR (10/24/20)
- Endorsement of Congressional concurrent resolution, S.Con.Res. 47 and H.Con.Res. 119 recognizing that the current climate crisis is disproportionately affecting the health, economic opportunity, and fundamental rights of children and demanding that the United States develop a national, comprehensive, science-based, and just climate recovery plan to meet necessary emissions reduction targets. LCWR (10/25/20)
- Letter to President Trump and Acting Secretary US Department of Homeland Security, Chad Wolf calling for an immediate 18-month designation of Deferred Enforced Departure (DED) or Temporary Protected Status (TPS) for Cameroon in light of the multiple crises facing the country. LCWR (10/28/20)
- Quote in Interfaith Immigration Coalition press release decrying the presidential determination limiting refugee admissions for FY'21 to 15,000. Carol Zinn, SSJ (10/28/20)
- Interfaith statement expressing profound regret that at the direction of the Trump administration the United States has now formally exited the Paris Agreement on climate change. LCWR (11/1/20)
- Quote for *National Catholic Reporter* election day article. Carol Zinn, SSJ (11/3/20)
- Letter to President-elect Joseph R. Biden Jr., asking him to order the Department of Homeland Security, Department of Defense, and Department of Justice to halt all construction and land acquisition efforts for President Trump's border wall on his first day in office. LCWR (11/3/20)
- Letter to President Trump supporting the clemency for Lisa Montgomery in light of her history of sexual abuse and trafficking victimization. LCWR (11/12/20)
- LCWR statement congratulating President-elect Joe Biden and Vice-President-elect Kamala Harris and pledging to work with them to heal the nation. LCWR (11/10/20)
- Faith leaders statement congratulating the President-elect and Vice-President-elect and calling for healing from the COVID pandemic and the polarized divisions and the reconciliation that comes from working together to build more racially just America. Ann Scholz, SSND (11/11/20)
- Statement urging the Biden-Harris Administration to prioritize global education as a critical element in US foreign policy. LCWR (11/11/20)
- Co-sponsored petition supporting the *For the People Act*, (HR 1) calling for a number of key democratic reforms. LCWR (1/16/20)

Faith Community Outraged by Cuts to US Refugee Program

When it comes to deciding how many refugees can start their lives anew in the United States this fiscal year, the Trump administration is a month late and 80,000 short of the historic average goal of 95,000 people. The administration is also restricting refugee arrivals based on limited categories of persecution and country of origin—meaning even fewer than 15,000 refugees will actually be resettled.

“This is an historic low for the United States and an historic low for the Trump administration,” said Elissa Diaz, policy and advocacy manager with Church World Service and chair of the Interfaith Immigration Coalition.

President Trump’s FY’21 Presidential Determination (PD) on refugee resettlement offers only 15,000 of the world’s refugees a home in the United States, despite the record number of people globally who are in search of safety. Even then, additional and unnecessary restrictions make it very likely that the United States will be able to welcome fewer than 15,000 people. Refugee resettlement organizations and faith leaders have been calling for a presidential determination of at least 95,000 and explanation of the restrictive categories of refugee arrivals.

Refugees are valued members of US communities. They work alongside native-born Americans to protect all, serving on the frontlines of COVID-19 response, and are family members, neighbors, and friends. There are 176,000 refugees working in healthcare; and another 175,000 who are part of the nation’s food supply chain. The PD’s language restricting resettlement to “States and localities that have clearly expressed their willingness to receive refugees” is another example of this administration’s toxic divisiveness.

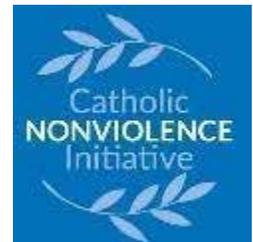
“The Trump administration’s continued dismantling of the US refugee resettlement program, in the face of an unprecedented global pandemic and continuing refugee crisis, is unconscionable. More than 26 million refugees, mostly children, have been forced from their homes. Fleeing persecution, they are quite literally running for their lives,” said Carol Zinn, SSJ, LCWR executive director.

“The United States has a long history of welcoming refugees, and women religious have been blessed to be able to accompany refugee communities,” she continued. “We strongly object to President Trump’s attempts to limit our ability to heed the scriptural command to welcome the stranger and care for the foreigner. The Leadership Conference of Women Religious urges our government to act with compassion for those most in need.”

The administration violated US law by not consulting with Congress on its refugee admissions goal and failing to sign a formal refugee admissions goal before the start of the new fiscal year. It also added xenophobic rhetoric and disqualifications to a program that has bipartisan support.

Three-year Global Conversation on Nonviolence Culminates in Publication

A new book published by the Catholic Nonviolence Initiative project of Pax Christi International is the culmination of a three-year global conversation among church leaders, community organizers, activists, social scientists, and theologians about how the Catholic Church might return to its gospel nonviolence roots and transform the world.



Titled, *Advancing Nonviolence and Just Peace in the Church and the World*, the book shares the experiences of on-the-ground nonviolent interventions, explores the scriptural, theological, and historical foundations of nonviolence, reviews the most current social science on how nonviolence has been effectively employed, and outlines a vision for how the Church might embrace active nonviolence into every aspect of its life. The book may be ordered [here](#).

The New Deal for New Americans Act Introduced in House and Senate

Representative Grace Meng (D-NY) and Senator James Markey (MA) have introduced the New Deal for New Americans Act (HR 4928/S 3470). The bill contains several provisions to assist and help to integrate immigrants and refugees.



The bill reflects a proactive, affirmative vision for the nation in which the federal government commits significant resources to support immigrants and refugees. It would establish a National Office of New Americans in the White House, provide social, economic, and civic support to refugees, and rebuild the capacity and infrastructure of local communities to welcome refugees. Additionally, the bill would set a minimum refugee admissions goal of 110,000 and eliminate roadblocks to citizenship for eligible residents.

It would also address some of the most egregious federal policies and practices introduced by the Trump administration including: limiting US Citizenship and Immigration Services' (USCIS) ability to raise fees without congressional approval; prohibiting the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) from using application fees for immigration enforcement activities; mandating quarterly reporting on adjudication backlogs, delays, and processing times; and amending the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA) to no longer allow for the deportation of an individual deemed a public charge.

Bishop Mario E. Dorsonville, auxiliary bishop of Washington and chair of the USCCB Committee on Migration, recently sent a letter to members of Congress in support of the bill.



UN Launches ActNow Campaign for More Sustainable Lifestyles

In light of worsening climate impacts around the world and strong public concern about the climate crisis, the United Nations is stepping up engagement of its global audiences, calling on everyone everywhere to turn the recovery from COVID-19 into an opportunity to do things right for the future. The UN's ActNow campaign offers an experience for individuals to learn, engage, and take action for a more sustainable future.

The UN's worldwide consultation on its 75th anniversary identified the climate crisis and the destruction of the natural environment as the most overwhelming medium- and long-term concerns for people in all regions. A new mobile app in support of ActNow helps people to directly address those concerns. It allows users to track a set of everyday actions and to see the impact they are making in terms of CO₂, water, and electricity saved. Impact metrics along with educational journeys, challenges, tips, and quizzes provide engaging entry points for users to develop sustainable habits.

Targeting primarily individuals in the twenty major economies (G20), which account for 78 per cent of global greenhouse gas emissions, the ActNow campaign encourages people to take ten everyday actions for a healthier planet, such as driving less, buying local produce, eating more plant-based meals, and making clothes last longer.

While bold action is urgently needed from governments and the private sector, individuals also have a significant role to play. "We want to empower people to make climate action an integral part of their daily life and be part of the solution to the climate crisis," said Melissa Fleming, UN under-secretary-general for Global Communications. "The global problems we face can seem overwhelming, but there are things every one of us can do."

Vatican Plans Multi-Year *Laudato Si'* Campaign

The Dicastery for Integral Human Development is planning to roll out a seven-year plan to help Catholic communities around the world become more sustainable in the spirit of the integral human development of *Laudato Si'*. Organizers hope to mobilize Catholic institutions around the world to make a public commitment to create the “critical mass” needed for the radical societal transformation invoked by Pope Francis.



The plan is to mobilize seven sectors within the global Catholic community: families, dioceses, schools, universities, healthcare centers, business and agriculture, and religious orders to join the journey toward seven goals: responding to the cry of Earth, responding to the cry of the poor, building ecological economies, adopting simple lifestyles, creating ecological education, recovering ecological spirituality, and promoting community action and advocacy.

[Global Catholic Climate Movement](#) will provide support at the international level and the [Catholic Climate Covenant](#) will do the same at the national level. Likewise, each of the sectors will have both an international and national lead. It is expected that LCWR and CMSM will coordinate with [Sowing Hope for the Planet](#), a project of the International Union Superiors General and Union Superiors General (UISG/USG), to help facilitate participation of religious orders who commit to the journey.

The initiative, to be launched on May 24, 2021, will build on what communities are already doing and should be simple and gradual enough to be manageable. Planners are striving to make it inspiring enough to motivate and flexible enough to accommodate different contexts, planning cycles, and priorities.

A webinar introducing the *Laudato Si'* campaign with Sheila Kinsey, OFM, executive co-secretary for the Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation Commission, a project of UISG, will be offered on December 14, 11:00 AM - 12:30 PM ET. Registration information to follow.

December 2 Marks the 40th Anniversary of Martyrdom

LCWR and SHARE El Salvador

encourage people to host a prayer vigil, evening of conversation and story-telling, retreat, or other gathering in their communities, parishes or educational institutions to commemorate the 40th anniversary of the four US churchwomen murdered in 1980 in El Salvador and those who continue to follow in their footsteps. To assist with planning a [Roses in December Toolkit](#) is available.



Organizers hope to commemorate the lives of the Roses in December martyrs by hosting 40 remembrances to mark the 40th anniversary. SHARE El Salvador is collecting brief descriptions of local events. Details may be sent to [Jose Artiga](#) to be counted among the 40.

The Roses in December delegation to El Salvador and Honduras originally scheduled for November 29 - December 7, 2020 will be rescheduled for 2021. A national online celebration is tentatively planned January 16, 6:00 PM-8:00 PM (ET).



Update is an official publication of the Leadership Conference of Women Religious published monthly and distributed to members nationally. All rights reserved © 2020 LCWR

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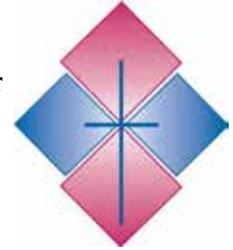


NRVVC, in partnership with Franciscan Media, has produced 19 videos of women and men who entered consecrated life since 2003. These two-minute videos can be shared widely to amplify hope and animate the data in the 2020 NRVC/CARA Study on Recent Vocations to Religious Life. The videos are publicly posted on the [National Religious Vocation Conference YouTube](#) page. The videos feature the following LCWR communities:

- Apostles of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, Sr. Elizabeth Doyle, ASCJ
- Salesian Sisters of St. John Bosco, Sr. Vuong Do, FMA
- Sisters of Charity of Cincinnati, Sr. Tracy Kemme, SC
- Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word, San Antonio, Sr. Christi Sanchez, CCVI
- Sisters of Christian Charity, Sr. Mary Amata Reifsnnyder, SCC
- Sisters of Mercy of the Americas, Sr. Jennifer Wilson, RSM
- Sisters of the Holy Cross, Sr. Comfort Arthur, CSC
- Verbum Dei Missionary Fraternity, Sr. Jeanette Kong, VDMF

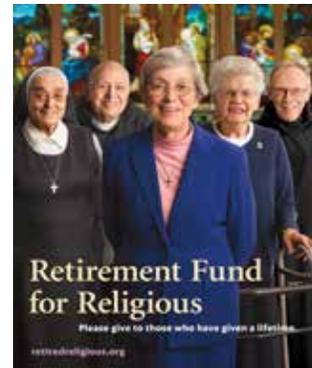
Update from NRRO

The National Religious Retirement Office (NRRO) needs assistance more than ever in raising awareness of the annual collection for retired religious to be held **December 12-13** in most US dioceses. Due to ongoing COVID-19 concerns, many parishioners may be unable to attend mass in person to learn about the appeal. All institutes are asked to support the appeal whether or not the institutes receives financial assistance. Raising awareness of the retirement-funding crisis that affects hundreds of US religious institutes is critical.



[Campaign materials](#) are available at the NRRO [website](#), including a [social media toolkit](#) to make it easy to promote the appeal on [social media platforms](#).

More importantly prayers are requested for faithful donors whose generosity enables NRRO to continue the mission to assist religious institutes with retirement needs.



RFC Extends ForMission Application Deadline

The Religious Formation Conference has extended the deadline to apply to this year's new *ForMission* cohort until **February 2, 2021**. The current health pandemic necessitated that the scheduled program move to a virtual format in May/June 2021. In-person gatherings will resume after the May/June session, if health and safety guidelines allow.

The new *ForMission* cohort will convene for a day-long virtual orientation in March 2021 (date to be confirmed). Additionally, the group will be offered other opportunities to engage with the content and each other prior to the May/June gathering. Further information and an application may be found [here](#). Questions about beginning with the new group this spring may be directed to [Ellen Dauwer, SC, executive director](#).





by Joan Mumaw, IHM
President
jmumaw.solidarity@gmail.com

During this Thanksgiving season, Friends in Solidarity and Solidarity with South Sudan extend their gratitude to you, our donors, and supporters. This pandemic has challenged all of us. The calls on the generosity of congregations are great and yet, many of you have stepped forward to support the people of South Sudan who stand in great need of assistance.

South Sudan has approximately 3000 persons infected with COVID-19 and 60 deaths. It is difficult to really understand what this means as there is little possibility of testing outside of the Juba area. We do know that people living in the UN Protection of Civilian sites have been infected. Most people impacted by the virus are day laborers who have lost their jobs due to the pandemic. Teachers in government schools are desperate for wages which are promised, but not given. Solidarity has been able to assist staff employed at our institutions, as required by the government. Because of your generosity, the families of our staff have food on their tables and are not among the millions threatened with food insecurity bordering on famine. Fr. Jim Greene, executive director, has sent a brief [message](#) expressing gratitude for your support. We are happy to report that the Catholic Health Training Institute re-opened on October 5 and the Teacher Training College is planning to re-open in January 2021. Solidarity with South Sudan annually holds an assembly of the members and those interested in the work of the organization. Due to the pandemic, the assembly will be held online this year for members and other interested persons.

Date: Thursday December 3, 2020
Time: from 8:30 AM - 2:PM (ET)

If you are interested in participating in this event, please complete the [form](#) and email to solidarityssudan@gmail.com to be registered. All documents and the link for the meeting will be sent directly to the participants' email. For further information, please contact [Joan Mumaw](#).

Blessing on you, your members, and your families during this time when we count our blessings and thank God for all that we receive, and can share during this Thanksgiving season.

News from the UN

December 1- World AIDS Day has become one of the most recognized international health days and a key opportunity to raise awareness, commemorate those who have passed, and celebrate victories, such as increased access to treatment and prevention services.



December 10 - International Human Rights Day commemorates the day on which, in 1948, the United Nations General Assembly adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Disrespect for basic human rights continues to be widespread in all parts of the globe. Extremist movements subject people to horrific violence. Messages of intolerance and hatred prey on people's fears. It is time to reaffirm the dignity and rights outlined in the Declaration.

December 18 - International Day of the Migrants marks the adoption of the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and members of their families. There are over 272 million migrants in the world today. One of every six migrants is under the age of 20.

RESOLUTION of the LCWR Board of Directors

WHEREAS, all members of the LCWR community have faced unprecedented challenges in responding to the global coronavirus pandemic that emerged in the United States in February 2020, leading to emergency measures in mid-March;

WHEREAS, the LCWR National Office ministers took immediate and effective action and, while working from home, provided LCWR members with materials for leading in times of crisis, practices for coping, a template for communications, and other helpful guidance;

WHEREAS, the National Office ministers were attentive to the fear, grief, and enormous challenges faced by elected leaders as the pandemic ensued and created weekly reflection processes that invited us to be deeply conscious of the transformation occurring in us and our world as we live through this time;

WHEREAS, the National Office ministers offered multiple opportunities over the weeks for members to engage in virtual sessions of contemplative dialogue, enabling elected leaders to share experiences, deepen reflection, and grow in solidarity with one another;

WHEREAS, the National Office ministers continued to advance the Conference's advocacy and issue agenda, programs, publications, member services, and media outreach, creating virtual formats and reimagining approaches as needed;

WHEREAS, the National Office ministers pivoted dramatically from planning for an in-person Assembly in Dallas to a virtual gathering on a new platform supporting nearly 900 participants with 46 exhibitors and 17 sponsors, and providing multiple opportunities for members to participate in two pre-Assembly reflection processes and online conversations; and

WHEREAS, when all travel was suspended, the National Office ministers continued to engage with church leaders and other conferences of religious in the US and abroad, as well as with other national and international organizations, facilitators and groups engaged in support of religious life.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:

- **THAT** the LCWR Board of Directors hereby recognizes the exceptional leadership and service rendered by the National Office ministers during this extraordinarily challenging time and, on behalf of all LCWR members, extends our deep gratitude and heartfelt appreciation to Executive Director Carol Zinn, SSJ; Associate Directors Christine Beckett, SCN, Mary Hughes, OP, Marie McCarthy, SP, Annmarie Sanders, IHM, and Ann Scholz, SSND; and Administrative Assistants Janette Cahill Houhoulis, Bianca Louis, and Carol Glidden Minovitz.
- **THAT** our gratitude and support will be carried forward into the coming months as the COVID-19 pandemic continues to impact us all, recognizing the enduring perseverance, reimagining, and generosity of spirit of our National Office ministers for the common good of the Conference and our world.
- **THAT** a copy of this Resolution is published in the LCWR Update, attached to the minutes of this Board meeting, and placed in the LCWR archives as part of the official record of the Leadership Conference of Women Religious.

Presented virtually on this 11th day of November, 2020.

Elise D. Garcia, OP, LCWR President; Mary Jane Herb, IHM, LCWR President-Elect; Jayne Helmlinger, CSJ, LCWR Past-President; Marcia Ann Fiutko, FSSJ; Susan Francois, CSJP; Rebecca Ann Gemma, OP; Eileen Haynes, SCL; Vicky Larsen, PBVM; Maureen O'Connor, OSF; Jocelyn Quijano, PBVM; Anna Marie Reha, SSND; Theresa Sandok, OSM; Michelle Stachowiak, CSSF

LCWR Board of Directors