



February 2015

A Message from the LCWR Executive Director

Thank you for your messages of welcome, support and promise of prayer as I begin my ministry with LCWR. It is a joy to be working with the wonderful LCWR team and with you as we live our mission and call. If we can be of service to you please do not hesitate to contact the national office.



I am profoundly grateful to Janet Mock, CSJ for all that she has done for LCWR and the church. The time of orientation with Janet was comprehensive and very helpful. The wisdom she shared is gift and blessing. With all of you I wish Janet peace and some rest as she enters the sacred space of her sabbatical.

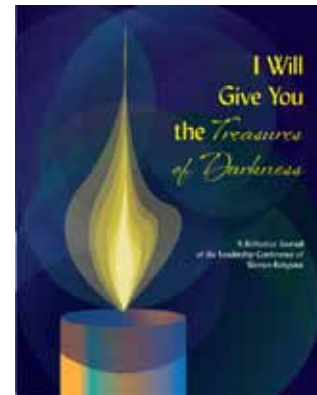
As the charism of religious life continues to unfold, a passage from the letter to the Ephesians speaks to my heart and experience: "God can do infinitely more than we can ask imagine." As we make this journey together I trust that the Spirit's movement within us, among us and around us will draw us deeper into the heart of God and God's people.

United with women religious throughout the world let us pray for peace in the hearts of all people and carry hope for a world of compassion.

Devotedly,

Joan Marie Steadman, CSC
LCWR Executive Director

LCWR Reflection Book



LCWR presents a new book, *I Will Give You the Treasures of Darkness*, a reflective resource for the spiritual journey. Based on the text of Isaiah 45:3, "I will give you the treasures of darkness and riches hidden in secret places," the book focuses on God's work in the midst of the mystery of darkness.

Approximately 40 LCWR members share in short reflections what they have learned from their own life experiences about dwelling with darkness, how they encounter and relate to God in darkness, and what sustains them as they journey through dark times. The images and stories are shared with the hope that they will assist readers to plumb the richness of the dark experiences in their own lives and find the wisdom there that God may be inviting them to discover. Artwork by Catholic sisters will accompany the reflections, as well as questions and suggestions for deepening the reader's own prayer.

LCWR will print only the amount of copies that are pre-ordered. Special rates are available for ordering in bulk.

Orders may be placed online at lwr.org/publications/i-will-give-you-treasures-darkness and must be received with payment by February 27, 2015. The books will be mailed by April.

From the LCWR Presidency

Incline Our Hearts, O God

by Carol Zinn, SSJ — LCWR Past President

For the shortest month on the western calendar, February 2015 invites a fullness that defies its brevity.

Whether we consider the international, national, or ecclesial remembrances, February provides opportunities for an examination of heart, conscience, and consciousness.

The global community designates a week of World Interfaith Harmony (2/2-8); World Cancer Awareness Day (2/4); World Day of Zero Tolerance to Female Genital Mutilation (2/6); World Radio Day (2/13); World Day of Social Justice (2/20); and International Mother Language Day (2/21). How inclined are our hearts to the need for and purpose of these days? Can we participate in the global community's recognition of these themes in some way so as to have our hearts go to the periphery where people are impacted by these realities?

The international and national ecclesial community marks February with the World Day of Consecrated Life (2/2—the Feast of the Presentation); Catholic Social Ministry gathering in Washington, DC (2/7-10); The Day of Open House with Religious (2/8); the Feasts of Saint Agatha, Saint Paul Miki and Companions and Saint Scholastica (2/5,6,10); and Ash Wednesday (2/18). How inclined are our hearts to the richness of these memorials and events that mark centuries of fidelity to the Gospel in service of God's People and the life of the world?

And we hold Valentine's Day (2/14) as a day to reflect on the power of love in our lives and the capacity in our hearts to offer an expansive love to God, all our sisters



During this short
but very full month,
may our hearts be so inclined to
love with
God's own heart,
as Jesus did.

and brothers, near and far, and all living beings with whom we share the community of life.

The scriptures of these February days speak clearly to the heart of the matter. We'll hear the psalmist pray, "harden not your hearts," and "God heals the brokenhearted." We'll hear the words spoken to Mary, "the thoughts of many hearts will be revealed." And when we begin Lent, we'll hear, "return to Me with your whole heart."

With the Year of Consecrated Life barely begun, perhaps the letter from Pope Francis to consecrated persons might find a place in our hearts. Francis challenges us, "The question we have to ask ourselves during this Year is if and how we are open to being challenged by the Gospel; whether the Gospel is truly the "manual" for our daily lives and the decisions we are called to make. The Gospel is demanding; it demands to be lived radically and sincerely... Jesus calls us to practice it, put his words into effect in our lives... Is Jesus really our first and only love, as we promised he would be when we professed our

vows? Only if he is, will we be empowered to love, in truth and mercy, every person who crosses our path. For we will have learned from Jesus the meaning and practice of love. We will be able to love because we have his heart." (#2, Paragraphs 3,4)

During this short but very full month, may our hearts be so inclined to love with God's own heart, as Jesus did.

LCWR Leading from Within Retreat



Twenty-seven LCWR members gathered at the Bethany Retreat Center in Lutz, Florida for the LCWR Leading from Within Retreat from January 11-16. Through prayer, ritual, presentations, quiet time, and optional small group sharing, the participants reflected on themes pertinent to contemporary religious life leadership.



Next Leading
from Within
Retreat
January 17-22,
2016
Redemptorist
Retreat Center
Tucson, Arizona



Plans Set for National Catholic Sisters Week

National Catholic Sisters Week will be celebrated from March 8 – 14, 2015. Resources and creative ideas for commemorating the week are available at www.nationalcatholicsistersweek.org. The following are some of the ways in which women religious can be involved in efforts to promote the week.

- 1. NCSW Weekend.** LCWR members are invited to send a sister/female college student (18 – 26 years of age) pair to St. Paul from March 6-8, 2015. Communities/colleges are asked to send one team per location and pay for their travel costs. Other expenses are covered. Information on the event is on the website under Discern Conference.
- 2. Local Events.** A toolkit is provided in the “Get Involved” section of the website to help for the planning of local events.
- 3. Social Media.** The NCSW staff is ready to promote local events on their social media platforms.
- 4. #NCSWeek Campaign.** The NCSW staff will host a virtual #NCSWeek campaign on Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram.
- 5. Sisters of Influence Boards.** The NCSW staff seeks photos (300 dpi) and short blurbs describing the achievements of individual sisters.
- 6. #1000Blessings.** Previously submitted blessings can be viewed at www.pinterest.com/sisterstory. New submissions are being accepted.
- 7. Sister Stories.** NCSW is promoting compelling sister stories in the following archdioceses: Los Angeles, New York, Chicago, Washington, D.C., St. Louis, Atlanta, Seattle, San Antonio, and Miami and the dioceses of Palm Beach, Las Vegas, and Bridgeport. Communities with sisters in these areas are asked to contact Carolyn Sullivan at csullivan@webershandwick.com with story ideas. Communities are asked to share information on any media coverage, ads, or municipality proclamations

Questions about NCSW may be directed to Mary Soher, OP and Molly Hazelton, co-executive directors of the Hilton Sisters Project at 651-690-6925 or contact@nationalcatholicsistersweek.org

Year of Consecrated Life



The US Catholic Conference of Bishops has invited the Council of Major Superiors of Women Religious (CMSWR), the Conference of Major Superiors of Men (CMSM), and LCWR to participate in a joint effort to provide educational and inspirational materials about religious life for posting on the USCCB’s various social media platforms.

For the duration of the Year of Consecrated Life, LCWR is responsible for making available materials for posting to the USCCB’s Facebook page, as well as its Instagram and Twitter accounts. The Communicators for Women Religious organization is assisting LCWR in collecting, selecting, and editing submissions for this project.

Members are encouraged to follow the postings at:

- USCCB Facebook: www.facebook.com/usccb
- Twitter: [#YCL15](https://twitter.com/#YCL15) [#YCL2015](https://twitter.com/#YCL2015)
- Instagram: [instagram.com/usccb](https://www.instagram.com/usccb)

LCWR Board to Meet in February

All LCWR members are asked to remember the LCWR national board and staff as they meet from February 15 to 19 at Bethany Retreat Center in Lutz, Florida. Information on the board’s proceedings will be shared in the March 2015 issue of *Update*.

The LCWR Resource Sharing Forum

LCWR reminds its members and associates of its LCWR Resource Sharing Forum. The forum is a listserv that is open only to LCWR members and associates that provides a means for communicating with one another online with a question or to share information.

What are the benefits of participating?

Members can easily ask other members for help any time they have a question or are looking for information, resources, speakers, facilitators, translators, policies, or good ideas. Members report that they have received very helpful information on questions they have asked.

Members can participate in polls initiated by the national office, asking for input on LCWR issues. Forum participants can also access the archives of past messages.

How do I sign up for the LCWR Forum?

Information on signing up for the LCWR Forum is available on the [LCWR website](#) in the “Members” section, which is password-protected. Any member or associate who does not have the username and password to access this part of the site may obtain this information from Carol Glidden at cglidden@lcwr.org. Carol can also guide members through the process of signing up for the forum.

What are some of the recent questions asked on the LCWR Forum?

Some of the subjects of recent postings include:

- Processing the apostolic visitation report
- Setting up a foundation
- Contemplative leadership discernment and selection processes
- Treatment centers for religious
- Policies for use of motherhouse chapels
- Charity care policies for healthcare facilities
- Bilingual speakers on religious life
- Canon lawyers who deal with property issues
- Restructuring buildings for assisted living
- Aging, wellness philosophy
- New sponsorship models
- Psychological testing for candidates

Upcoming LCWR Dates

Imagining Justice

Presentation Center
Los Gatos, California
March 2 — 5, 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

Leading from Within Retreat

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

LCWR Assembly

Atlanta, Georgia
August 9—13, 2016



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- Letter to President Obama opposing the incarceration of families and the opening of the new family detention facility in Dilley, Texas. LCWR (12/18/14)
- Endorsement of the Global Catholic Climate Movement; an international coalition of individuals and organizations united by faith and working to combat climate change and care for God’s creation. LCWR (1/12/15)
- Letter to members of the House of Representatives urging them to oppose any amendment to HR 240, the Fiscal Year 2015 Homeland Security Appropriations bill, that would repeal important immigration programs, such as the Deferred Action for Parental Accountability (DAPA) and the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA), or attempt to reinstate the dysfunctional Secure Communities program. LCWR (1/13/15)
- Letter to the Deputy Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security asking for child welfare professionals who are licensed social workers to be placed at US Customs and Border Protection (CBP) stations for the purposes of screening children and overseeing the humanitarian and child protection needs of children while in CBP custody. LCWR (1/14/15)

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.

Catholic Campaign for Human Development Seeks Nominations of Young Adults Fighting Poverty

USCCB’s Catholic Campaign for Human Development (CCHD) is seeking nominations for the 2015 Cardinal Bernardin New Leadership Award. The annual award honors Catholics between the ages 18-40 who are actively engaged in work to break the cycle of poverty in the United States. The campaign is seeking nominees who are leading efforts to address problems in their local communities, working with social justice organizations, or championing social concerns efforts on college campuses. The winner will receive \$1,000 at a reception at the June meeting of the US Catholic bishops.

The deadline for nominations is March 15, 2015. Additional information is available at: tinyurl.com/8aln98u and from Genevieve Mougey gmougey@usccb.org.

Catholic Health Association Sponsors Day of Prayer for the Sick

At 1:00 PM on February 11, the feast of Our Lady of Lourdes and the International



Day of the Sick, thousands of people from across the Catholic health care ministry and beyond will pause for one powerful minute of prayer for all who are sick or injured and those who care for them.

The moment of prayer is the culmination of CHA’s “100 Days of Prayer” campaign which invited people from across the United States to raise their voices in prayer and kick off of their centennial observance. Prayers and resources are available at: www.chausa.org/wdos/default.html.

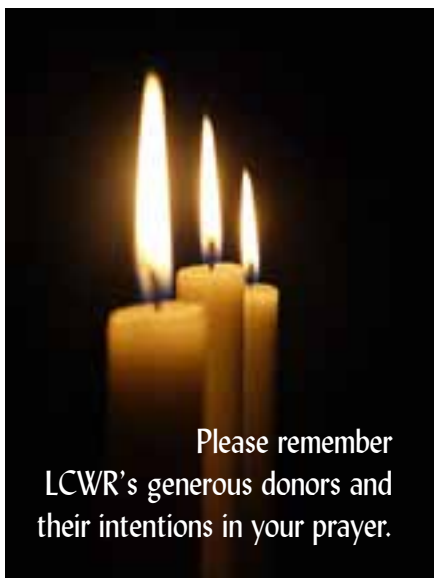
Vatican Announces International Day of Prayer and Awareness against Human Trafficking

The Vatican has announced that the Pontifical Council for Migrants has designated February 8 the International Day of Prayer and Awareness against Human Trafficking. The day of prayer and awareness-raising will be celebrated in all dioceses and parishes around the world on the feast of Josephine Bakhita, a freed Sudanese slave who became a Canossian nun and was declared a saint in 2000.



The Vatican stated that the primary objective of the International Day is to create greater awareness about human trafficking and to reflect on the overall situation of violence and injustice that affects so many people, and to attempt to provide solutions to counter this modern form of slavery.

Pope Francis' 2015 World Peace Day message, "No Longer Slaves, but Brothers and Sisters" can be found at: tinyurl.com/mafou7y.



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

Conference Focuses on Mass Incarceration and Systems of Exploitation

More than 1,000 Christian advocates are expected to gather April 17-20 for the annual Ecumenical Advocacy Days (EAD) conference entitled, Breaking the Chains: Mass Incarceration and Systems of Exploitation.



Those gathered will discuss solutions to national and worldwide issues of imprisonment, exploitation, and forced labor. A world that incarcerates so many and allows some to profit from the exploitation of slave, trafficked, and forced labor remains far from the "beloved community" of God's people. Registration information may be found at: advocacydays.org/2015-breaking-the-chains.



Justice for Immigrants to Publish Lenten Toolkit

Justice for Immigrants (JFI) is preparing a Lenten toolkit which will be available in early February. JFI and its member organizations will invite people of faith to make the concerns of immigrant families a focus of their prayer, sacrifice, and action during Lent 2015.

The Lenten toolkit will feature themes for Ash Wednesday, each of the six weeks of Lent, and the Easter celebration. It will include weekly readings, prayers, and suggested actions designed to help the faithful reflect on the biblical call to welcome the stranger and act to make immigrant justice a reality.

Global Catholic Climate Movement Launches as Pope Francis Visits the Philippines

Catholic organizations and leaders throughout the world have announced their collaboration as a movement working toward a sustainable climate future. The movement of laity and clergy, theologians, scientists, and activists released their mission statement which supports Catholic environmental teachings and calls for prayer and action among the world's Catholic population, making it the first time that such a global movement of Catholics gathers to work together on climate issues. Cardinal Tagle, Archbishop of Manila, presented the statement to Pope Francis during his January trip to the Philippines.

According to Dr. Pablo Canziani, a climate scientist from Argentina participating in the Catholic movement, "Conversations about the climate crisis have historically been more about intellectual arguments than about the profound spiritual and moral implications of our failure to care for God's creation." GCCM hopes that will change.

"The basis of our concerns is scriptural and founded on the tradition of the church. From Genesis through Revelation, Catholics accept as a revealed truth that creation and its order is a good that we must embrace and steward. This has been echoed and championed by church leaders for two millennia," said Dr. Canziani.

Patrick Carolan, executive director of the Franciscan Action Network, who is also a member of the group, explained the statement further saying: "... the statement calls for Catholics to promote the teachings of the church, appreciate their moral responsibility to act, and raise awareness about climate change and its impacts, particularly on the poor and future generations."

The GCCM launch coincided with the trip of Pope Francis to the Philippines where he met survivors of super typhoon Haiyan, considered to be related to climate change, and it took place at a time when the Catholic community is expecting the Holy Father's upcoming encyclical about ecology.

Additional information can be found at www.Catholic-ClimateMovement.global.

News from the UN

February 6: International Day of Zero Tolerance for FGM

This is a day set aside by the United Nations to raise awareness about the need to end female genital mutilation (FGM), the harmful practice recognized internationally as a violation of the human rights of girls and women. FGM reflects deep-rooted inequality between the sexes. It constitutes an extreme form of discrimination against women and is nearly always carried out on minors. While the practice has persisted for more than 1,000 years, programmatic evidence suggests that FGM can be ended in one generation. More information can be found at tinyurl.com/lar9bqu.



February 20: World Day of Social Justice

The UN World Day of Social Justice is observed to highlight the power of global solidarity to advance opportunity for all. In his 2014 message Secretary General Ban Ki-moon reminded world leaders and global citizens, "The gap between the poorest and the wealthiest around the world is wide and growing. . . . We must do more to empower individuals through decent work, support people through social protection, and ensure the voices of the poor and marginalized are heard." More information is available at tinyurl.com/9dn8dsn.



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Twitter: @LCWR_US
@LCWRjpic



The **ForMission** program for the class of 2017 starts June 2-10, 2015 at Catholic Theological Union, Chicago, Illinois. The two year program offers formation for current and future formators and leadership liaisons to formation. An application packet may be obtained from the Religious Formation Conference by calling 202-827-4562. More information is available at www.relforcon.org/programs/formission.

The **Life Commitment** program is offered for people preparing for final profession from July 14-22, 2015 at Immaculata Retreat House at Willimantic, Connecticut. Information and the application materials are available at www.relforcon.org/programs/life-commitment.

Also at www.relforcon.org is information on special RFC programming in Houston, Texas; Dubuque, Iowa; Louisville, Kentucky; and Boston, Massachusetts during this Year of Consecrated Life.



In Special Commemoration of the Year of Consecrated Life
Vocation Ministry Within the Year of Consecrated Life:
Trends, Issues and Best Practices
 October 23-25, 2015

NRVC is offering this seminal workshop which will feature three professionals treating the topic of religious life and its implications for vocation ministry among the young church today.

Approaching the topic from their own expertise, each presenter will offer the trends, issues, best practices, and skills needed for credible and proficient vocation ministry, in three individual day-long workshops. The central focus of this comprehensive three-day workshop is for participants to echo the words of Pope Francis: to “look to the past with gratitude...live the present with

passion...(and) embrace the future with hope” as religious “Wake up the World” while celebrating the Year of Consecrated Life. This workshop is intended for vocation ministers, formation teams, religious leadership, and others interested or involved in vocation ministry.

Day 1 - A Call to Encounter/Encuentro: Invitations and Implications for Religious Life Today

Presenter: Sister Maria Cimperman, RSCJ

In an age of many meetings about varied topics, the deeper call and invitation of religious life today is to encounter / *encuentro*. Encounters hold the potential of calling us forth more deeply and fully in God, with one another, and in creation. This day will consider five dimensions of encounter in order to see what invitations they offer and where *encuentros* will lead religious in the world today. The exploration of encounter will be through the multi-faceted lenses of scripture and tradition, religious (life) history, the arts, and the participants’ own experience.

Day 2 - Vocation Ministry through the Lens of Transformation

Presenter: Ted Dunn, PhD

Religious life is at a graced crossroads, moving through a period of profound transformation, and communities are discerning God’s call to new life. Despite this growing recognition, and for many a growing crisis, many communities will fail to engage in the hard work of transformation and deep change. Vocation efforts are at the center of the demographic crisis among religious congregations. This workshop will address how vocation efforts can become a catalyst for transformation using new paradigms for vowed communal life.

Day 3 - Creating a Religious Life for the 21st Century

Presenter: Brother Sean D. Sammon, FMS

The time has come to begin rebuilding religious life for a new age. This presentation will help participants to understand better religious life’s pilgrimage during the past 50 years, to appreciate where this way of life stands today, and to look ahead to see what the future might hold. While monastic, mendicant, and apostolic expressions of consecrated life cannot be renewed in the same way, all three forms face some common challenges today: clarifying identity, reclaiming charism, reading the signs of this age, and understanding the real changes that are taking place in the world and church.



SOLIDARITY with South Sudan

By Joan Mumaw, IHM

A country without an education...

A new year has begun! Solidarity with South Sudan offers best wishes for this new year to all who have supported our efforts during this past year. It is amazing what the "widow's mite" can do when there is collaboration and generosity!

As the new year breaks into our lives, students are arriving at the Solidarity Teacher Training Institute at Yambio and the Catholic Health Training Institute (CHTI) at Wau. They arrive in Yambio just as ground is being broken for additional staff and dormitory rooms necessitated by the increase in students coming from areas ravaged by civil unrest during this past year. The newly built Solidarity Teachers Training College at Malakal was virtually destroyed in the early part of last year and, as this is still an area of insecurity, Solidarity has chosen to expand the college at Yambio. It is now a national college accepting students from throughout the country. Solidarity will accommodate 120 teachers for in-service in January and February and it is anticipated that there will be 120 students taking advantage of the two-year pre-service program which runs from March to November.

Solidarity staff often ask themselves, "Are we focusing our efforts on the greatest need facing the people of South Sudan? Is training health care providers and teachers what we should be doing? Some days it is difficult to focus on education when there are so many other needs – such as refugees and the homeless. Yet, we believe that education is the key to the future development of South Sudan. Whether or not those we educate

become nurses or teachers, they will be leaders in their communities precisely because they are educated. Alvar Sánchez, SJ of the Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS) Maban, South Sudan had this to say in a recent article, "A country without education is like a house without a foundation, and the foundation of South Sudan is crumbling. You can't build a future for a new nation unless you prioritize education; sadly South Sudan never did so. The country is on the brink of disaster, and one of main reasons is the lack of access to education."

He quotes Adolfo Nicholas, SJ, superior general, "Education is a priority, an emergency, something that should not be suspended or postponed ... Emergencies – wars or even natural disasters – do not go away overnight; they affect people for years and whole generations miss out on an education... Ignorance breeds violence, which in turn becomes a vicious circle." The article also highlights the importance of educating girls. Only 6% of girls finish primary school in South Sudan. Solidarity espouses affirmative action intending to change this situation. CHTI is to be congratulated at achieving gender balance in its student population in 2015.

Solidarity staff are affirmed in their choice to focus on education. It is what religious have done for centuries and it is what has made the United States a strong nation. It is through collaboration and sharing of resources, both personnel and finances, as well as the energy of the Spirit which comes from prayer, that Solidarity is able to build the capacity of South Sudanese to be leaders for the next generation.

The full article published by Jesuit Refugee Services is available at en.jrs.net/news_detail?TN=NEWS-20150113033757.

Additional information on Solidarity may be found at www.solidarityssudan.org or by contacting jmumaw.solidarity@gmail.com.