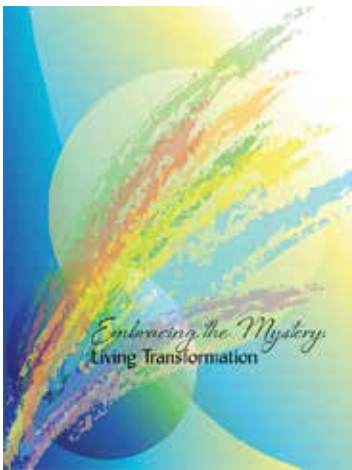




March 2016

2016 LCWR Assembly
Embracing the Mystery: Living Transformation
August 9 – 12 -- Atlanta, Georgia

This year's LCWR assembly will be uniquely structured to assist members to reframe their perspectives and conversations on this moment in religious life away from diminishment and toward transformation. Designed to assist members to view the changes occurring in religious life – with all of their pain and challenge – as significant opportunities for growth, the assembly promises to offer stimulating new ideas for embracing the call to religious at this time. The assembly aims to provide LCWR members with skills for learning how to move through this transformative time that will be useful for themselves and the members of their institutes, as well as skills for deepening their capacities for contemplative engagement in real and concrete ways.



Logo by Donna Korba, IHM

Keynoters for this assembly will be organizational consultant and author **Dr. Margaret Wheatley** and 2012 LCWR president **Pat Farrell, OSF**.

LCWR also engaged the services of **Liz Sweeney, SSJ** who works as a facilitator of consciousness transformation groups. Liz will serve as a listener/reflector/guide throughout the assembly. Participants will have several opportunities to process the assembly proceedings through contemplative dialogue, as well as their own prayer and contemplation.

The assembly will also include a presentation and prayer experience on racism and US religious congregations. Participants may wish to consider adding time on to their stay in Atlanta to visit some of the historic sites that commemorate the struggle endured and achievements gained in the quest to obtain civil rights for all.

Registration information for this assembly will be sent electronically to all LCWR members and associates. The registration process will take place online.



Margaret Wheatley



Pat Farrell, OSF



Liz Sweeney, SSJ

From the LCWR Presidency

A Call for *Pentimenti*

by Mary Pellegrino, CSJ — LCWR President-Elect

It's a fixture in many of our principle houses: a painting of two peasant farmers pausing from their work in a field, hands clasped in front of them, heads bowed, eyes cast downward toward a basket of potatoes. In 1859 French artist Jean-Francois Millet titled the scene "L'Angelus" and, for many, it's become a beloved image of simple faith and gratitude.

Underneath the surface, however, can be found another image that drastically alters the painting's tone, mood and meaning. X-rays often used to authenticate or restore old paintings, reveal that the basket of potatoes was originally a small coffin. This favorite scene of humble faith was originally a funeral scene, depicting what was surely the heart-rending burial of the peasant couple's infant child. What a difference a brush stroke – or several – can make.

At some point Millet changed his mind about what he wanted or hoped for in this particular painting. In a gesture not uncommon to artists, he painted over the original image and refashioned the coffin into a basket of food. The "do-over" is an instance of "pentimento," from the Italian "repentance" because at some point in the creative process the artist "repents" of an earlier choice.

At the start of the Lenten season I wonder if the repentance that the world so desperately needs from each of us and all of us together can really be that simple. Can it just be about making different choices in the ongoing creation that is our lives and our world? Can our acts of repentance – both personal and communal – simply be the new and different choices inspired in us by the call of the Creator and the cry of creation?



As women religious
we are uniquely poised
to contribute
to this next
transformation.

In this Year of Mercy we're reminded that repentance really is that simple. How frequently in the Gospels do we hear Jesus say, "Go, and sin no more," or some variation on that merciful command? Go, wash in the pool. Pick up your mat and walk. Unbind him and let him go free. Essentially, he's saying, "This way of life of yours that leads to death – go, do something different. Repent. Make a different choice."

Each day choices for hatred and violence, ignorance and fear vie for our collective soul. They cry out for acts of healing and repentance equal in magnitude to the harm and destruction they signal. While personal acts of repentance are essential; they seem to no longer be enough in the face of the scale of evil experienced today. Creation cries out for collective *pentimenti* - groups of people making different choices together, making communal acts of courage, forgiveness, mercy and justice in response to all that threatens and diminishes the sacredness of creation.

It's been posited that the next great evolutionary transformation will be communal not individual. As women religious we are uniquely poised to contribute to this next transformation. We are practiced in making communal choices for good. We are experienced in placing our personal preferences in service to a mission far greater and more expansive than any personal mission, no matter how noble, can be. May our collective Lenten offering be the different choices we make together that, like Millet's brush strokes, bring life and nourishment out of death.

27 Members Participate in LCWR Retreat

During the third week of January, 27 leaders from around the country gathered at the Redemptorist Renewal Center in Tucson for the annual Leading From Within Retreat. Each day was framed by prayer, ritual, and input in the morning, and a gathering of the gifts of the day with ritual and sharing after the evening meal.

The flow of the retreat included prayer and reflection on accessing one's deep inner wisdom, claiming the deep desires within oneself, the path of transformation, saying yes to God's activity, and living in joyful hope. The retreat staff -- Janet Mock, CSJ; Marie McCarthy, SP; and Annmarie Sanders, IHM -- used scripture, poetry, story and music to weave together these themes for each day. Warm, sunny days and cool nights along with the desert landscape and an environment of silence created a rich container for the participants.

Participants expressed deep appreciation for all the elements of the retreat and returned home feeling refreshed and renewed for the journey ahead.



Membership in LCWR Made Possible Through Donations

LCWR expresses its sincere gratitude to the congregations that sent donations to assist members who requested financial support for membership in the conference. Members who received support have noted their deep appreciation and promise their prayers for the donors. Members are encouraged to request assistance with membership dues by contacting Grace Hartzog, SC at ghartzog@lcwr.org.



University Honors Sharon Holland, IHM and Carol Keehan, DC

During its January commencement convocation, Saint Mary's University of Minnesota recognized LCWR past president Sharon Holland, IHM, and LCWR associate Carol Keehan, DC, with honorary doctor of humanities degrees.

The university's Schools of Graduate and Professional Programs, at the university's Twin Cities campus in Minneapolis, cited Sharon's "half-century of service to the Church and the human family" and the canon lawyer's "broad and deep understanding of Church life and religious life."

Sharon, the vice president of the Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary (Monroe, Michigan), served at the Vatican from 1988 to 2009, where she was one of the highest-ranking women in the Holy See, serving in the Congregation for Religious and Secular Institutes and with the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life, as office head for ordinary governance.

Carol, CHA president and chief executive officer, received recognition for being a "tireless advocate for the poor, in particular their right to timely, affordable, professional health care treatment." The university also said Carol has "worked diligently for more than four decades to help eradicate poverty, envision a more just economy, and empower all persons to live in dignity as children of God."

New Grant Opportunity Available for Aging Religious

In honor of its 30th anniversary, Support Our Aging Religious (SOAR!) is offering a new grant opportunity for a sister, brother, or religious priest who, with some additional assistance, can continue to be a witness of Christ to the people he or she serves. A Founders' Grant can provide the extra help needed for an aging religious to stay active in ministry by funding, for example, adaptive equipment or furniture. **Deadline for applications is March 15.** More information is available at soar-usa.org/grants/founders-grants.

Registration Still Open for the LCWR New Leaders Workshop -- April 2016

New and/or returning leaders are encouraged to attend the LCWR New Leaders Workshop to be held from April 7 to 10, 2016 at Our Lady of the Lake University Conference Center in Mundelein, Illinois. The workshop will focus on the skills and dispositions needed to grow as spiritually-grounded, transformational leaders. Through the use of input, role play, and contemplative engagement, participants will examine some of the real-life situations and challenges facing leaders today.

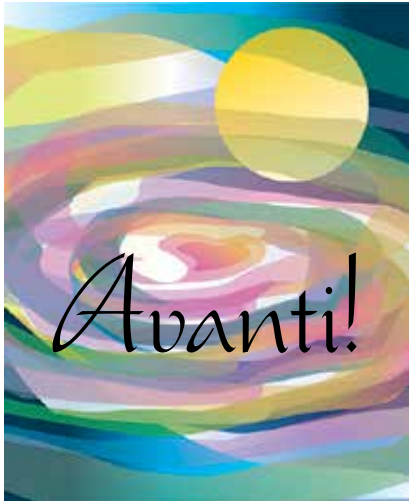
Resource persons for this workshop will be Nancy Schreck, OSF; Lynn M. Levo, CSJ; Sharon Euart, RSM; and Donna Miller; as well as LCWR staff members Joan Marie Steadman, CSC; Grace Hartzog, SC; Mary Hughes, OP; Marie McCarthy, SP; Annmarie Sanders, IHM; and Ann Scholz, SSND.

The workshop is structured to facilitate interaction among participants in mixed table groupings, as leadership teams, and with resource persons. In addition, the resource persons will be available throughout the days of the workshop for informal conversation.

All persons registering for the workshop will receive a link to a set of online resources. These resources include in-depth presentations by Lynn M. Levo, CSJ; Janice Bader, CPPS; Lynn Jarrell, OSU; and Simone Campbell, SSS. The presentations focus on many of the issues elected leaders face on a regular basis. In addition to the recordings there are some written resources and information on organizations that provide services for elected leaders. These resources are intended to provide a context for participants prior to the workshop and also assist with ongoing leadership development when participants return home.

New leaders, returning leaders, and new leadership teams are strongly encouraged to take advantage of this opportunity. More information and a registration form can be found at: lcwr.org/calendar/new-leader-workshop-0.

LCWR Offers *Avanti!*, a New Reflection Journal Orders Due by March 10



LCWR presents a new book, *Avanti!*, a collection of reflections written by 30 LCWR members about responding to God who comes from the future and invites all to come forward.

Artwork by Catholic sisters, as well as questions and suggestions for deepening the readers's own prayer, accompany the reflections.

The cost of each book is \$6.00, plus shipping and handling. Discounted prices are available for orders larger than 10 copies.

Orders may be placed online at lcwr.org/item/daily-reflection-book. Although LCWR members, associates, and subscribers will receive their own copies of the book, many leaders purchase additional copies for their members, associates, staffs, boards, benefactors, and friends. Some also sell the books in their motherhouse and retreat center gift shops.

LCWR will print only the amount of copies that are pre-ordered. Orders must be received with payment by **March 10, 2016**. Revenue from this LCWR project helps defray the costs of the resources and programs the conference provides its members.

Questions about orders may be directed to LCWR's administrative assistant, Carol Glidden, at cglidden@lcwr.org or at 301-588-4955.

Conference on Nonviolence Scheduled for April in Rome

In recognition of the Year of Mercy declared by Pope Francis, a Catholic conference on nonviolence and just peace co-sponsored by the Vatican's Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace and Pax



Christi International will take place in Rome April 11-13 with participants from around the world representing a broad spectrum of church experiences in peacebuilding and creative nonviolence in the face of violence and war. The gathering intends to contribute to renewed Catholic teaching and practice on war and peace, violence, and nonviolence.

Catholic peace practitioners, theologians, members of religious congregations, and non-governmental organizations will draw on lived experience of responding nonviolently to war and conflict, challenge the centrality of the just war tradition, and move to affirm proactive, nonviolent approaches to peacemaking at all levels.

The invitation-only gathering, will call for more developed Scripture-based Catholic teaching on nonviolence and just peace, and an action plan to promote such teaching in Catholic dioceses, seminaries, Catholic educational institutions, Catholic media, and parishes.

Conference planners include representatives of the Unions of Superior Generals (USG/UISG) JPIC Commission, the Conference of Major Superiors of Men (CMSM), LCWR, Columban Mission Institute, Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns and Pace e Bene Nonviolence Service.

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.

Upcoming LCWR Dates

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



Hundreds Call for Protection for Central American Refugees

A coalition of 275 organizations, including LCWR, urged President Obama to grant Temporary Protected Status (TPS) to refugees fleeing pervasive violence in El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras. TPS was created to provide temporary immigration protection to those fleeing catastrophic situations, and would save many from grave harm in Central America.

The letter, signed by civil rights, labor rights, faith-based, immigrant, human rights, humanitarian, and legal service organizations, sets out the legal and factual rationale for the designation of TPS for the Northern Triangle.

More than 17,500 people died in homicides in 2015 in the Northern Triangle, a geographic region the size of the state of Oregon and home to just under 30 million people. For the past six years, all three countries have ranked within the world's top four countries for rates of femicide, while El Salvador and Guatemala have had the highest homicide rates in the world among children. A recent report by the Immigrant Legal Resource Center estimates that over 750,000 Central Americans would benefit under a TPS expansion. The letter is found at immigrantjustice.org/TPSNorthernTriangleLetter.



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Supreme Court to Hear Immigration Case on Expanded DACA and DAPA

The US Supreme Court will hear oral arguments on the Obama administration's immigration executive actions which would provide relief to millions of immigrants with strong ties to the United States.



The suit, which was brought by 26 states, challenges the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) and Deferred Action for Parents of Americans and Lawful Permanent Residents (DAPA) programs. The justices are expected to hear arguments in April and to hand down a ruling by the end of June.

If the Supreme Court rules in favor of the President's executive action and allows the DAPA and DACA expansion to proceed, it will transform the lives of millions of immigrants living in the United States.

End the Raids—Stop the Deportations

More than 50 faith groups, including LCWR, sent a letter to President Obama calling for an end to immigration raids targeting Central Americans.

"As leaders of faith, we have witnessed first-hand the deep anxieties these tactics have sparked in communities of immigrants across our nation, particularly as word of the arrest of young children and parents has spread throughout the community," the letter said. "The administration's actions are sowing fear and trauma. Our faith communities are unanimous in the view that these raids must end."

The faith leaders further urged President Obama to refrain from raiding houses of worship, saying they "must remain safe and sacred spaces where all families can engage in their respective faith traditions without fear of harassment or monitoring by immigration officials."

Supreme Court Blocks Clean Power Plan

On February 9 the US Supreme Court issued a "stay" which halts the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) plan to address climate change through the Clean Power Plan (CPP) until court cases that challenge the legality of the plan are resolved. The court's decision does not address the merits of the EPA's efforts.



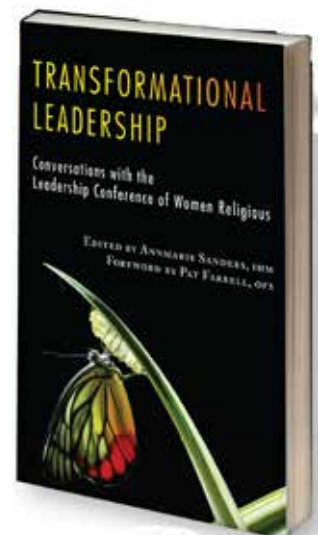
The CPP sets goals for states to cut the amount of carbon emitted from power plants. The EPA gives states the flexibility to come up with their own plans to meet their targets, whether that means increasing reliance on renewable energy sources such as solar and wind, adding technology to coal-fired plants that could scrub carbon out of smokestack emissions, converting coal plants to natural gas, state-wide conservation measures or creating or joining greenhouse gas initiatives.

The timing of the Supreme Court is disappointing, as it delays implementation of a national carbon standard which is an important step in reducing harmful carbon emissions in the United States.

Transformational Leadership

The book, *Transformational Leadership*, is a collection of interviews conducted by LCWR of 18 theologians, psychologists, educators, and religious leaders from various fields and disciplines who share their wisdom about a way of leadership able to meet the deep challenges of today's world.

Copies may be ordered at www.orbisbooks.com/transformational-leadership.html.





- Letter from national organizations to Senators opposing the American Security against Foreign Enemies (SAFE) Act of 2015 (H.R. 4038) and any other legislation that would stop the resettlement of Syrian refugees, LCWR (1/19/16)
- Letter to President Obama requesting that the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS), in consultation with the Secretary of State, designate El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras for Temporary Protected Status (TPS), a critical component of humanitarian protection. LCWR (1/25/16)
- Letter to President Obama from faith leaders expressing deep concern about raids conducted by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) aimed at rounding up and deporting Central American asylum-seeking families back to the danger they escaped and seeking absolute assurance that centers of worship will remain inviolable spaces, free from immigration enforcement actions and surveillance by ICE and CBP officials. LCWR (1/25/16)
- Letter from faith leaders expressing opposition to the current immoral and unjust ICE raids, as ordered by your administration and carried out by Department of Homeland Security and Customs Enforcement. Marcia Allen, CSJ (2/1/16)
- Letter from faith leaders reminding members of Congress that they have choices when it comes to spending priorities and asking them to choose to invest in Native American schools to bring them up to a standard that other children in publicly owned schools have a right to expect rather than wasteful Pentagon programs. Ann Scholz, SSND (2/5/16)
- Letter to members of Congress urging them to support funding in FY2017 for poverty-focused international development and humanitarian assistance accounts. LCWR (2/20/16)
- Faith leaders' letter in support of the Zero Tolerance for Domestic Abusers Act (H.R. 3130) and the

Protecting Domestic Violence and Stalking Victims Act (S.1520) that would close loopholes that allow convicted abusers and stalkers to buy and own guns. Ann Scholz, SSND (2/11/16)

- Religious community's statement of disappointment with the Supreme Court's decision to stay the Clean Power Plan. LCWR (2/12/16)

News from the UN

International Women's Day- March 8

International Women's Day is a chance to reflect on progress made, to call for change, and to celebrate acts of courage and determination by ordinary women who have played an extraordinary role in the history of their countries and communities. The 2016 theme for International Women's Day is "Planet 50-50 by 2030: Step It Up for Gender Equality." It is an opportunity to consider how to accelerate the 2030 agenda, building momentum for the effective implementation of the new Sustainable Development Goals, especially goal five, Achieve Gender Equality and Empower Women and Girls, and goal four, Ensure Inclusive and Quality Education for All and Promote Lifelong Learning. More information is available at www.un.org/en/events/womensday.



International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination- 21 March

The International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination is an opportunity to renew the commitment to building a world of justice and equality where xenophobia and bigotry do not exist. "We must learn the lessons of history and acknowledge the profound damage caused by racial discrimination," explained Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon. More information is available at www.un.org/en/events/racialdiscriminationday.



New Vocation Ambassadors Program

NRVC is in the process of creating a network of young adults who will be commissioned as Vocation Ambassadors and equipped with media training and communication skills to represent and promote religious life in the church and to the general public. All program materials, accommodations, meals, and presenter fees will be underwritten by the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation. Selected participants will be responsible for personal expenses and travel to and from Holy Cross College for this summer workshop.

Using a four-day workshop called Share the Sacred, 14 selected teams of vocation ministers, communicators, and Catholic young adults (ages 20-30), will work together to develop a consistent message about vocations to religious life as a viable option in the Catholic Church.

The Share the Sacred workshop will be held at Holy Cross College at Notre Dame, Indiana from June 10 to 13.

Participants in the Vocation Ambassadors Program will be selected as a team from an application submitted by an NRVC member who has some experience in social media and has previously attended the NRVC Orientation Program for Vocation Directors workshop. The communicator and young adult do not have to be NRVC members. Team members need not be the same gender. More information is available at: nrv.net/292/article/new-vocation-ambassadors-program-10065.

NRVC Misericordia Fund

So as to ensure religious life for future generations, NRVC firmly believes that all religious share in the responsibility of promoting vocations to the consecrated life. This is true for thriving and aging congregations as well.

As a way to support all religious institutes in their commitment to vocation ministry, NRVC has established the Misericordia Fund to provide scholarships for membership and programming to religious institutes in financial need. Established last year to commemorate the extraordinary Holy Year of Mercy, NRVC has already provided more than 20 scholarships in excess of \$20,000.

More information on the fund is available through Deborah M. Borneman SSCM at debbiesscm@nrv.net or 773-363-5454.

Grant Applications for NFCRV

The National Fund for Catholic Religious Vocations (NFCRV), established by the National Religious Vocation Conference (NRVC) in 2014, is dedicated to increasing the number of women and men entering religious communities by:

- Offering financial assistance to religious institutes so that they may accept candidates who have student loan obligations;
- Assisting congregations in developing policies and resources so that they may work effectively with those who have educational debt;
- Inviting contributors to invest so that the vital legacy of religious life continues for Church and the world.

Last year the NFCRV issued ten grants in excess of \$210,000 to eight religious institutes. NFCRV is now accepting grant requests for 2016. Any canonically recognized religious institute with a current member in the NRVC may apply for a grant to service a candidate's educational debt during formation.

More information may be obtained by contacting Mark Teresi, NFCRV director, at mjteresi@nfcrv.org or 773-595-4028.



by Joan Mumaw, IHM
US Regional
Development Director

We cried to the Lord and the Lord heard our voice and saw our affliction, our toil and our oppression.

These words from the First Sunday of Lent are the prayer of the people of South Sudan who continue to suffer the ravages of civil war. This war is prolonged by the inability of leaders to compromise for the good of the whole nation. A power struggle has exacerbated historical tribal strife igniting a cycle of killing and revenge. The impact on women and children is especially horrific. 2.8 million, 25% of the population are in dire need of food with 40,000 bordering on catastrophe. 51% of children are unable to attend school as schools are destroyed and both teachers and children displaced. Hundreds of thousands of persons are living in camps under UN protection as it is unsafe for them to return to their homes. The rains have come and gone and little is being planted to be harvested to feed

the population. Many are surviving off plants in the swamps of the Nile.

In the midst of this, volunteer agencies continue to try to get food to the people and others are setting up classrooms in the UN camps. Solidarity with South Sudan remains committed to the people of South Sudan. Sixteen volunteers are involved with in-service training of teachers in distant areas of the country during the months of January and February. Solidarity staff are training teachers in UN camps. A national pastoral team led by Solidarity staff is training catechists in remote areas of the country; these catechists are hungry for the Word and eager to learn of the sacramental life in their desire to be more prepared to serve their people.

One fruit of the work of the Pastoral team is a reflection booklet prepared for parishes, small Christian communities and prayer groups for the Lenten/Easter/Pentecost season. Joining with Pope Francis in this Jubilee Year of Mercy, the people of South Sudan are called to reflect upon Christ as the sign of God's Mercy. We invite you to join in prayer with them. To access this booklet, please click on the link bit.ly/20LAccU.

For more information on how to support the work of Friends in Solidarity, Inc. as it supports the work being done in South Sudan, contact Joan Mumaw, IHM jmumaw.solidarity@gmail.com.

Sign Up for the LCWR Resource Sharing Forum

LCWR offers a listserv that is open only to LCWR members and associates. Called the LCWR Resource Sharing Forum, the listserv provides a means for LCWR members to communicate with one another online with a question or to share information. Topics around which members have shared information in the past include: new sponsorship models, chapter facilitators, bilingual speakers on religious life, psychological testing for candidates, canon lawyers who deal with property issues, treatment centers for religious, restructuring buildings for assisted living, and much more.

LCWR members who have not signed up yet for this listserv are encouraged to do so. More information on the forum and how to sign up for it is available on the [LCWR website](#) in the "Members" section. Members must enter their username and password to access this part of the site. Anyone who does not have her username or password may contact Carol Glidden at cglidden@lcrw.org. Carol can also guide members through the process of signing up for the forum.