

Update

*A Publication of the
Leadership Conference of Women Religious*

March 2018

Space Still Available at the LCWR New Leaders Workshop

The LCWR New Leaders Workshop will be held from April 12 - 15, 2018, at the Conference Center at the University of St. Mary of the Lake in Mundelein, Illinois. The workshop is strongly recommended for leadership teams in their first year or two of leadership. It has received highly positive evaluations from past participants. Registration is currently open and while the workshop is close to capacity, there are still a few spots available. Any members who are new to leadership and wish to attend this workshop are encouraged to sign up now so as not to miss out. The registration form is available on the [LCWR website](#).

All 2018 New Leader Workshop participants have received log-in information for materials that are available online on topics including canon and civil law, team-building, and working with congregation members. Participants are encouraged to work with the materials in advance of the workshop.



Catholic Organizations Host Prayer Service for Dreamers on Capitol Hill

More than 100 people of faith joined LCWR and other Catholic organizations in prayer for justice for Dreamers at the Capitol on February 6. The event brought together Catholics, and other people of faith, in a nonpartisan, prayerful setting to emphasize the urgency of passing bipartisan legislation to protect Dreamers and their families.



Ann Scholz, SSND (right) of the LCWR staff helps lead the prayer

Dreamers, women religious, priests, and other Catholic advocates led the community in prayer which included song, scripture, and an immigrant rosary. They were joined by US Rep. Juan Vargas of California who prayed with the group and then urged those gathered to call on fellow Catholic, Speaker of the House Paul Ryan, to allow a vote on the Dream Act. According to Rep. Vargas, "If the Dream Act gets on the floor, it will pass."

After years of advocacy, months of meetings with members of Congress, hundreds of arguments about the need for a legislative solution that is compassionate and just, and countless hours of testimony from Dreamers the organizers decided that it was time to take it all to prayer.

Organizers included: The Daughters of Charity, NETWORK, Catholic Legal Immigration Network, Inc., Franciscan Action Network, and LCWR.

From the LCWR Presidency

Love in the Little Moments

by Sharlet Wagner, CSC — LCWR President-Elect

As we journey through Lent and toward the events of Holy Week, I find myself reflecting on life, on death, and on love in the little moments.

It has been said that religious life embodies a call to love: not the sentimental love of hearts, flowers, and cupids, but the agape love of selfless action for the good of another.

This agape love is a day-to-day work. When I professed perpetual vows, I was deeply touched when the president turned to the congregation and asked, "My Sisters, what is your wish?" and the perpetually professed stood and responded together, "We wish to live and die with her." I was speaking with one of our sisters afterward and told her what that moment meant to me. She said, "You know, the dying with one another is not really the hard part. It's the living with one another that will challenge you!" We both laughed, but there was wisdom in her words.

That exchange came back to me several years ago when a member of our leadership team was dying of cancer. It was my first experience of truly journeying with another in her death, and I was experiencing the "dying with one another" in a way that I had not previously known. I considered whether I would still agree with the sister who said that the dying with one another is not the hard part. As I reflected I realized that while the dying with one another calls for extraordinary love and commitment in the moment, the living with one another calls for love and commitment in the day to day, day after day, and year after year.



**Love in the little moments
throughout our lives calls
us to a lifetime of
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and forgiving
as we live out
the gospel call.**

Love in the few and far between large moments of life calls us to greatness in the moment. Love in the little moments throughout our lives calls us to a lifetime of oftentimes unseen giving and forgiving as we live out the gospel call. This can be sheer, sweat-inducing, labor-intensive hard work.

This is the love which we are called to live and to model as Christians, as religious, and as leaders. It is a love that enables us to face unjust accusations while refusing to adopt the tactics of our accusers, to challenge ugly political rhetoric without descending to ugliness ourselves, to reject words that belittle the "other" without rejecting the one speaking. It is a love that our country and our world so desperately need to experience and to see in action.

Jesus gives us an example in his life and in his death of the love to which we are called. As we move into Holy Week we will listen again, as the Gospel is read, to the story of an act of love in one of the greatest of moments. But the gospels also tell a profound story of love in the little moments of life: Jesus touching the untouchables and healing their hurt, weeping with friends outside of a tomb, standing under the hot noonday sun and speaking with a woman at a well, welcoming a multitude even as he longs to withdraw to a quiet place and pray.

Jesus loved during his life on earth "not in word or speech, but in truth and action." May we women religious do the hard work of this active love in the large moments and the little moments of our lives.

LCWR Retreat Offers Grounding for Leaders

From January 14 -19, 34 LCWR members gathered at the Redemptorist Renewal Center in Tucson for the annual Leading From Within Retreat, facilitated by Janet Mock, CSJ; Marie McCarthy, SP; and Annmarie Sanders, IHM. The retreat location, with the warmth of the Arizona sun and the beauty and mystery of desert landscapes, offered participants the perfect environment to slow down, enter the silence, and listen deeply to their own inner wisdom. Each morning participants gathered for prayer, input, and simple ritual. Each evening the group assembled again to gather, share, and express in ritual the fruits of the day. The rest of the day was left unstructured to allow silent, open space for the work of the Spirit.

At the close of the retreat experience participants commented that they found the retreat grounding. The retreat helped them to say a fuller and deeper yes to their call to elected leadership, to carry leadership more lightly, and to access their own deep wisdom and courage. It was also helpful to be with other leaders facing similar challenges. Participants returned home refreshed and strengthened for the journey ahead.

The retreat will be offered again from February 10 - 15, 2019 at Bethany Center Retreat House in Lutz, Florida.



Retreatants experienced a balance of input, ritual, and quiet space each day as they enjoyed the beauty of the Arizona desert.



Upcoming LCWR Dates

Imagining Justice Workshop
Redemptorist Renewal Center
Tucson, Arizona
March 12 – 15, 2018

LCWR New Leader Workshop
Conference Center
University of St. Mary of the Lake
Mundelein, Illinois
April 12 – 15, 2018

LCWR Assembly
St. Louis, Missouri
August 7—11, 2018

Leading from Within Retreat
Bethany Retreat Center
Lutz, Florida
February 10 – 15, 2019

LCWR New Leader Workshop
Conference Center
University of St. Mary of the Lake
Mundelein, Illinois
April 4 — 7, 2019

LCWR Assembly
Scottsdale, Arizona
August 13 — 17, 2019

Leading from Within Retreat
Redemptorist Renewal Center
Tucson, Arizona
January 12 – 17, 2020

LCWR Assembly
Dallas, Texas
August 11 — 15, 2020

Hold the Dates:
2018 LCWR Assembly
Being the Presence of Love:
The Power of Communion
August 7 - 10, 2018
St. Louis, Missouri

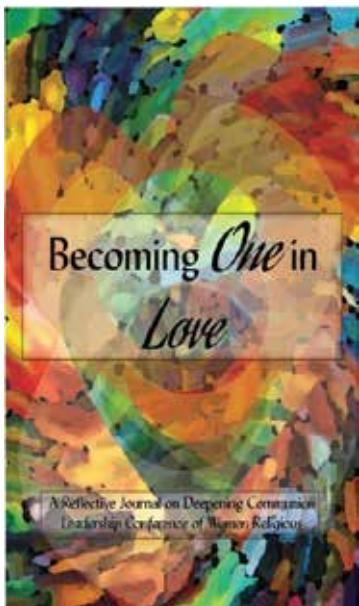


The 2018 LCWR assembly is being designed to demonstrate how a deeper embracing of communion can help members understand and experience themselves more fully as transformational leaders, particularly as the global community struggles with numerous fractures of communion. The event will be set in a contemplative context with many opportunities for the participants to interact with one another, integrate the assembly content into their leadership ministries, and leave with an abundance of riches to share with their own communities at home.

LCWR 
Update on the
LCWR Executive Director Search

All LCWR members and associates are asked to watch for a message from the LCWR Executive Director Search Committee concerning ways in which they can assist the committee in its work.

The materials will include a short video and a letter from LCWR president Teresa Maya, CCVI.



Order *Becoming One in Love*, the 2018 LCWR Reflective Journal by March 9

CWR is taking orders for its 2018 book, *Becoming One in Love: A Reflective Journal on Deepening Communion*. This collection of reflections written by more than 30 LCWR members explores how women religious are coming to understand the concepts and challenges of communion, and what living from a place of deeper communion might mean for the world.

The writers probe the reality of the polarized world in which we live, and why the choice to move toward one-ness and communion is critical. Artwork by Catholic sisters, as well as questions and suggestions for deepening the reader'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. 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.

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

LCWR will print only the amount of copies that are pre-ordered. Orders must be received with payment by March 9, 2018.

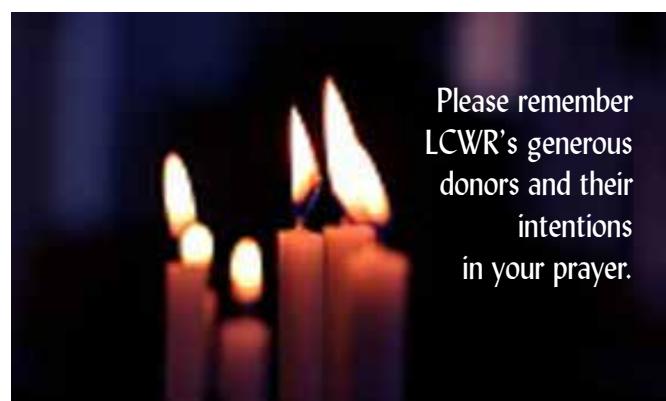


Extra Copies of *Occasional Papers* Available

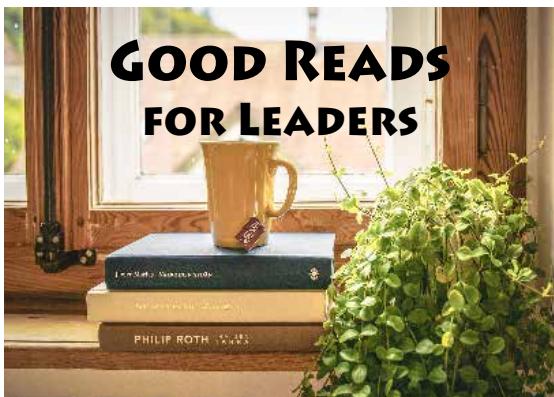
Due to a printer overrun, some extra copies of the Winter 2018 edition of *Occasional Papers*, entitled "At the Heart of the Life," are available for purchase.

New Translation in Spanish Available

The presidential address delivered by Marcia Allen at the 2016 LCWR assembly, entitled, "Transformation: An Experiment in Hope," has been translated into Spanish by Denise Montagne, IHM. It is available on the [LCWR website](#).



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



The New Cosmic Story: Inside Our Awakening Universe

By John F. Haught -- 2017

Recommended by Barbara Blesse, OP

While reading books in a study mode, I underline provocative or memorable ideas in pencil. In reviewing John F. Haught's most recent book, *The New Cosmic Story: Inside Our Awakening Universe*, I wondered if I would have enough lead to last until the end! Exploring religion within the reality of an unfinished universe, Haught invites the reader to consider the "insideness/interiority/subjectivity" of our evolving universe, a universe whose evolution is normally described primarily and only through its external manifestations. Utilizing three approaches labeled "archaeonomy, analogy and anticipation" he examines 12 universal aspects of religion and reveals much richness for contemplation and praxis. Among the 12, he features transformation, interiority, indestructibility, transcendence, symbolism, purpose, and prayerfulness. As an excellent teacher, he skillfully draws forth insights that support the deepening of religious faith within an appreciation of the "big picture" narrative of the cosmos.

For leaders in women's religious congregations who embrace a contemplative worldview nestled in the New Universe story and nourished through prayer and contemplation, along with a commitment to social justice and a lifestyle grounded in profound religious faith, patient hope, and loving presence, this book has much to offer. It is not a quick read and requires focus and stick-to-it-tiveness but it is perhaps the most intellectually satisfying book I have encountered. Employing a delicious writing language and style, Haught effectively

integrates religion with the science of the cosmos and offers an intriguing perspective on it all. I feel certain I will re-visit this book in the future.

Any LCWR member who has read a book that may be of interest to other women religious leaders is asked to consider submitting a brief review to include in the monthly "Good Reads" column. This is a helpful way to share good resources with one another. Contact LCWR communications director Annmarie Sanders, IHM for more information (asanders@lcwr.org).

Thank Pope Francis for His Commitment to Nonviolence and Peace

The Catholic Nonviolence Initiative, of which LCWR is a member, and Pax Christi International, are deeply grateful to Pope Francis for his consistently strong condemnation of nuclear weapons and the vicious arms trade. His clarity on, and commitment to, peace and nonviolence are wonderful gifts to the movement.



This year in celebration of International Women's Day (March 8), women are invited to send a thank-you message to Pope Francis, in appreciation for his leadership on nonviolence and just peace.

The thank you messages will be collected over the next month, and will be delivered along with names and personal notes to the Vatican on March 8. The postcard is available in four languages: [English](#), [français](#), [español](#), and [italiano](#).

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.



LCWR SIGN ONs & Letters

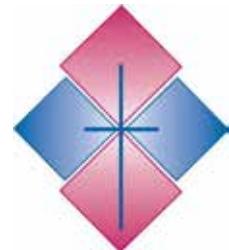
- Letter to Secretary of State Rex Tillerson and Secretary of Homeland Security Kirstjen M. Nielsen urging them to renew and re-designate Temporary Protected Status (TPS) for Syrians in the United States. LCWR (1/13/18)
- Interfaith letter to members of Congress urging them to immediately pass the Dream Act of 2017 (S. 1615/H.R. 3440) which provides a pathway to citizenship for immigrant youth. LCWR (1/16/18).
- Amicus brief in the case of Janus v. American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) in support of unions right to organize and collect the funds they need to effectively represent laborers in the workplace. LCWR (1/17/18)
- Letter to Members of Congress urging them to enact four urgent priorities before the continuing resolution expires on January 19: Pass the Dream Act; Fully fund and reauthorize the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) and the Special Diabetes Program for Indians (SDPI), and other health extenders; Fund disaster and emergency relief; and Pass a budget deal that protects critical non-defense programs from sequestration. Carole Shinnick, SSND (1/19/18)
- Letter to Kirstjen Nielsen, Secretary of US Department of Homeland Secretary requesting the re-designation and extension of Temporary Protected Status (TPS) for Syria for at least 18 months. LCWR (1/20/18)
- Letter from faith leaders to Congress opposing the Securing America's Future Act (HR 4760) and urging support for the Dream Act or other bipartisan proposal that provides a pathway to citizenship for Dreamers while upholding the value of family unity. Carole Shinnick, SSND (1/29/18)
- Statement urging Congress to take the opportunity presented by the reauthorization of the Farm Bill to reduce hunger and poverty in the US and around

the world and encourage sustainable stewardship of our resources. LCWR (2/4/18)

- Endorsement of Senate Resolution on the anniversary of the first refugee and Muslim ban calling on the administration to resettle at least 45,000 refugees this fiscal year to meet its own refugee admission goal and calling on the administration to commit to resettling at least 75,000 refugees next fiscal year (FY2019). LCWR (2/5/18)
- Interfaith letter urging Congress to immediately pass a bipartisan pathway to citizenship that protects Dreamers from deportation, supports family unification, border communities, refugees and asylum seekers, and does not cut legal immigration. LCWR (2/9/18)

National Religious Retirement Office

The National Religious Retirement Office (NRRO) expresses gratitude to its diocesan coordinators for promoting the Retirement Fund for Religious collection held in December 2017. The collection aids more than 32,000 US women and men religious.



Direct Care Assistance information was distributed in January. Any institute that has not received this information is asked to contact Monica Glover: mglover@usccb.org or (202) 541-3216. Adhering to the March 31 deadline will assure the timely processing of these funding requests.

The Tending the Vineyard (TTV) strategic property planning [video series](#) is an important resource for institutes. Funded by the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation, TTV promotes effective property planning. With five videos and accompanying support materials, the series features guidance from property experts and insights from religious who have completed congregational property initiatives. The videos are designed for leadership, members, lay staff, and other stakeholders who aid institutes in assessing and managing properties.



Celebrate Women Religious from March 8-14

Organizers of the National Catholic Sisters Week (NCSW) -- slated for March 8-14 -- have made resources available to encourage locally organized events, and they are asking people to list their events and activities [online](#).

Two different style T-shirts may be ordered online: [2018 shirt](#) and a [US map shirt](#).

In addition, prepackaged kits ("NCSW in a Box") will be available for those with limited time who want to hold an event. Information about the kits is available [here](#). Other resources, such as prayers, ideas, and bookmarks are available at [nationalcatholicsistersweek.org](#).

2018 NFCRV Applications Open

The National Fund for Catholic Religious Vocations (NFCRV) has opened its 2018 online process for submission of grant requests. All requests must be submitted by March 13, 2018. These 2018 grant requests -- for college debt accrued by a viable candidate that a community is unable to subsume -- can only be made by active 2018 NRVC members. No grant request will be considered if the community does not have membership in NRVC or is currently receiving Misericorida Financial Assistance.

Marge Argyelan at 773-959-4034 may be contacted with questions about the status of NRVC memberships. The NFCRV board will approve 2018 grant requests at its May 2018 meeting and notify recipients in June 2018. All 2018 application guidelines are online at [nfcrv.org](#).

New Part-Time Attorney Joins RCRI Staff

RCRI is pleased to announce that Mr. Christopher J. Fusco, JCL, JD has been hired as a part-time staff attorney for the Resource Center for Religious Institutes. He will join the staff on March 1, 2018.



Mr. Fusco comes to RCRI from the Diocese of Metuchen where he serves as assistant general counsel and judge and moderator of the diocesan tribunal. He received his civil law degree from the City University of New York School of Law and his licentiate in canon law from the Catholic University of Louvain. In addition, he holds a masters in music. He is a member of the New York and New Jersey State Bar Associations and is admitted to the US Tax Court and US Court of Appeals of the Second and Third Circuits.

He will work from RCRI's Silver Spring office and from his office in New Jersey.



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by Joan Mumaw, IHM
President
www.solidarityfriends.org

Prayer May Be the Most Effective Intervention We Can Make!

On February 4, Pope Francis announced that the first Friday of Lent would be a day of prayer and fasting for peace given the many ongoing conflicts throughout the world, particularly those in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and South Sudan. (*A link to prayer service is at the end of this post.*)

"Facing the tragic continuation of conflicts in different parts of the world, I invite all the faithful to a special day of prayer and fasting for peace Feb. 23, the Friday of the first week of Lent," the Pope said. He asked that the day be offered specifically for the people of the

Democratic Republic of the Congo and South Sudan and invited both non-Catholics and non-Christians to join "in the ways they deem most appropriate."

"Our heavenly Father always listens to his children who cry out to him in pain and anguish," he said, and made a "heartfelt appeal" for each one of us to "hear this cry and, each one according to their own conscience, before God, ask ourselves: 'What can I do to make peace?'"

While prayer is always an effective resolution, more can be done, Francis said, explaining that each person "can concretely say no to violence to the extent that it depends on him or herself. Because victories obtained with violence are false victories, while working for peace does good for all!"

The Secretary General of the Anglican Communion, Dr Josiah Idowu-Fearon, also backed the call to prayer and fasting, saying: "Conflicts continue to blight the lives of millions of people. In support of our brothers and sisters in areas of conflict, and particularly in solidarity with those in the Democratic Republic of Congo and South Sudan, I join with Pope Francis in calling the Churches of the Anglican Communion and all people of good will to prayer and fasting for peace on Friday 23 February."

[Prayer for Peace in South-Sudan and DRCongo](#) (*Prepared by Mary Beth Hamm, SSJ for Bon Secours Sisters of Paris.*)

Support LCWR Through the Purchase of Cards



Consider supporting LCWR and purchasing sets of 10 greeting cards based on the insights of its members that were voiced at the 2016 LCWR assembly. Priced at just \$10.00 for the set of 10, these folded cards make great gifts and are a means of sharing ideas about contemplation, communion, and Gospel-centered living. All proceeds from the sale of cards go toward supporting the work and mission of LCWR. Cards may be purchased online at lcwr.org/item/contemplative-greeting-cards. For more information, contact Carol Glidden at cglidden@lcwr.org.



RFC to Offer Webinars in March & May

[Registration Information](#)

Lenten webinar
The Spirituality of Holy Week
March 21
Sr. Sallie Latkovich, CSJ

Getting the Most Out of a Psychological Assessment
RFC and the Conference of Major Superiors of Men (CMSM) will co-sponsor this series of webinars
May 2, 16, & 30, 2018
Jerry McGlone, SJ, PhD

News from the UN

March 8—International Women's Day

The theme for International Women's Day 2018 is "*The Time is Now: Rural and Urban Activists Transforming Women's Lives.*" This year's celebration comes on the heels of an unprecedented global movement for women's rights, equality, and justice. Sexual harassment, violence, and discrimination against women have captured the headlines and propelled a rising determination for change.



March 21—International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination

The UN General Assembly has proclaimed March 21 the day when all eyes should be focused on racism. The theme for 2018, "Promoting Tolerance, Inclusion, Unity and Respect for Diversity in the Context of Combating Racial Discrimination," is particularly important in a time that is witnessing a surge of intolerance, racist views, and hate-driven violence. The rights to equality and non-discrimination are cornerstones of human rights law and enshrined in Articles 1 and 2 of the [Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#).



The UN Commission on the Status of Women to Meet in NYC

The [62nd session of the Commission on the Status of Women](#) (CSW) will take place at United Nations Headquarters in New York from March 12-23 2018. This year representatives of UN member states, civil society, and UN agencies will gather to consider the challenges and opportunities in achieving equality of rural women and girls.

The [CSW](#) is the principal global intergovernmental body exclusively dedicated to the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls. The commission will assess progress and gaps in the implementation of the 1995 Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, as well as emerging issues that affect gender equality and the empowerment of women.

During the commission meeting, member states agree on further actions to accelerate progress and promote women's enjoyment of their political, economic, and social rights. In addition, there will be accompanying parallel and side events that focus on a wide range of issues affecting women and girls, particularly in rural areas.

UN Secretary General Urges Member States to Empower Women

At an informal meeting of the UN General Assembly



Secretary-

General Antonio Guterres encouraged member countries to take steps to empower women and prevent their exploitation and abuse. He noted that equality for women is essential to securing peace and achieving the [UN Sustainable Development Goals](#).

The Secretary-General suggested an approach built on three pillars. The first is empowering women and girls. "Power," he said, "is the heart of the matter."

Second, preventing sexual exploitation and abuse of women. Eighty-two member states are part of a voluntary compact to prevent these crimes and to respond swiftly to allegations. "There is a long way to go, but we are totally determined," he promised.

Third, preventing and addressing sexual harassment. Secretary-General Guterres reiterates his personal commitment to eliminating sexual harassment from the United Nations organization. "My zero-tolerance approach was recently reaffirmed in a joint letter to our staff. I also set up a task force, to review United Nations policies and capacities to investigate, to ensure accountability, and to look at the support and protection offered to those affected."

The secretary-general concluded his remarks by reminding those present that, "... everyone, everywhere, can do something to make our world more safe, sustainable, and secure. Even in the face of headwinds and hatred, we must uphold the values of the United Nations Charter. But we can only do that together, as United Nations and one human family."