

November 2012



Photo by Nancy Wiechec for CNS

"It is this kind of leadership that is necessary to advance the dialogue and response to the accusations of those who would challenge the Gospel message of equality, unity, community, and empowerment of all women and men in the church. Maintaining an open heart and mind in matters about which we agree and disagree are central to Sr. Pat's leadership style, approach, and message.

"Surrounded by the aura of faith, empowered by the conviction of the Holy Spirit, and challenged by the Gospel of justice preached and lived by Jesus, Sr. Pat Farrell demonstrates true leadership. Call To Action's board of directors is proud to present its 2012 Call To Action leadership award to Sr. Pat Farrell, OSF."

LCWR Past President Pat Farrell, OSF to Receive Leadership Award

Call To Action (CTA) will honor LCWR past president Pat Farrell, OSF with its leadership award, established to honor an individual or organization's prophetic stance or long-term work.

In announcing the award to its members, CTA described Pat's leadership these past months following the release of the doctrinal assessment of LCWR by the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. "Amid the commentaries all along the political spectrum, from all corners of the church and secular media outlets, a calm, steady, pastoral voice emerged and modeled the best of Catholic leadership," CTA noted.

"This summer, Sr. Pat Farrell OSF, together with the national team of LCWR leadership, led the LCWR sisters in a prayerful, collaborative process to discern their response to the Vatican," the announcement continued. "That process led to their courageous and inspiring statement that puts dialogue ahead of dogma, places people before policies, and invites the entire Catholic community to discern the signs of the times and boldly follow where the Spirit leads.

Pat will accept the award on November 10 at the CTA conference in Louisville, Kentucky.

Consider Giving a Women & Spirit DVD for Christmas

Several congregations are ordering the LCWR *Women & Spirit: Catholic Sisters in America* DVD to give as Christmas presents.

Consider purchasing these as gifts for benefactors, associates, boards of sponsored ministries, coworkers, and more.

The DVD provides a comprehensive history of Catholic sisters for just \$19.95. Reduced prices are available for bulk orders. All proceeds benefit LCWR. Order forms are at: lwr.org/item/women-spirit-dvd



From the LCWR Presidency

Learning to Swim in the Winter

by Pat Farrell, OSF — LCWR Past President

As the days grow shorter and colder and nature calls attention to itself in the change of seasons, I am reminded of the story of a little girl who learned to swim in the winter. She took swimming lessons during the summer, determined to learn, but summer was soon over and she was still straining to get her breathing coordinated with her arm movements. Frustrated, she saw the swimming pool close for the season and she returned to school. The following spring the pool re-opened and she eagerly went to practice again, hoping to eventually get it right. She jumped in the pool and, to her surprise, effortlessly swam from one side to the other, arms and breath easily coordinated. Somehow she had learned to swim in the winter. When she was no longer even thinking about swimming, the learning continued within her on some other level and showed itself in the spring.



I believe that we did, while also aware that we had identified only initial steps in an ongoing process. Since then LCWR has been in a somewhat quieter mode. The flurry of media attention has settled down a bit and phones at the national office have had a little rest. However, I do believe that important movements and learnings are coalescing within us, within LCWR, on an unseen level. In the low-key, in-between times I have no doubt that something more is gestating, that God is gradually bringing to birth what is needed now. I trust that the Spirit is readying us for whatever comes next.

In the meantime, the context around us is also in flux, probably in ways both visible and less apparent. The air is charged with presidential election concerns, sending

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I have a suspicion that a similar process is often at work in us. We saw it in the processing of responses to the CDF mandate in the six weeks of silence immediately

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following the announcement. Does anyone doubt the importance of that time for the gradual gathering of our collective wisdom? At our August assembly there was evidence of intense collective probing of how best to respond to the doctrinal assessment. We labored together to give birth to a direction of truthfulness and integrity.

us into the complexity and controversy of living out our convictions in a polarized public arena. The world church is commemorating the 50th anniversary of Vatican II, stirring up a multitude of memories and giving voice to important perspectives, questions, and perhaps unfinished business. Recent changes in Vatican offices create questions about dynamics at work in that venue. Clearly, we are not the only ones learning to swim in the winter. Processes are at work both within us and beyond us, in what is seen and in what is unseen. What we know of discernment invites us to attentive awareness on all sides, as we listen our way into a faithful response to the kind of future towards which God is beckoning us.

Leadership:

Mystery Unfolding



Leadership: Mystery Unfolding
is a retreat for LCWR members
and LCWR associates who are serving
in congregation leadership

January 20 - 25, 2013
Holy Spirit Retreat Center in Encino, California

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

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

Retreat Directors



Maria Elena Martinez, OSF



Mary Waskowiak, RSM

Space is limited to 25 persons and registration is nearly full.
More information and registration materials are found at:
lcrw.org/resources/leadership-retreat-2013

THE Occasional Papers



Order Additional Copies of the Winter 2012 Occasional Papers

An order form for the Winter 2012 issue of LCWR's *Occasional Papers* is available on the LCWR website at: lcrw.org/sites/default/files/publications/files/oporderswinter13.pdf.

Orders are due by **December 20**.

This issue will provide materials for further reflection on many of the significant events and movements in the lives of US women religious in recent years. These include the emphasis on intentional contemplation, greater awareness of the universe story, the apostolic visitation, the doctrinal assessment of LCWR, and all the dynamics that go with these events. How are women religious sensing a new consciousness of the significance of religious life in these times? How are religious sensing a shift in their own self-definition as religious and their understanding of what religious life can potentially be? The issue will also provide a means for reflecting on the church's "Year of Faith" and the commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the Second Vatican Council. How is the fidelity of religious to the call of Vatican II fidelity to the invitation to evolutionary leadership in a living church?

Content will include articles and interviews on understanding conscience, contemporary interpretations of the vow of obedience, the skill of collaboration, deepening relationships with the laity, exploring the new texture of religious life, and leading in polarized times.

Although all members, associates, and subscribers will receive their own copy of this issue, many leaders order additional copies for their members. If you have any questions about an order, please contact Carol Glidden at cglidden@lcrw.org or at 301-588-4955.

LCWR Membership Renewals Due Before November 1

LCWR member and associate status renewal is underway. At the beginning of October, renewal information was sent about how to access the renewal forms and how to complete them.

Anyone who has not yet submitted membership renewal materials is asked to do so before November 1. Once the renewal forms and checks are processed at LCWR, the office will send a confirmation so that members will have a record of this transaction.

Members Asked to Consider Donations to LCWR Scholarship Fund

LCWR continues to receive requests for scholarship assistance from smaller congregations that do not have sufficient resources to pay all of their annual dues. LCWR has seen a decline in donations to the scholarship fund. Any member who can make even a small donation will help to replenish the fund. The membership application provides an opportunity to donate. All are encouraged to consider supporting others in this way.

Global Concerns Committee Meets in Chicago

LCWR's Global Concerns Committee met October 8-10 in Chicago. The committee, which meets four times a year, assists LCWR members to work for a just world order by addressing issues of justice, peace, and the interrelatedness of all creation.

This year's fall meeting included evaluations of the justice activity and resolution process at the conference's annual assembly. Each received positive evaluations from participants and from the committee. Committee members hope to continue to make use of both processes to further integrate justice concerns into the national assembly and other programs of the conference.

In addition, the committee reviewed progress on the priorities of the LCWR office for social mission includ-

ing immigration reform, human trafficking, economic justice, election 2012, and affordable healthcare, and explored strategies for developing coalitions of religious around national justice priorities and strengthening relationships with justice groups operating in various LCWR regions.

Finally, members committed themselves to the continued publication of the well-received *Resolutions to Action*. Upcoming issues will address environmental concerns including fracking and water, and the right to quality affordable health care for all.

The Chicago meeting was chaired by Dorothy Pagosa, SSJ-TOSF and attended by committee members Sharon Altendorf, PBVM; Maureen Foltz, CCV; Eileen Gannon, OP; JoAnn Showalter, SP and Ann Scholz, SSND, LCWR associate director for social mission.



- Letter to United Nations Security Council members demanding that Sudan allow humanitarian access to South Kordofan and Blue Nile.
- Letter to Health and Human Services Secretary Kathleen Sibelius from faith-based organizations expressing dismay at the exclusion of individuals receiving relief through the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) from coverage under the Affordable Care Act (ACA), Medicaid, and the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP).
- Letter to the Republican and Democratic presidential candidates urging them to make global climate change a primary issue in their campaigns and to support concrete action to prevent its worst anticipated impacts.
- Petition in support of the United Nations Social Protection Floor Initiative which promotes access to essential social security transfers and social services in the areas of health, water and sanitation, education, food, housing, and life- and asset-savings.

Poverty and Hunger on the Agenda of Congressional Lame Duck Session

The agenda for the lame duck session of Congress set to begin after the election and to conclude before the new year is already overflowing with difficult items. When legislators headed home for the election in mid-September they kicked many of the “big decisions” down the road to what may be one of the most consequential lame duck sessions in a long time. The legislation drafted by Congress during that session will certainly have tremendous effects on people who live with hunger and struggle with poverty.

Congress will need to reach an agreement on the re-authorization of the farm bill which includes ensuring the food security of more than 45 million people who receive benefits through the Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP) and international food aid programs which provide emergency assistance around the world. Current versions of the farm bill in both the Senate and the House propose severe cuts to food assistance programs, particularly SNAP.

Congress must also decide what to do about the 2001 and 2003 tax cuts, set to expire on December 31, 2012. The Obama administration has proposed ending cuts to those earning over \$250,000 a year, while the Republican leadership seems committed to preserving all of the Bush era tax cuts.

Legislators must also tackle the across-the-board federal spending cuts of \$1.2 trillion over 10 years, set to take effect on January 2, 2013. Sequestration was designed to force Congress to enact comprehensive deficit-reduction legislation, but the two parties were unable to reach an agreement on the balance between budget cuts and revenue enhancements. If Congress fails once again to solve the sequestration dilemma, many federal programs will suffer severe cuts, including nutrition for pregnant women, education for children from low-income households, access to vital medicine for people living with AIDS, and services for homeless people.

While the challenge of sequestration is not without risk, it presents the nation with the opportunity to institute a balanced and comprehensive approach to deficit reduction. Congress could choose to raise additional tax revenue without burdening low and middle income families. Legislators could elect to cut wasteful weapons

programs from the military budget. The federal budget is a moral document which rightly reflects the values of the nation. The difficult decisions of November and December will require the moral courage of lawmakers and citizens alike.

Upcoming LCWR Dates

LCWR Leading from Within Retreat

*Holy Spirit Retreat Center
Encino, California
January 20 — 25, 2013*

LCWR Think Tank Symposium

*Redemptorists' Renewal Center
Tucson, AZ
February 11-14, 2013*

LCWR New Leader Workshop

*Conference Center - University of St. Mary of the Lake
Mundelein, Illinois
March 21 — 24, 2013*

LCWR Assembly

*Orlando, Florida
August 13 — 17, 2013*

LCWR Assembly

*Nashville, Tennessee
August 12 — 16, 2014*

LCWR Assembly

*Houston, Texas
August 11—15, 2015*

Christian Peacemaker Teams Seek to Embody God's Love

Partnering with nonviolent movements around the world, Christian Peacemaker Teams (CPT) seek to embody an inclusive, ecumenical, and diverse community of God's love. Founded in 1986, CPT has had involvement with Roman Catholic women religious since Anne Montgomery, RSCJ began serving on the Palestine team in 1996. She served on teams through 2005 as a reservist, a CPT role that involves serving on a team one to three months a year.

CPT's mission is building partnerships to transform violence and oppression through creative nonviolent action and strengthening grass-roots initiatives. CPT places teams at the invitation of local peacemaking communities that are confronting situations of lethal conflict. They currently have teams in Palestine, Colombia, Iraqi Kurdistan, and Canada. These teams seek to follow God's Spirit as it works through local peacemakers who risk injury and death by waging nonviolent direct action to confront systems of violence and oppression.

CPT enlists the whole church in an organized, nonviolent alternative to war. Its initial roots among Mennonites, Church of the Brethren, and Quakers have spread into a broad ecumenical network that together works towards a vision of communities that embrace the diversity of the human family and live justly and peaceably with all creation.

Each year CPT projects host two to four delegations that give participants a window into the work of peacemaking. These delegations are nine to 14 days long and are the first step to getting more involved with CPT. After completing a delegation, participants can apply to join CPT's peacemaker corps. More information is available at www.cpt.org and from Merwyn DeMello at 773-376-0550 or peacemakers@cpt.org.

Is Your Leadership Term About to End?

If your leadership term is ending this month, you must 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.

Girls' Right to Education Comes at High Cost

Malala Yousafzai is a young education advocate in Pakistan who would not back down and for that she was shot in an assassination attempt for which the Taliban claimed responsibility. The Taliban call her "western-minded," but others say she is simply committed — committed to girls' right to education. Malala said in an interview at age 11, "I don't mind if I have to sit on the floor at school. All I want is education. And I'm afraid of no one."

Malala is determined to ensure that women and girls enjoy their right to participate fully in their communities. She dares to stand for education — girls' education for the 32 million girls her age and younger in Pakistan and worldwide — in a place where schools are regularly destroyed for teaching girls.

LCWR members are encouraged to stand with Malala by:

- Signing a petition to members of Congress asking them to prioritize education in foreign aid www.campaignforeducationusa.org/forms/sign/educationfunding2012.
- Sending a message to Ambassador Rehman, the Pakistani ambassador to the United States, asking the government to redress the attempted assassination of Malala Yousafzai by immediately guaranteeing that every girl in Pakistan has access to high-quality education action.aft.org/c/622/p/dia/action3/common/public/?action_KEY=4973.



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Upcoming Justice Events

USCCB Webcast—Strengthening the “The Circle of Protection after the Election” — At a time of persistently high poverty and joblessness, programs that serve poor and vulnerable families in their time of need must be protected. Shortly after Election Day, Congress will return to the Capitol to complete its work for the year. The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops’ (USCCB) will host a post-election webinar on Thursday, November 8 at 2:00 PM to share what is at stake and what needs to be done to ensure that Congress helps, rather than hurts, people at home and abroad struggling to live in dignity. Registration: www.surveymonkey.com/s/JZM9PSG

IIC Post-Election Analysis & Discussion — On November 12 at 4:00 PM the Interfaith Immigration Coalition (IIC) will provide a post-election breakdown of who won, who lost, and what it means for immigrants’ rights advocacy in 2013. The call will feature analysis by Angie Kelley, vice president for immigration policy and advocacy with the Center for American Progress and other experts. By registering at bit.ly/P50Id.1 one will receive a link to the visual portion of the call. Audio can be accessed by calling (605) 475-4700 (participant access code: 833838#).

CLINIC and USCCB’s MRS — “Migration Policy and Advocacy in 2013 and Beyond: New Challenges and New opportunities,” in Atlanta, GA December 3-5. The conference will examine immigration from both federal and local perspectives and will discuss immigration policy advocacy as well as other issues including federal legislation, refugee protection, detention, and migration trends. LCWR’s social mission office is planning a caucus for women religious Tuesday, December 4 at 5:00 PM. Information is available at www.justiceforimmigrants.org.