

Update

*A Publication of the
Leadership Conference of Women Religious*

March 2019

2019 LCWR Assembly Imagining Leadership in a Global Community August 13 – 16, 2019 Scottsdale, Arizona

The 2019 LCWR assembly will be an important gathering as women religious leaders explore together the exciting movements occurring within contemporary religious life – globally and nationally.

The event aims to help participants learn to practice anticipatory leadership during this unique era in religious life. In this time of unprecedented shifts in the understandings of religious life and in the exercise of leadership, how can one lead in ways that anticipate the emergence of the new within this lifeform? In the midst of the deep transformation occurring in religious life, how can leaders find meaning? How can leaders assist their members to claim their own critical part in birthing the new life that is aching to come forth?

The focus of this assembly evolved from the interest expressed by LCWR members to further explore the focus of the 2018 assembly which noted the urgent need to foster communion and connection in a world plagued by polarization and division. The planning is also informed by the feedback conference members provided through the 2018 LCWR needs assessment. This assembly intends to address some of the interests and questions raised by members in that assessment including:

- **Understanding this moment in US religious life from the perspective of the Paschal Mystery.** What kind of leadership is needed to ground and support the new that is emerging?
- **Seeing US religious life in the context of the global sisterhood.** What are the questions being explored by women religious leaders throughout

the world and how might US women religious grow even more integrally connected to the global sisterhood?

- **Envisioning new ways of leading religious life.** What creative ways are emerging for leading religious into a new reality?

Pat Murray, IBVM, executive secretary of the International Union of Superiors General (UISG), will serve as the assembly keynote. In her position at the heart of global religious life, she has observed the variety of ways in which religious life leadership is being exercised throughout the world. Her presentation and reflections will explore how leaders can learn to focus on the new and find meaning in their ministry in this evolutionary era.



As with recent LCWR assemblies, the 2019 gathering will incorporate contemplative processing so that participants may collectively listen carefully for the movement of God's Spirit among them. A variety of opportunities will be offered that allow participants to hear diverse perspectives on religious life and leadership, particularly from some of the other national organizations serving religious life, and to process what they hear with other leaders. The members will also engage with the recommendations coming from the LCWR emergent planning process with the goal of affirming a direction for LCWR for the next 10 years.

Additional information about the assembly as well as registration materials will be available soon. In the meantime, all are encouraged to reserve the assembly dates and begin making plans to attend. This will be an assembly where every voice is needed and where every member will wish to be present as LCWR looks to its next 10 years.

From the LCWR Presidency

Time to Move

by Teresa Maya, CCVI — LCWR Past President

The Copper Canyon extends majestically in the heart of the Sierra *Tarahumara* in Chihuahua, Mexico. The wondrous mountainous region is home to the *Raramuri* Native American community. Ricardo La Puente, a Jesuit who lived there many years, tells a story of serving among them that changed his understanding of ministry profoundly. One morning, after having spent many cold nights in their local settlement in the heart of the sierra he woke up and they were all gone! He scrambled to collect his belongings and run after the community. When he finally caught up with them several hours later, he questioned why they had left, and the *Raramuri* looked at him and simply said: “it was time to move.” He accepted the response as humbly as he could, because he realized his role was simply to accompany the community. He reflected he had to learn to notice when it was “time to move,” because every single time they moved, they never told him!

The *Raramuri* are a nomad community, and perhaps have a lot to teach us in this postmodern world that is in constant movement. When I consider the staggering number of people on the move around the world, or even just the sheer numbers of people requesting refugee status along the Unites States-Mexico border, I cannot help wondering how we are now called to accompany this people. It just may be that it is truly time to move once again. For so long we have developed a ministry of “place” -- a hospital, a school, a community project -- but the people we are called to accompany are moving. Eleazar López, an Amerindian theologian, explains that we have thought of religious life in terms of a place rather than as a journey. He said “There is a new inspiration in nomad communities, their movement resonates



We need to return to the itinerancy that characterized Jesus to find some clues about how to move.

anew and holds new significance. We thought them primitive, but they hold a wisdom that will be most helpful. Their sense of identity depends on the community they move with, not on a place!”¹

How are we open to being “displaced” in order to accompany a people on the move? And even more significantly, how are we cultivating the capacity to notice who and how people are moving? I believe that our communities and our conference are now blessed with the collective wisdom of the intentional journey of renewal we began many decades ago. The contemplative dialogue process that we have embraced holds the key to this new noticing. Communal discernment will help us know how to and when to move together.

We need to return to the itinerancy that characterized Jesus to find some clues about how to move. His identity was tied to a community that moved with him, not to a place. He embraced a lifestyle that did not require the status of place of traditional culture and was free of possessions or cultural “absolutes.” Jesus’ itinerancy allowed him to encounter others on the journey, and these encounters transformed and broadened his horizons.

Jesus moved; it is time for us to move once again. As leaders we need to find the different ways in which to encourage and support the different “moves” — physical, spiritual, and intellectual- that are required for us to accompany the People of God!

¹ Fr. Eleazar López, “Taller Interculturalidad y Vida Religiosa”, CIRM Conference, 2016.

LCWR Planning Process Draws Upon Wide Variety of Perspectives

During the months of December and January, the LCWR Emergent Planning Process Design Team conducted focus groups as part of the effort to discern how women’s religious life can best respond to the current realities of the world and religious life today. The process is designed to help LCWR determine how it can continue to best serve those who are leading religious institutes, particularly in the next 10 years.

Using videoconferencing, the design team met with various groupings of people across the country including: past presidents and executive directors of LCWR, directors of other organizations serving religious life, facilitators and consultants working with congregations of women religious, young women religious, religious of a variety of ethnicities and cultures, and members of the public from an array of fields including healthcare, education, justice, and the media. Members of the design team facilitated the focus groups and were assisted in each one by members of the board and staff who served as listeners/recorders.

On February 18 and 19, the LCWR board, the design team, the LCWR staff, and 14 invited guests who lead many of the organizations serving religious life, will participate in a charrette to review the input obtained from the focus groups with an eye to how religious life is shifting and changing. Donna Fyffe of CommunityWorks is facilitating the planning process, and will lead the charrette. Following the February gathering, materials will be prepared for the LCWR members to consider at the spring regional meetings.



The emergent planning process has included focus groups conducted via videoconferencing with a wide variety of participants

Further processing with all LCWR members will take place at the August assembly with the goal of affirming a direction for LCWR for the next 10 years.

Norma Pimentel, MJ to Receive LCWR Outstanding Leadership Award

LCWR is pleased to honor Norma Pimentel, MJ with its 2019 Outstanding Leadership Award. A religious sister of the Missionaries of Jesus, she serves as the executive director of Catholic Charities of the Rio Grande Valley, the charitable arm of the Diocese of Brownsville, Texas. She has been instrumental in organizing the local response to the recent surges of Central Americans seeking asylum in the United States, including helping to establish the Humanitarian Respite Center in McAllen, Texas. Her work for those in need has captured the attention of the media, particularly in September 2015 when Pope Francis acknowledged her work with immigrants during a satellite broadcast prior to his visit to the United States. Norma and her mission have subsequently inspired thousands of others across the country in the work of welcoming and supporting immigrants and asylum seekers.



The daughter of Mexican immigrants, Norma was born in Texas while her parents were awaiting response from US authorities on their application for residency. She grew up crossing the border between Texas and Mexico to be with family on both sides of the border. Her own family experiences and her ministries with persons in desperate need have made her a powerful and effective advocate especially for those fleeing violence and seeking a better life.

Norma will be honored during the August 2019 LCWR assembly in Scottsdale, Arizona at the closing banquet. At that time, participants will learn much more about this outstanding leader as LCWR acknowledges her and her many contributions to building a safer and more welcoming world for the thousands of lives she has touched.

LCWR Issues Statement on the Sexual Abuse of Catholic Sisters by Clergy

Following Pope Francis' public acknowledgement of the sexual abuse of Catholic sisters by members of the clergy, LCWR issued a statement voicing its hope that the pope's gesture was "some comfort for those who have survived abuse and that it hastens the much-needed repair of the systems within the Catholic Church that have allowed abuse to remain unaddressed for years."

The LCWR statement noted that women religious have not always reported sexual abuse for the same reasons as other abuse victims: a sense of shame, a tendency to blame themselves, fear they will not be believed, anxiety over possible retaliation, a sense of powerlessness, and other factors.

The sexual harassment and rape of Catholic sisters by priests and bishops has been discussed in meetings of leaders of orders of Catholic sisters from around the world for almost 20 years. Although the incidences seem most prevalent in developing countries, harassment and rape of sisters have been noted in other countries as well, including in the United States. A study conducted in 1996 by St. Louis University indicated that there were sisters in the United States who had suffered some form of sexual trauma by Catholic priests. Often those sisters did not share this information even with their own communities.

"Our own understanding of occurrences of abuse of all forms has grown and deepened over these last two decades as we have learned more about the hiddenness of abuse and its long-range devastating effects on the lives of survivors," reads the statement. "We acknowledge that, as sisters, we did not always provide environments that encouraged our members to come forward and report their experiences to proper authorities. We regret that when we did know of instances of abuse, we did not speak out more forcefully for an end to the culture of secrecy and cover-ups within the Catholic Church that have discouraged victims from coming forward. Communities of Catholic sisters have worked hard in recent years to have in place what is needed to deal responsibly

and compassionately with survivors and will continue to make the protection from abuse of all persons a priority."

LCWR acknowledged with gratitude the efforts of the International Union of Superiors General (UISG), that has worked for the past two decades to raise awareness within the church and in the public of the abuse occurring among communities of Catholic sisters particularly in the developing world. LCWR pledged its support and collaboration in the efforts being made by UISG to call the church to accountability for this problem.

LCWR also offered two recommendations to rectify the issue of sexual abuse by clergy:

1. The creation of mechanisms for the reporting of abuse in an atmosphere where victims are met with compassion and are offered safety.
2. Refashion the leadership structures of the church to address the issue of clericalism and ensure that power and authority are shared with members of the laity. The revelations of the extent of abuse indicate clearly that the current structures must change if the church is to regain its moral credibility and have a viable future.

Numerous media outlets throughout the world covered the story of Pope Francis' remarks, and some included the LCWR statement as well as interviews with LCWR officers and members. Links to some of these follow:

- [Associated Press: US nuns urge changes to church structure to address abuse](#)

(continued on page 5)



Carol Zinn, SSJ appeared on "The Weekly with Wendy Mesley," a Canadian public broadcasting program

- NPR: [Pope Francis Addresses Abuse of Nuns by Clergy](#) (Interview with LCWR executive director Carol Zinn, SSJ)
- Global Sisters Report: [Women Religious Leaders Call for Decisive Action Against Abuse](#)
- BBC Radio: [#NunsToo: Nuns abused by priests and bishops](#) (Interview with LCWR president Sharlet Wagner, CSC)
- NPR: [Pope Francis Admits Priests, Bishops Have Sexually Abused Nuns](#) (Interview with LCWR member Kathleen Bryant)
- Canadian Broadcasting Corporation: The Weekly with Wendy Mesley [Pope acknowledges sexual abuse of nuns](#) (Interview with Carol Zinn, SSJ)

LCWR Encourages Members to Prepare to Respond to Allegations of Abuse

LCWR issued a [statement](#) acknowledging the horrific actions of some Catholic sisters who perpetrated sexual abuse of persons entrusted to their care and noting how the conference has encouraged its members to both prepare to respond to an allegation and to assure that abuse does not occur in the future.

Since the early 1990s most congregations of women religious have invested time and resources into developing policies and procedures to respond to allegations of abuse that are made, to deal appropriately with persons bringing allegations as well as with those accused, and to take preventative measures.

Sexual abuse of minors by women in the general population and in the population of women religious is statistically very low. This does not in any way minimize the pain and suffering of a victim, or deny the reality of sexual abuse of minors by women and by women religious. All congregations are encouraged to review their own policies for responding to an allegation and assure that their members know how to protect children and vulnerable adults in their care.

LCWR Participates in Leadership Summit of Sexual Abuse

LCWR president Sharlet Wagner, CSC was among more than 200 church leaders (laity, religious, and clergy) from across the country who attended the Catholic Partnership Summit, coordinated by the Leadership Roundtable, held in Washington, DC from February 1-2. Focusing on the abuse crisis in the Catholic Church, the days included panel presentations followed by small group discussions, with scribes recording the main points of the discussion at each table and compiling results. Three focus areas for the three panel presentations and table discussions were:

- Defining the root causes of the sexual abuse crisis and the culture change required to address it;
- Emerging best practices in bishop accountability and co—responsibility; and
- Emerging best practices for responding to sexual abuse.

The summit focused on considering concrete recommendations that would make the most impact. “It was energizing and hope-filled to be in conversation with committed Catholics who mirrored the face of the church in that they represented laity, religious, and clergy, with laity being very much in the majority,” said Sharlet. “I particularly appreciated the emphasis on addressing the root causes of the crisis. This group did address rules and structures to prevent and report abuse, but the greatest energy seemed to be around addressing a culture of clericalism and abuse of power that is at the heart of the crisis.”

The Leadership Roundtable will issue a document with the summit recommendations.



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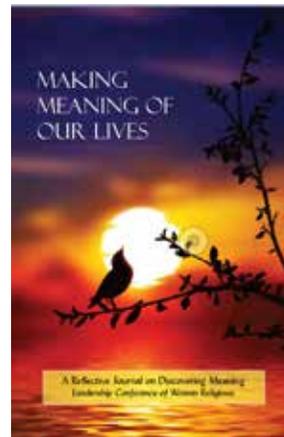
Editor: Annmarie Sanders, IHM
 8737 Colesville Road, Suite 610 | Silver Spring, MD 20910
 Phone: 301-588-4955 Fax: 301-587-4575
 E-mail: asanders@lcwr.org Website: lcwr.org

LCWR Participates in Missionary Oblate Partnership Conference on Church Renewal

LCWR executive director Carol Zinn, SSJ was among 60 people invited to the 2019 De Mazenod Conference held by the Missionary Oblate Partnership at the Oblate School of Theology in San Antonio, Texas from February 15-17. This annual gathering chose as a theme for this year “A Pathway of the Heart: Renewing the Catholic Church” as it focused it on the crucial issues facing the church and the role of all its members in renewing it.

The participants, who represent a variety of professions and included leaders from many Catholic organizations, engaged with a number of speakers including: Kerry Robinson, global ambassador, Leadership Roundtable; Julie Craven, communications consultant; Seamus Finn, OMI, chair, Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility; Mary Gautier, editor, Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate; Janine Geske, justice emeritus, Wisconsin Supreme Court; Rev. Dan Griffith, professor, St. Thomas University School of Law; and Ron Rolheiser, OMI, president, Oblate School of Theology. The outcome document of the conference proceedings will be presented to the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops.

LCWR secretary Theresa Sandok, OSM was also among the invited participants.



Order the 2019 LCWR Reflection Book

LCWR is producing a new 2019 reflection book, *Making Meaning of Our Lives*. This collection of reflections written by more than 40 LCWR members builds on an insight shared by LCWR 2018 president Teresa Maya, CCI that “our new apostolic call is centered on meaning.” She said, “We need to tell our story, the deep meaning of our lives, that allowed us to do everything we have done.... Our story needs to be shared with a world desperate for meaning and purpose.”

In their reflections, the writers share how they practice meaning-making by describing how they understand and make sense of what happens in their lives. By sharing stories from their own journeys, they provide inspiration for the readers to find deeper meaning and purpose in their own lives, especially as we grapple with the larger questions of life.

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. Copies may be ordered online. 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 only print the number of copies that are pre-ordered. **Orders must be received by March 1, 2019.** This is a pre-order. The books will be printed in March and mailed in April 2019.



EMERGING QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION AND CONVERSATION

Can we give away some of what we do so that we can attend to what is ours to do as women religious today?



Upcoming LCWR Dates

LCWR Practicing Leadership: How to Embrace a Vital and Vibrant Future Workshop

*Bon Secours Retreat & Conference Center
Marriottsville, MD
March 4 — 6, 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*

LCWR Practicing Leadership: How to Embrace a Vital and Vibrant Future Workshop

*Carmelite Spiritual Center | Darien, Illinois
September 17 — 19, 2019*

Leading from Within Retreat

*Redemptorist Renewal Center | Tucson, Arizona
January 12 – 17, 2020*

LCWR New Leader Workshop

*Conference Center
University of St. Mary of the Lake | Mundelein, Illinois
March 26 — 29, 2020*

Imagining Justice

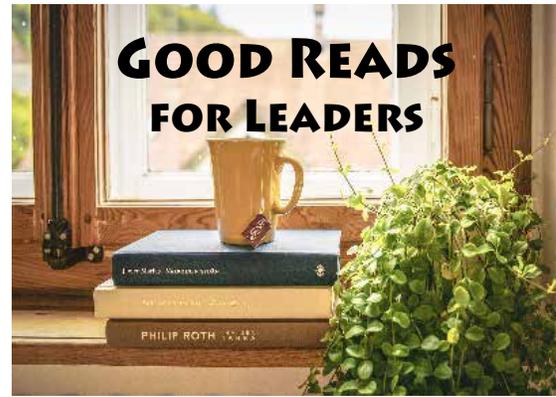
*Bon Secours Retreat & Conference Center
Marriottsville, MD
April 20 – 23, 2020*

LCWR Assembly

*Dallas, Texas
August 11 — 15, 2020*

Leading from Within Retreat

*San Pedro Retreat Center
Winter Park, Florida
January 10 – 15, 2021*



A Man Called Ove: A Novel By Fredrik Backman

Recommended by Theresa Sandok, OSM

I need to begin with a disclaimer. *A Man Called Ove* is not a new book. This Swedish novel first appeared in English in 2014, and a movie based on it came out the following year. But if the book passed you by when it first came out, as it did me, then I think you'll appreciate this plug for a great read.

Ove, on first meeting, is not a very likable character. He is a middle-aged man, rude and dismissive to just about everyone he meets, extremely opinionated and judgmental, angry and disillusioned with life. This curmudgeon, whom you begin to think has no redeeming qualities, little by little reveals himself to be an enormously kind, sympathetic, and vulnerable human being – without losing any of his crusty exterior.

One of the many lessons leaders might take from this book is how to deal with difficult people. Ove's very pregnant neighbor Parvaneh seems intuitively to know how to reach him. She refuses to be put off by his petulant façade and refuses to give up on him. Most of all, she notices things: She notices he is hungry, and sends her two little girls over with a warm plastic container of rice with saffron and chicken. She notices he is idle, and asks him to teach her to drive. She notices he is lonely, and invites him to babysit her children.

A Man Called Ove is a beautiful story of the redemptive power of human interaction.

Consider Participating in LCWR's Cartridge Recycling Program and Contribute to its Scholarship Fund

LCWR and many of its member congregations participate in an ink cartridge recycling program that helps protect the environment and conserve non-renewable resources.



LCWR works with a recycling company, Empties-4-Cash, an organization that rewards those who recycle by paying for each usable empty ink jet cartridge. LCWR applies the earnings received to the scholarship fund that assists LCWR members who wish to attend the LCWR national assembly but cannot afford to do so.

LCWR congregations are invited to assist in building the scholarship fund by sending their cartridges directly to Empties-4-Cash and having their earnings applied directly to the scholarship fund. Congregations are encouraged to invite companies and other organizations to participate in this effort as well.

Anyone interested in the program is asked to contact Carol Glidden at 301-588-4955 or cglidden@lcwr.org and provide a contact person, email, phone number, and address where labels can be sent. Empties-4-Cash will send the labels to all participants after the contact with Carol is made. These labels are prepaid Fed-Ex labels and can be adhered to any box to be shipped directly to Empties-4-Cash at no cost to you. Once a shipment of cartridges is processed, LCWR will receive a check from Empties-4-Cash that will go to the scholarship fund.

Standing Against Racism Resource Sharing Column



Waking Up White by Debby Irving
Reviewed by Eileen Haynes, SCL

In her book, *Waking Up White*, Debby Irving shares experiences of her life which unknowingly shaped and perpetuated racism in her. She explains, "I became aware of how my own internalized white ways of thinking and acting interfered with my best intent of helping to bridge the racial divide." Debby provides reflective questions for the reader to consider ways that family values, education, lifestyle, and culture shape attitudes and perspectives of racism. *Waking Up White* is an invitation to recognize and embrace the problem of racism within oneself.

Vatican Releases Human Trafficking Resource

The Migrants and Refugee Section of the Vatican Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development recently released a set of guidelines to help worldwide Catholic communities address the scourge of modern-day slavery. The publication, **Pastoral Orientations on Human Trafficking**, offers Catholic dioceses, parishes, religious congregations, schools and universities, and others willing to respond, a view of the nature of and challenges posed by human trafficking. "The variety of its forms, the heterogeneity of its victims and its many types of perpetrators make HT a very complex problem. . . . Such complexity requires a multidisciplinary approach in order to understand the phenomenon and its causes, to identify the processes and persons involved in it - victims, perpetrators, and consumers (knowing or unwitting) - before appropriate responses can be shaped." (Introduction, 8)

The publication is the result of six-months of study and consultation with partners including **Talitha Kum**, the international network of consecrated life against trafficking in persons. The 36-page document includes a definition of human trafficking and addresses its causes, and dynamics, as well as the need to bolster the church's response. Additional resources are available on the website of the **Migrants and Refugees Section**.



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

Catholic Organizations Issue Joint Statement Urging Congress to ‘Face the Crisis’

On January 21, Martin Luther King Day, a group of national and international Catholic social justice organizations, including LCWR, delivered a [joint statement](#) to Congress entitled *Facing the Crisis: A Catholic Offer of Wisdom and Courage to Congress*.



The statement called on members of Congress to courageously take the first steps to end the political polarization that is eroding democracy in the United States. “Inspired by Dr. King, we declare that this is a moment of moral crisis in the United States,” the statement reads. “The habit of inflicting suffering on some for the supposed benefit of others is all too common in both our political discourse and policies today.”

Recalling the wisdom of Pope Francis and the courage of Dr. King, the Catholic groups challenged members of Congress to, “break free of the division and polarization that grip our nation.” They pointed to six “signs of the times” that require united action: creeping corruption; justice for immigrants; racial justice; climate change; violence and fear of every sort; and the need for a politics focused on the common good and at the service of justice and peace.

Speaking with one voice, the 11 Catholic organizations affirmed the hope of faithful Catholics, and citizens of every faith tradition, that this nation can turn away from the politics of division and polarization and together address the urgent concerns of these times. Additional Catholic organizations are invited to [endorse the statement](#) and to share it widely.

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.

Catholic Social Ministry Gathering Attracts Justice-Seekers from Across the Country

LCWR’s associate director for social mission, Ann Scholz, SSND, was among the more than 500 Catholics from across the country who met in Washington, DC, February 2-5 for the Catholic Social Ministry Gathering (CSMG). This annual convocation provides Catholic social justice leaders the chance to respond to pressing domestic and global challenges and the opportunity to connect, learn, pray, and advocate on Capitol Hill.

The theme for this year’s gathering, *Let Justice Flow: A Call to Restore and Reconcile*, was rooted in the commitment of the disciples of Jesus to cultivate God’s justice for the common good at home and around the world, and to heal the brokenness communities face including racism, incivility, and poverty.

The gathering featured an opening keynote as well as 14 workshops on such topics as: domestic and international poverty; the bishops’ recent pastoral on racism; restorative justice; and nonviolence. Eli S. McCarthy, director of justice and peace, Conference of Major Superiors of Men and Ann teamed up to offer a workshop, “Nonviolent Communication to Transform Conflict and Build Community,” in which they explored and practiced skills to positively engage conflict whether across political parties, within the church, or in families and communities.

On the final day of CSMG attendees headed for Capitol Hill to meet with members of Congress and make the case for justice. Among the requests that participants brought to their lawmakers were asks to: (1) provide a path to citizenship for Dreamers; (2) provide permanent protection to Temporary Protected Status (TPS) recipients; (3) ensure that existing protections for unaccompanied children and asylum seekers are maintained; (4) fund nutrition and housing programs; (5) support environmental stewardship; (6) preserve funding for domestic and international poverty reducing and humanitarian programs; (7) invest in diplomacy; and (8) pass the Global Fragility and Violence Reduction Act. Backgrounders on these issues can be found [here](#).



- Joint letter from DC Catholic Coalition to members of Congress addressing the political polarization that is eroding democracy and threatening the integrity of democratic institutions and urging them to affirm their responsibility to promote the dignity of every person and to work for justice and the common good. LCWR (1/21/19)
- Faith organizations letter to Congress calling for urgent action to address climate change already posing risks to the health, economy, and quality of life in the US and abroad. LCWR (1/23/19)
- Letter to Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell and Leader Charles Schumer asking them to reject the Trump-McConnell *End the Shutdown and Secure the Border Act* and to reopen the government immediately instead of holding federal workers hostage to extreme immigration proposals. LCWR (1/23/19)
- Endorsement of a Senate Resolution to support refugee resettlement and urging the administration to resettle a robust number of refugees in an effort to meet the rising global need. LCWR (1/28/19)
- Letter to members of Congress urging them to utilize their oversight authority to protect and rebuild the US Refugee Admissions Program so that its legacy can continue to be a pillar of US leadership. LCWR (1/28/19)
- Endorsement of the *Raise the Wage Act of 2019*, as introduced by Senators Bernie Sanders (VT) and Patty Murray (WA), and Representatives Robert C. “Bobby” Scott (VA), Mark Pocan (WI) and Stephanie Murphy (FL). LCWR (1/30/19)
- Faith organizations letter to Secretary of Homeland Security Kirstjen Nielsen calling on her to extend for 18 months and to re-designate Temporary Protected Status for South Sudan. LCWR (1/31/19)
- Interfaith letter to leaders of Congress and appropriations conferees urging them to reach a bi-partisan compromise that respects the dignity and needs of immigrants and funds the government. Carol Zinn, SSJ (2/4/19)

- Letter to members of the House of Representative urging them to support the bipartisan *Joint Resolution 37* which invokes the *War Powers Resolution of 1973* to end the unconstitutional US military participation in the Saudi-led military campaign in Yemen. LCWR (2/11/19)
- Clergy letter to Senators Tim Kaine and Mark Warner asking them to intervene with Immigration and Customs Enforcement on behalf of Rosa Gutierrez Lopez, a resident of Fredericksburg, Virginia, who has recently taken sanctuary at Cedar Lane Unitarian Universalist Church in Bethesda, MD. Ann Scholz, SSND (2/9/19)

Senator Markey and Representative Ocasio-Cortez Introduce Green New Deal Resolution

On February 7, Senator Ed Markey (D-MA) and Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (D-NY 14) introduced a resolution that outlines the vision and goals of the much-anticipated Green New Deal which seeks to address the climate crisis while also tackling racial, economic, and gender inequality.



The draft framework is a non-binding resolution that builds on the findings of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, [Global Warming of 1.5°C](#), and the [Fourth National Climate Assessment](#) and it lays out five goals, 14 projects, and 15 requirements. The hope is that it will inspire legislation to address the goals, give life to the projects, and meet the requirements it lays out. Proponents acknowledge that it will not be easy to craft effective legislation which does not alienate either the right or the left while still providing for the expansion of green energy, the “greening” of buildings and transportation systems; and the massive reduction in emissions and pollution.

The House resolution, [H.Res. 109](#) has attracted 67 Democratic co-sponsors. The [Senate Resolution](#), which has not yet been dropped, has already garnered 10 co-sponsors, all Democrats. Gaining bi-partisan support may be difficult. David Roberts lays out the challenges facing the Green New Deal in his article on Vox.com, [There's Now an Official Green New Deal. Here's What's In It.](#)

ACWR Provides Archival Assistance to Congregations

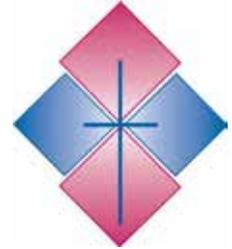
Congregations that need help preserving and planning for their historical archival records may be interested in Custodia, an initiative that the Archivists for Congregation of Women Religious (ACWR) began 3 years ago. Custodia offers one-on-one assistance for archives of congregations and communities facing closure, mergers, or reorganizations; it was begun when ACWR board members saw an unanswered need for member (and non-member) communities to make plans and face uncertain futures.



Rather than offer absolute answers, Custodia emphasizes that there is no “one size fits all” solution. This service discusses and advises on the needed steps religious archivists and their leadership can take in preparation for moves, transfers, or closure. Custodia has assisted more than 30 archives as well as dozens of archivists and leaders, offering sensible and achievable steps to solutions to what seem to be overwhelming issues. [More information is available](#) at the ACWR website, or by contacting ACWR directly: archivistsacwr@gmail.com.

News from the National Religious Retirement Office

The National Religious Retirement Office (NRRO) is pleased to offer *Leading With Pastoral Presence*, a new workshop on supporting members with addictions, depression, and other challenges. Scheduled for April 8-10, this workshop will offer practical knowledge and resources for healthcare support partners and those in leadership. It will be held at the Carmelite Spirituality Center in Darien, Illinois. [More information and a registration form](#) are available online.



Applications for Direct Care Assistance were distributed in January. Any institute that has not received this information is asked to contact Monica Glover: mglover@uscgb.org or (202) 541-3216. Whether or not one's institute is eligible for or requests funding, all are urged to complete the application. Each community's information helps the NRRO compile a more complete picture of retirement needs and assets among US religious institutes. The deadline for submitting information is March 31. NRRO asks all to join in praying for the donors who make this funding



NRVC/CARA Study on Recent Trends in Newer Members to Religious Life is Underway

Every religious superior was recently sent a two-page questionnaire to complete. The survey focuses on the characteristics of the institute or society, its vocation and formation programs, and newer members who have entered and/or left within the past 15 years. Leaders are asked to complete this survey regardless of whether or not the institute has newer members. More information

about the survey as well as the questionnaire are available. [Additional information as well as the questionnaire are available online.](#)

Workshop Registrations Open for Summer and Fall Institutes

This year, NRVC is offering nine workshops for all those entrusted with the assessment of discerners and candidates. The institute features 19 presenters representing diverse fields to enhance professional competencies, engage in networking on a national level, and provide an inclusive approach to vocation ministry and the full flourishing of religious life. [Information about workshops for the Summer Institute in Chicago](#) and the [Fall Institute in Leavenworth](#) are available online.



RFC Announces Two Upcoming Webinars

The Religious Formation Conference is offering two upcoming webinars.

History and Ecclesiology of the Sex Abuse Crisis

Presenter: Massimo Faggioli, PhD
Wednesday, March 20 at 1:00pm CST

Dr. Massimo Faggioli, professor of theology and religious studies at Villanova University and contributing writer to *Commonweal* magazine, will give an overview of his current work on the Catholic Church and sex abuse. Massimo is a church historian and has served on the faculty at the University of St. Thomas (St. Paul, Minnesota) from 2009 to 2016, where he was the founding director of the Institute for Catholicism and Citizenship (2014-2015).

Pope Francis's Gaudete Et Exultate

Presenter: Dan Horan, OFM, PhD
Tuesday, April 9 at 1:00pm CST

Dan Horan, a Franciscan Friar of the Holy Name Province, assistant professor of systematic theology and spirituality at Catholic Theological Union (Chicago, Illinois), and columnist for the *National Catholic Reporter* will discuss his forthcoming book on this encyclical by Pope Francis titled *Reading, Praying, Living Pope Francis's Rejoice and Be Glad: A Faith Formation Guide*. In addition to the RFC, Fr. Horan's presentation is also sponsored by the National Association of Vocation and Formation Directors (NAVFD) of Canada.

Webinars are open to everyone at no cost. [Registration required](#).

News from the UN

March 8—International Women's Day

The theme for International Women's Day 2019 is "Think equal, build smart innovative change". The theme will focus on innovative ways in which to advance gender equality and the empowerment of women, particularly in the areas of social protection systems, access to public services and sustainable infrastructure.



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 2019, "Mitigating and countering rising nationalist populism and extreme supremacist ideologies 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 63rd session of the [Commission on the Status of Women \(CSW\)](#) will take place at United Nations Headquarters in New York, March 11-22. Representatives of Member States, UN entities, and ECOSOC-accredited non-governmental organizations (NGOs) from all regions of the world are expected to attend.



CSW 63 will consider how social protection systems, access to public services, and sustainable infrastructure can contribute to gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls. It will also review women's empowerment and the link to sustainable development detailed in the [agreed conclusions](#) of its 60th session.

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by Joan Mumaw, IHM
President
www.solidarityfriends.org

Greetings from our new offices with LCWR and RCRI at 8737 Colesville Road, just a block away from our old office! We are all settling in well and recently hosted an open house for friends in the area. We hope that, if you are in the area, you will stop by to visit us. There is an elevator to the 6th floor!

Some of you know that we are in the process of building the capacity of *Friends in Solidarity*, the US partner to *Solidarity with South Sudan*, to enable us to grow our efforts to raise awareness of what is happening in South Sudan and to increase financial support for the work of Solidarity. We have grown well these past three years and are now at a point where we need to slowly expand our staff. We have recently contracted with a part-time communications person with expertise in social media.

We are also advertising for a part-time office administrator. We would really prefer to have a religious since the project is one of religious from many congregations and many countries collaborating together to build the capacity of the people of South Sudan. The person would need to have good computer skills and basic accounting skills. She/he could have flexible hours but would need to work from the Silver Spring office. [A job description is available.](#)

I often say that for me this is “life after leadership.” Sometimes there are people who are moving out of demanding positions who have the skills to do this work and would like a part-time position. If this person had the skills, interest and passion to take on more responsibility, this could be considered. The real need is to make contacts with potential donors and develop more proposals and opportunities for funding.

There is also a great need for staff to join *Solidarity with South Sudan*, a ministry initiated by the UISG/USG. We need people with skills for teacher training (primary school level); nurse and midwife training; as bursar, nurse and social worker for the agricultural project and the IDP camp; and persons with pastoral skills to build the capacity of diocesan pastoral teams. International congregations may have personnel in other countries that would be interested in this experience. I would be happy to talk with interested persons or congregations about these needs. jmumaw.solidarity@gmail.com

Thanks for your willingness to share this with members of your congregation and/or others whom you know.

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

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The two-week meeting provides an excellent opportunity for interested parties to discuss themes of the commission and other critical gender equality issues. In addition to the formal commission sessions, there will be a variety of UN-organized panels of experts, as well as NGO-organized side events. For more information, please visit the website of the [NGO Committee on the Status of Women](#).

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 assesses progress and gaps in the implementation of the 1995 Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, as well as emerging issues that affect women and girls.