



February 2014

## LCWR New Leader Workshop Accepting Registrations

March 27 - 30, 2014

University of St. Mary of the Lake, Mundelein, Illinois

### Who should attend?

Women religious leaders who have been in office for two years or less — either as first-time leaders, or those returning to leadership.

### Is it recommended that participants come as leadership teams?

The workshop will be beneficial for anyone in congregational leadership today. However, councils are strongly encouraged to attend as a group, if that is possible.

### Why would this workshop be beneficial?

This workshop will provide invaluable information on topics of critical importance for religious life leaders in the areas of spiritual leadership, canon and civil law, human development, team-building, care of the elderly, and the impact of the Vatican investigations on leadership today. It will provide opportunities for councils to explore the implications of the presentations for them as a group and for their congregations. The days will be set in a context honoring the mystery, grace, and power of God's Spirit. In this setting, the faculty and participants will share their insights in a spirit of mutual learning.

Space is limited

Registration forms are due by **February 28, 2014**

Forms are available at

[lcwr.org/sites/default/files/calendar/attachments/nlwregistration2014.pdf](http://lcwr.org/sites/default/files/calendar/attachments/nlwregistration2014.pdf)



## From the LCWR Presidency

# Our Dreams Soar Higher

by Florence Deacon, OSF — LCWR Past President

Recently Sisters Carol Zinn, Sharon Holland, Janet Mock and I had a team building and planning session at the Jersey Shore. The final morning I took an invigorating walk along the beach, watching the sun streak across the waves for the first time since we arrived. I had been trying to coordinate breaks in our meeting with breaks from the drizzle and fog, and was finally successful!



constantly amazes us by his divine creativity.” What a vivid way to describe the need to recover the original freshness of the Gospel and create “more eloquent signs and words with new meaning for today’s world.”<sup>2</sup>

Pope Francis stresses the importance of theology being in dialogue with other sciences and human experiences in discerning how to bring the Gospel to various cultures and groups. When reason and the sciences become tools to proclaim the message, he poetically

I have a vivid memory of the first time I flew in an airplane which broke through the rain clouds and soared into bright sunshine that dazzled my eyes. I hadn’t realized there was sun above the drizzle! My reflections on *The Gospel of Joy* have similarly helped me soar into the sunshine above. I’ve been inspired by how Pope Francis pointed out new paths for the church’s journey and new ways to adapt the Gospel to our time with the use of vivid imagery. His descriptive words often stop me in my tracks, make me smile, and then take a second look.

*Pope Francis stresses the importance of theology being in dialogue with other sciences and human experiences in discerning how to bring the Gospel to various cultures and groups.*

concludes, “water is changed into wine.”<sup>3</sup>

By his actions Pope Francis has repeatedly illustrated the meaning of the Incarnation in his own life. Here

he explains, “To believe that the Son of God assumed our human flesh means that each human person has been taken up into the very heart of God.” He later describes our relationship to the earth. “Thanks to our bodies, God

His introduction contains a litany of passages from scripture filled with expressions of joy which then concludes with the down-to-earth observation, “There are Christians whose lives seem like Lent without Easter.” What a reality check for us! He explains that especially in difficult circumstances joy might adapt and change, “but it always endures, even as a flicker of light born of our personal certainty that, when everything is said and done, we are infinitely loved.” Later he scolds bluntly, “an evangelizer must never look like someone who has just come back from a funeral!”<sup>1</sup>

Pope Francis acknowledges that the Christian message has been through periods of darkness and ecclesial weakness but “Jesus can also break through the dull categories with which we would enclose him and he

has joined us so closely to the world around us that we can feel the desertification of the soil almost as a physical ailment, and the extinction of a species as a painful disfigurement.” And he expresses his desire to enter fully into the fabric of society, sharing the lives and concerns of all, rejoicing with those who rejoice and weeping with those who weep, ending “arm in arm with others, we are committed to building a new world.”<sup>4</sup> What beautiful ways to describe our relationship with God, with the earth, and with others, as arm in arm together, we live out the Gospel in our time and place!

1. Pope Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*, 24 November 2013, paragraph # 6, 10.
2. #11
3. #133, 132
4. #178, 215, and 269



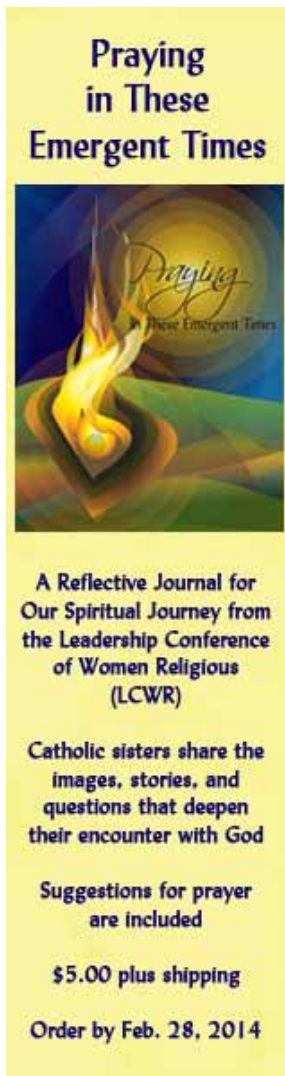
## LCWR Makes Reflection Book Available for Sale in Gift Shops

LCWR is offering its reflective journal, *Praying in These Emergent Times*, to the gift shops and retreat centers of its members. Its low cost allows for a substantial mark up and a greater profit margin for those who sell it. Last year, more than 23,000 copies of the reflection book were sold.

Members are asked to forward information on the book to their congregation's gift shop and retreat centers.

In the book, LCWR members share the images, stories, symbols, and questions that are shaping how they encounter God and how they pray. Artwork by Catholic sisters as well as questions and suggestions for deepening the reader's own prayer accompany the reflections.

Orders are being taken through February 28. This 56 page paperback is offered at \$5.00 (plus shipping), and discounted rates are available for ordering in bulk. Orders can be placed online at [lcwr.org/publications/praying-these-emergent-times](http://lcwr.org/publications/praying-these-emergent-times).



## LCWR Board to Meet in February

All LCWR members are asked to remember the LCWR national board and staff as they meet from February 16 to 20 at the Redemptorist Renewal Center in Tucson, Arizona. Information on the board's proceedings will be shared in the March 2014 issue of *Update*.



## LCWR Members Encouraged to Reflect on Emerging Insights

A new LCWR contemplative insight card is now available for downloading. The January 2014 card (pictured above) is available at: [lcwr.org/resources/leadership-pathways/behold](http://lcwr.org/resources/leadership-pathways/behold).

Save the Dates!  
 LCWR Assembly  
 Nashville, Tennessee  
 August 12 — 16, 2014

LCWR



LCWR has begun the portion of its Leadership Pathways initiative that hopes to involve the entire membership. This particular part of Leadership Pathways is based on the conviction that engaging in authentic and courageous conversation leads to meaningful change.

The Institute for Conversational Leadership describes the process in the following way: “Conversational leadership emphasizes keen attention, self-discipline, and a certain kind of artistry in engaging and communicating with others. Conversational leadership does not mean indulging in endless talking but rather identifying and engaging with the crucial and often courageous exchanges that facilitate meaningful change. It begins with a leader understanding that one of the critical functions in shaping and evolving an organization is to consciously address the essential conversations which form how people think and act. . .

“... engaging in conversational leadership is to ‘invite what you do not expect,’ bringing you to the frontier of what is emerging in your organization and asking you to turn into it, rather than away from it.”

LCWR invites all members to participate in this portion of Leadership Pathways by:

- Reading the reflection paper, “Leading from a Contemplative Stance.” This paper provides insight into the wider context that is informing LCWR’s approach to leading from a contemplative stance. [lcwr.org/sites/default/files/page/files/contemplation\\_article.pdf](http://lcwr.org/sites/default/files/page/files/contemplation_article.pdf) .
- Reading “An Interview with Donald Goergen, OP” found in *LCWR Occasional Papers* - Summer 2013. [lcwr.org/sites/default/files/page/files/lcwr-occasional\\_papers\\_-\\_interview\\_with\\_don\\_goergen\\_op\\_-\\_summer\\_2013.pdf](http://lcwr.org/sites/default/files/page/files/lcwr-occasional_papers_-_interview_with_don_goergen_op_-_summer_2013.pdf) .
- Using the suggested reflection process for your

individual reflection and leadership team reflection and sharing. [lcwr.org/sites/default/files/page/files/process\\_for\\_ind\\_and\\_team\\_for\\_spring\\_final\\_form.pdf](http://lcwr.org/sites/default/files/page/files/process_for_ind_and_team_for_spring_final_form.pdf).

- Members are encouraged to adapt these processes to suit their needs and the styles their teams have found helpful.

The fruits of the members’ individual reflections and leadership team conversations will provide the framework for the contemplative process at the spring LCWR regional meetings. It is hoped that this process will foster member-wide, contemplative engagement around the big questions facing women religious today which will increase their collective capacity to lead creatively from an emerging future.

Any questions about the process may be directed to LCWR’s associate director of programs, Marie McCarthy, SP at [mmccarthy@lcwr.org](mailto:mmccarthy@lcwr.org).

## Upcoming LCWR Dates

### Imagining Justice: A Learning Lab for Leaders and Justice Promoters

*Bethany Retreat Center*

*Lutz, Florida*

March 3 — 6, 2014

### LCWR New Leader Workshop

*Conference Center - University of St. Mary of the Lake*

*Mundelein, Illinois*

March 27 — 30, 2014

### LCWR Assembly

*Nashville, Tennessee*

August 12 — 16, 2014

### Leading from Within Retreat

*Bethany Retreat Center*

*Lutz, Florida*

January 11 — 16, 2015

### LCWR Assembly

*Houston, Texas*

August 11—15, 2015



## Keeping in Touch

by Rebecca Ann Gemma, OP

*Dominican Sisters of Springfield, Illinois*

Since the apostolic visitation and the doctrinal assessment, the sisters in our congregation have taken more active interest in LCWR and its mission. Before the national assembly, our prioress sends out a notice stating that leadership will be attending and asks for prayers. Upon our return, we make accessible to them the DVDs and CDs of the national assembly keynote speakers. Many have taken advantage of using these materials and a number of sisters have used them with study and prayer groups.

Over the past couple years, however, the leadership team wanted the sisters to have more familiarity with the day-to-day events we were experiencing during the assembly. So, each day, one of the team members would be responsible to send a short narrative to our sisters via our email listserv. The content is both informative and reflective and at times, humorous. We may highlight some key points of the keynote presentation; communicate the overall tone of the gathering; or relay how a topic applies to some of our dialogues related to living authentic religious life. This practice connects us with our sisters in the present moment and invites further conversation upon our return. The sisters have shared their appreciation for our “keeping in touch.”



Any team that has discovered a helpful practice is invited to submit a brief description of the practice to the Contemporary Religious Life Committee via LCWR associate director for communications Annmarie Sanders, IHM at [asanders@lcwr.org](mailto:asanders@lcwr.org).



- Letters to members of the Senate and House Appropriations Committees urging them not to include immigration detention bed mandate language in the appropriations bill that funds the US Department of Homeland Security for FY 2015. LCWR (12/13)
- Letter to President Obama urging the Administration to request flexibility to transfer funds between the accounts for immigration detention and alternatives to detention and to reject the principle of a mandated daily detention level in its FY 2015 budget request to Congress. LCWR (12/13)
- Letters to Robert Goodlatte, chairman of House Committee on the Judiciary, and ranking member John Conyers Jr opposing new legislative restrictions to the asylum system. LCWR (12/12/13)
- Statement of support for Senator Barbara Boxer's Humane Short Term Custody Act, legislation aimed at improving the standards of treatment for individuals detained by US Customs and Border Protection (CBP). LCWR (12/19/13)
- Letter to Assistant Secretary Roberta Jacobson regarding the attack on Annie Bird of Rights Action by a Honduran colonel. Ann Scholz, SSND (12/20/13)
- Letters to House and Senate members of the Appropriation Subcommittees on the Department of State urging Appropriators to enact a robust 302(b) allocation for State Foreign Operations. LCWR (12/23/13)



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## IGNITE Conference on Fighting Sex Trafficking to be Held in March

At the LCWR assembly in August 2013, Nix Conference & Meeting Management announced its new national effort to fight sex trafficking, the Exchange Initiative, as well as the IGNITE Conference: Sparking Action Against Sex Trafficking. This conference will be held at the St. Louis Union Station Hotel, a DoubleTree by Hilton (Hilton has signed the ECPAT-USA Child Protection Code of Conduct for Travel & Tourism) and will be held from March 2-4, 2014. ([www.exchangeinitiative.com/ignite](http://www.exchangeinitiative.com/ignite))

Programming for the conference will focus on: criminal justice professionals, first responders (ER/clinic personnel, social workers, medical workers), corporations, non-profits and faith-based organizations, and educational administrators and counselors. Conference highlights will include: an address by Congresswoman Ann Wagner, a session on effective sting operations and case studies, and a panel session with survivors.

LCWR members who know of a stakeholder who would benefit from the conference are asked to contact Kimberly Ritter at 314-645-1455 or [kritter@exchangeinitiative.com](mailto:kritter@exchangeinitiative.com).

## Immigration Reform Legislation May Move in the House

Immigration reform legislation may finally move forward in this session of the House of Representatives. There have been a number of signs in the last few weeks that suggest that Speaker Boehner may be preparing to move ahead on repairing the broken US immigration system.

It has been more than six months since the Senate passed its comprehensive reform legislation, S. 744. While many consider it a flawed bill, most acknowledge that it is a step forward. Since then there has been continued pressure from reformers and lots of speculation in the press, but very little legislative action in the House.

Finally, it appears that Speaker Boehner and the House Republican leadership may be preparing to move some kind of legislation forward. The House speaker and his

Republican leadership team have announced that they are preparing to release their principles for an overhaul of the nation's immigration laws. While the white paper has long been in the works, its release would indicate that the Republican conference is ready and willing to put forth its own proposals as a counterpoint to legislation passed by Democratic-controlled Senate and comprehensive bills already introduced by House Democrats.

It is hard to predict exactly when Speaker Boehner might allow floor debate on reform legislation. Some have suggested that he will wait until after the filing deadlines for 2014 primary elections in order to protect Republican incumbents from primary challenges by their Tea Party colleagues. That would push any meaningful votes until late March at the earliest. Others think floor votes will have to wait until after the close of the primary season or at least until primaries in states like Texas and California are decided. That could push floor action off until June.

Speculation among some Members of Congress, White House officials, and immigration reform activists suggest the most likely strategy will be to push to pass legislation in the House by late spring, after most Republican lawmakers have finished their primary campaigns. That would leave time for a House and Senate conference committee to present a compromise bill to President Obama which he could sign before the 2014 midterm election campaigns really heat up in the fall.

If the House cannot manage to pass legislation before the August recess, Congress might be able to accomplish immigration reform during the lame duck session after the November elections. If that too fails, it's back to the drawing board because all pending legislation, including S. 744, expires with the end of the 113th Congress on January 3, 2015.

## 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](http://lcwr.org/members/lcwr-membership-information).

## Day of Prayer for Trafficked Persons Set for February 8

The US Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) Committee on Migration has designated February 8 as an annual day of prayer for survivors and victims of human trafficking. February 8 is the feast day of St. Josephine Bakhita, who was kidnapped as a child and sold into slavery in Sudan and Italy. Once Josephine was freed, she dedicated her life to sharing her testament of deliverance from slavery and comforting the poor and suffering.



The USCCB's anti-trafficking program is encouraging Catholics to host prayer services, to reflect on the experiences of those who have suffered through human trafficking and exploitation and to pray for the emotional, physical, and spiritual healing of trafficked persons. In addition Catholics are encouraged to host awareness-raising events to educate their communities about this form of modern-day slavery. More information on the work of USCCB's anti-trafficking Program is available at: [www.usccb.org/about/anti-trafficking-program](http://www.usccb.org/about/anti-trafficking-program).

## Gun Violence Prevention Sabbath Scheduled for March 13-16

Faiths United to Prevent Gun Violence, a coalition of 50 national denominations and faith-based organizations, including LCWR, has announced plans for its second annual Gun Violence Prevention Sabbath to be celebrated March 13-16. The weekend will include prayer events from coast to coast and begin with a centerpiece event at the National Cathedral in Washington, DC on the evening of Thursday, March 13.

LCWR is hoping that 100 or more of its LCWR members' congregations will pledge to participate. That participation can be as simple as including a prayer, hymn, petition, or moment of silence in already planned worship services or, as ambitious as, hosting a special prayer service or vigil. Organizers simply hope to bring the nation together to remember those who have lost

their lives to gunfire, pray for those whose lives have been forever changed because of the loss of a loved one, and continue the discussion on how communities of faith can work together to help reduce gun violence.

Congregations and communities can pledge to join the Gun Violence Prevention Sabbath at [www.marchsabath.org](http://www.marchsabath.org). Participation in the Sabbath is an opportunity for LCWR members to implement the LCWR 2013 assembly resolution to end violence.

## NRRO Seeks Applicants for Two Positions

The National Religious Retirement Office (NRRO) recently received a \$2.5 million grant from the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation, payable over three years. The grant will support the NRRO's ongoing efforts to help religious communities in the United States address serious retirement-funding shortfalls. Specifically, the funds will underwrite the development of educational opportunities and resources that promote effective property management and utilization, a major issue impacting both elder care delivery and retirement funding. The funding also will be used to assess the impact of NRRO's Planning and Implementation process in order to improve future services and identify best practices.

NRRO currently is seeking a person to design and coordinate the property planning effort. The ideal candidate will have a thorough understanding of the issues related to religious institute property management. Former religious institute leaders who have dealt with property issues or persons with professional background in facilities management will be considered. The project director could work from the NRRO offices in Washington, DC or from his or her current location with periodic travel to DC. This position will entail a three-year commitment and significant travel.

NRRO also is still seeking a full time staff person to serve as assistant director of retirement Services. This staff member will assist religious institutes in identifying resources and in making sustainable choices about care delivery for the elder members. The work will focus particularly on those institutes with a high median age and/or few members. As a new position, there will be flexibility in developing the specifics of the job as it evolves.

## Congress to Consider Human Trafficking Legislation

The 113th Congress will be considering legislation to combat human trafficking as it begins its second session. Bills to watch include HR 1732: Strengthen the Child Welfare Response to Trafficking Act. Introduced by Congresswoman Karen Bass (D-CA), the proposed legislation would extend protections to child victims of trafficking within the child welfare system. Provisions of HR 1732 call upon the child welfare system to develop a response to the growing problem of child trafficking. Between 60% and 80% of trafficked children have had some contact with the system. Senators Ron Wyden (D-OR) and Rob Portman (R-OH) introduced a similar piece of legislation in the Senate.

Two other bills currently before Congress seek to raise the status, influence, and effectiveness of the Department of State office tasked with monitoring and combatting human trafficking. These sister pieces of legislation, HR 2283 and S 1249, express the sense of Congress that the Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking of the Department of State will be more effective in carrying out duties mandated by the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000, if the office's status is changed to that of a bureau within the Department and the Office is headed by an assistant secretary with direct access to the secretary of state, rather than an ambassador-at-large.

Congress watchers also expect that some kind of business transparency legislation will be introduced in 2014. The anti-trafficking community would welcome legislation to ensure that corporations work to prevent trafficking or commercial sexual exploitation from occurring within their supply chains.

## CRS Rice Bowl Webinar

Once again Catholic Relief Services (CRS) will sponsor Operation Rice Bowl, a program to encourage prayer, fasting, and almsgiving during Lent. In preparation CRS is hosting a webinar especially for religious educators and catechists. Registration: [www.surveymonkey.com/s/YVRH32P](http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/YVRH32P). Additional information about Operation Rice Bowl and CRS: [www.crsricebowl.org/about/how-to-practice-lent](http://www.crsricebowl.org/about/how-to-practice-lent).



Continuing the theme of Congress 2013, "Rooted in the Mission of Jesus: Reaching Out to the Margins," the Religious Formation Conference will offer a series of workshops on the implications of mission in the 21st century for members of religious congregations. Presenters in the series will be Richard Gaillardetz, PhD, Joseph Professor of Theology at Boston College, and Caroljean Willie, SC, PhD, NGO representative at the United Nations, Sisters of Charity Federation. More information will be forthcoming and posted on [www.relforcon.org](http://www.relforcon.org).

May 2-3, 2014  
Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet  
Latham (Albany), New York

September 19-20, 2014  
Felician Franciscan Sisters  
Chicago, Illinois

September 26-27, 2014  
Providence Health and Services  
Renton (Seattle), Washington

October 10-11, 2014  
Atchison Heritage Conference Center  
Atchison, Kansas

October 17-18, 2014  
Our Lady of the Lake Convent  
San Antonio, Texas



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