

ANNUAL REPORT

Leadership Conference of Women Religious
2007 — 2008

Inspired by
the radical call of the
Gospel,
led by
God's Spirit,
and companioned by
one another,
we embrace our time as *holy,*
our leadership as *gift,*
and our challenges as *blessings.*

LCWR Call 2004 — 2009





Annual Report of the Leadership Conference of Women Religious

The Next Frontier: Religious Life at the Edge of Tomorrow

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*There is something about
being on the frontier that stirs
imagination...*



J. Lora Dambroski, OSF; Mary Whited, CPPS; and Mary Dacey, SSJ

The theme of this annual report, *The Next Frontier: Religious Life at the Edge of Tomorrow*, engenders a certain optimism and hope among us, the presidency of the Leadership Conference of Women Religious. There is something about being on the frontier that stirs imagination, shakes one out of “settling in,” and encourages one to shed what is no longer needed.

What a gift it is to witness the commitment and courage of so many pioneers like you, the leaders who live on the edge of something new!

We, women religious, continue to move beyond the borders. After all, settling in is not an option for pioneers. When pioneers move into the frontier, they are changed significantly by what they encounter. We, too, continue to change as we reconfigure our congregations, creatively use our property and resources, and draw from a wealth of experience we have in ministering, living, and praying together.

This year the Leadership Conference of Women Religious has been present on many frontiers:

- Our gatherings of the national board have surfaced the energy and creativity of our regions and supported our members who continue to stand with and for the poor and who strive to address significant issues of our time, including climate change, trafficking, immigration, war, and recovery from the hurricanes in the Gulf Coast.
- Our meetings with CMSM, CMSWR, the Bishops’ Committee on Consecrated Life, and Vatican dicasteries,

have deepened the dialogue that struggles toward mutual understanding and respect.

- Our history project, “Women & Spirit”, promises to become a reality as a result of the hard work and inspiration of so many leaders, staff, and organizations who want the story of US women religious to be told well.
- Our outreach across the Americas through the InterAmerican Committee, our presence at the USCCB International Policy Committee, and LCWR presence to Iraqi refugees living in Syria and Lebanon continue to press us beyond our borders and sensitize us to the realities of the broader world.

We are privileged to serve you, the members of the Leadership Conference of Women Religious. Together let us continue to envision a “Shared Future” and to sensitively address the challenging questions that will move religious life into tomorrow.

*Mary Whited, CPPS, LCWR President
Mary Dacey, SSJ, LCWR Past President
J. Lora Dambroski, OSF, LCWR President-Elect*



Carole Shinnick, SSND

From the Frontier to the Mountains

*Our foremothers and founders stepped into the chaos and the unknown of their day,
trusting in God's good guidance and great providence.*

In our time, we are called to do the same. — LCWR Call 2004-2009

I am writing this reflection about the year that has passed while flying westward from Maryland to California. So far we have been in the air for about three hours. I have checked the geography below several times to see where we are. I have no idea. For a couple of hours we have been flying over that expanse of land that once was the frontier. Thanks to the Homestead Act of 1850, this part of the country is neatly arranged like tidy blocks of fabric on a patchwork quilt.

The families and farmers who crossed oceans in ships and then prairies in wagons would be startled to look up to see our jetliner streaming through the sky. The land below was plowed and planted, hoed and harvested by people we have never met. They lived and died, loved and fought, sang and groaned like us. But they are two-dimensional figures - sepia people in rumpled clothes standing in stubbly fields.

At the 2007 assembly in Kansas City, we tried to reach through time to touch the spirit of these ancestors of ours. We tried to taste the hunger that drew people from the homes they knew towards an unfamiliar horizon. What did they see? What kept them going? Why did some stop? Why did some move on? We remembered our own pioneers of religious life and hoped that their daring hearts and God-fueled stamina lived on in our DNA.

This year we will meet in the mountains. At some point, those ancestors of ours noticed the flat prairie become rocky

and pitched. Then they saw the mountains – at first a purple chalk stroke on the horizon that gradually took on shape and height. Apparently some pioneers saw the mountains as a sign that it was time to settle, and they did. But others saw them as craggy thresholds begging to be crossed.

The land below our plane has changed as I have written this. Gradually the patterned fields yielded to the grey-beige desert, and then to stony foothills. And now the mountains stretch below us in every direction. Crowned by snow and carved by ancient winds and waters, they are both lovely and foreboding. I try to imagine mule trains winding through them headed west.

A year after meeting in what was once the frontier outpost of Kansas City, we will meet in the Rockies of Denver. And in those holy mountains we will recall the transformative power of peaks. The air is thinner, the views amazing, and the effort to climb daunting. And-in that closer-to-heaven space God has often spoken intimately to other climbers. We know that when they came down, they were never the same again. May that be true for us as well if we venture to scale God's Holy Mountain.

Carole Shinnick, SSND
LCWR Executive Director



2007 LCWR Assembly: Exploring the Next Frontiers for US Religious Life

Approximately 750 members and associates gathered in Kansas City, Missouri in August 2007 to explore what it means to be standing on the edge of the next frontier of US religious life.

As the assembly speakers named some of the challenges of these times, they also spoke to the unique opportunities this moment in religious life offers. One speaker, psychologist Lynn M. Levo, CSJ, noted that the word frontier comes from the 15th century French for borderland, the region at the edge of or outside of a settled area. She said, "The frontier offers the psychological sense of unlimited opportunity, future orientation, and the shedding of restraints due to scarcity."

As Lynn noted, the absence of surety that comes with frontier living makes it easier to

- Be creative and try new ways of living
- View change as transitory and as exploration
- Regard mistakes as new ways of learning, rather than negatives to be avoided.

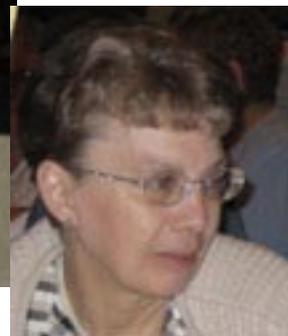
It is from this perspective of frontier living that LCWR members began the 2007-2008 year, open to the call to be pioneers who courageously and boldly step into the unknown.

LCWR president
Mary Dacey, SSJ:

"If religious are called to be prophetic, to face frontiers and to live on the edge, our ministry of leadership bears an even greater responsibility."



Keynoter Laurie Brink, OP: *"It is to the margins that religious life must again move, in order to be true to its original and renewed impetus toward holiness."*



THE YEAR IN REVIEW



Panel moderator Mary Waskowiak, RSM with panelists John L. Allen; Fran Ferder, FSPA; Lynn Levo, CSJ; and Simone Campbell, SSS

2007 LCWR Outstanding Leadership Award recipient Joan Chittister, OSB:
"I accept this award as a challenge to go on. I accept it as a call not to quit, never to stop, because I do truly believe that 'though nothing we do changes the past, everything we do changes the future.'"



The assembly participants prayed for peace at the World War I Memorial in Kansas City



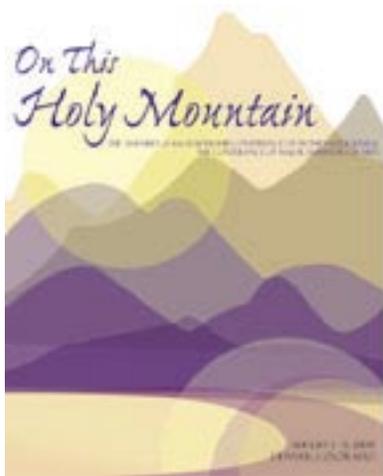
Planning for the 2008 LCWR-CMSM Assembly

The LCWR national office staff and a committee of members met in October to plan with the staff and members of the Conference of Major Superiors of Men the 2008 assembly to be held in Denver, Colorado. Noting that in scriptural stories the ascent of a mountain is often a sacred and transformative moment, the committee chose "On This Holy Mountain" as the assembly title.

The speakers and activities planned for the assembly will focus on some of the transformative questions that women and men religious leaders are asking today.



Members of the 2008 LCWR-CMSM Assembly Planning Committee and staff members of the two conferences met at the conference site in Denver



Preventing Sexual Abuse

Conscious of the sacred trust that public ministry implies, LCWR has encouraged its members and their congregations to make every effort possible to prevent all sexual exploitation and abuse of children and young people. To that end, LCWR published a listing of a variety of resources that could be used to provide ongoing educational opportunities related to child sexual abuse and its prevention. The resources include written material, speakers, websites, and audio-visual materials suitable for continuing education purposes.

LCWR has also alerted its members that it will reissue an inventory in fall 2008 to assess the preparedness of LCWR member congregations to address allegations of past member sexual misconduct and to prevent future sexual misconduct by members.

LCWR's Shared Future

LCWR members recognize that their work as leaders is not only for their own religious institute, but is also for the refounding of consecrated life itself. Acknowledging the critical role that LCWR can play in visioning religious life for a new time, the conference entered into a process that began in fall 2007 to look at the matters of critical importance for religious life leaders today and the role of LCWR in relation to these issues.

All LCWR members were invited to consider three questions:

- In the context of changing realities, what are the most significant issues, concerns, or questions that we as leaders need to be exploring at this time?
- How can we as leaders focus our collective energies to respond to these issues, concerns, and questions?
- How do we insure ongoing leadership for LCWR?

The LCWR regions spent time at their fall meetings to discuss their responses to these questions and then shared their insights with the LCWR Shared Future Task Force. Five significant themes emerged from this data which the task force identified as:

- the future of religious life
- collaboration and partnership
- relationship with the church
- leadership
- prophetic stance.

The task force will continue to explore these findings and their significance for the conference at the national assembly. Many opportunities will be provided for members to share their insights on how LCWR can be most responsive to the changing realities of religious life today.

New Orleans Recovery Project

Suzanne Hall, SNDdeN began working in spring 2007 as the coordinator of the New Orleans Recovery Project, an effort co-sponsored by LCWR and FADICA (Foundations and Donors Interested in Catholic Activities). The organizations created this position in response to the call of LCWR members at their 2006 assembly for a coordinated effort to assist the women religious in New Orleans in their recovery from the 2005 hurricanes.

Suzanne has met with each of the eight congregations in New Orleans and has consulted with business and civic leaders from the city as well as with representatives of the Army Corps of Engineers. Following these consultations, she prepared a major report on the socio-economic situation in New Orleans as well as a comprehensive inventory of the needs of each of the New Orleans communities.

To date Suzanne has approached approximately 45 foundations, charitable trusts, and potential donors with proposals for funding. She has raised close to \$3 million for the New Orleans congregations with several grant proposals still under review.

Thus far convents have been rebuilt and refurnished; an educational program for infants and pre-schoolers has received assistance; an adult learning center has been infused with new life; a project in the upper 9th ward assisting residents has been broadened; and major building projects for schools and retirement homes are beginning to receive matching grants.

In light of Suzanne's successful work, and because of a recent generous donation from the SC Ministry Foundation of Cincinnati, the position of project coordinator has been funded for an additional six months.

McGraw-Hill/Irwin Textbook Featuring New Orleans Leaders

The moving testimony of the four LCWR members from New Orleans who spoke at the 2006 LCWR assembly is now helping students who are preparing for leadership roles in the future. The higher education publishing company, McGraw-Hill/Irwin, released a textbook in late 2007 on leadership which included an accompanying DVD with the testimonies of these women who led their congregations through the aftermath of the 2005 hurricanes. The book is designed for use with students studying leadership during times of crisis.



The LCWR-FADICA-sponsored New Orleans Recovery Project has raised nearly \$3 million to assist the women religious in this area to continue their ministries.

A DVD produced by McGraw-Hill/Irwin designed for students studying leadership features the testimonies of Mary Kay Kinberger, MSC; Sylvia Thibodeaux, SSE; Beth Fitzpatrick, O Carm; and Dorothy Trosclair, OP who were in leadership of their New Orleans-based congregations when the hurricanes hit in 2005.



Commission on Religious Life and Ministry

The Commission on Religious Life and Ministry (CRLM) meets once per year in order that the four religious conferences may continue dialogue around significant topics. Members of LCWR, the Conference of Major Superiors of Men, the Conference of Major Superiors of Women Religious and the US Conference of Catholic Bishops met in Baltimore in November.

Representatives of each conference prepared and delivered reflections based on John Allen's megatrends shaping Catholic life and thought. Both Thomas Picton, CSSR and Bishop J. Terry Steib, SVD spoke about Catholic identity in a secular world. Regina Pacis Coury, FSGM spoke about the influence of John Paul II on the world.

LCWR's past president Mary Dacey, SSJ reflected upon the impact of globalization on religious congregations. Her words, relating to LCWR's 2007 assembly image of religious on the edge of the next frontier, called for religious to be culturally sensitive as well as to place themselves where the need is greatest.



Some of the members of the Commission on Religious Life and Ministry: Gabrielle Mary Braccio, RSM; Paul Lininger, OFM Conv (back to camera); Bishop Terry Steib; J. Lora Dambroski, OSF



Members of the LCWR national board engage in small group conversations about the LCWR shared future process.

LCWR Board

The LCWR national board assumes responsibility for planning for the conference, setting the theme and direction for the annual assembly, the stewardship of all conference funds, and many other significant roles. The board members meet twice a year and participate in online communications on a regular basis.

Among the issues addressed this year by the board at its August meeting in Kansas City, Missouri and its February meeting in Tucson, Arizona were the following:

- The LCWR Shared Future process
- LCWR leadership and the office nomination process
- The LCWR dues structure
- The search process for a new LCWR executive director
- The LCWR-FADICA response to the women religious in New Orleans
- The 2008 LCWR-CMSM assembly and the 2009 LCWR assembly
- The upcoming inventory of members on policies, procedures, and practices on preventing sexual abuse and responding to allegations of abuse
- The LCWR history exhibit
- The annual visit of LCWR to the Vatican offices
- An update on the Center for the Study of Religious Life



Annual LCWR-CMSM Joint Board Meeting

The national boards of LCWR and CMSM meet together once each year in February. This year the two boards welcomed three speakers to their meeting to speak on the following:

- Dan Ward, OSB, director of the Legal Resource Center for Religious, spoke on ways to work with local bishops regarding diocesan policies and actions which may have an impact on religious institutes. Areas touched on included employment contracts, sexual abuse settlements, fundraising and leasing norms, and requests for statements of members' suitability for ministry.
- Gerald F. Kicanas, bishop of Tucson and newly-elected vice-president of the United States Bishops Conference (USCCB), spoke on the restructuring of the USCCB and the 35th gathering of the bishops of the Americas.
- Janice Bader, CPPS, director of the National Religious Retirement Office (NRRO), spoke on the plan to revise NRRO's service, operations, and funding processes.



The LCWR and CMSM boards met in February 2008 in Tucson, Arizona where they discussed issues of mutual interest to both conferences.



Annual Visit to Vatican Offices

Each spring representatives of LCWR and CMSM travel to Rome to meet with a variety of officials at the Vatican. This year the LCWR delegation consisted of Mary Whited, CPPS; J. Lora Dambroski, OSF; Mary Dacey, SSJ; and Carole Shinnick, SSND. The purpose of the trip is to enhance communication between the US national conferences and the Vatican. This year Cardinal Franc Rodé and members of the staff of the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life (CICLSAL) held one meeting with the LCWR delegation alone and another jointly with the LCWR delegation and five members of the executive committee of the Council of Major Superiors of Women Religious (CMSWR) so that LCWR and CMSWR members would have an opportunity to engage in dialogue with one another and the CICLSAL staff.

The LCWR delegation also met with representatives of the Congregations for the Doctrine of the Faith, the Pontifical Council for Pastoral Assistance to Healthcare, the executive committee of the International Union of Superiors General, and 22 members of the various councils of congregations that have members in the United States. The delegation also joined with the CMSM representatives and visited the Congregation for Oriental Churches, the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, the Pontifical Council for Migrants and Refugees, and the Pontifical Council for Inter-Religious Dialogue.



Cardinal Franc Rodé of CICLSAL; Tom Picton, CSsR (CMSM president); Mary Dacey, SSJ and Tom Johnson, FSC at the CMSM-LCWR reception

LCWR Participates in Papal Visit to US

During Pope Benedict XVI's April visit to the United States, LCWR members, officers, and staff participated in several of the events in both Washington, DC and New York.



Mary Dacey, SSJ was one of 50 people selected to receive communion from the pope during the liturgy at Nationals Park in DC. (Photo by L'Osservatore Romano)



(Standing) Mary Dacey, SSJ; J. Lora Dambroski, OSF; Augustine DiNoia, OP (CDF staff); and Carole Shinnick, SSND (Seated) Cardinal William Levada, prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith and Mary Whited, CPPS

Programs Offered by LCWR



Leading from Within Retreat

Twenty-five LCWR members gathered at the Redemptorist Renewal Center at Picture Rocks in Tucson, Arizona in January for the fourth annual LCWR Leading from Within Retreat. Directed by María Elena Martínez, OSF and Margaret O'Brien, OSU, the retreatants spent the days in prayer and reflection on various spiritual life themes as they relate to religious life leadership.

2008 Systemic Change Think Tank

Earth as Teacher: The Dynamics of Emergent Processes engaged 18 LCWR members and 21 justice and peace coordinators in the 2008 Systemic Change Think Tank held in Scottsdale, Arizona. Participants learned much from both the presenter/facilitator, Paula González, SC and from one another and especially appreciated the presence of both elected leaders and justice coordinators.



New Leader Workshop

More than 90 leaders participated in the annual New Leader Workshop held in March in Plymouth, Michigan. A team of presenters provided insights on key issues for leaders and shared information on spiritual leadership, finance, canon and civil law, leading in times of transition, team-building, and communications.



Keeping Members Informed and Networked



The LCWR newsletter, *Update*, is published 11 times a year to keep members informed of conference news as well as activities of the officers, committees, and national office.

THE Occasional Papers

The LCWR *Occasional Papers* is a journal published twice a year by the conference that offers articles and reflections on topics pertinent to women religious leaders.



LCWR utilizes a broadcast online messaging system for nearly all its communications to members, associates, and subscribers, whose numbers total more than 1800.

Reflection Book

For the fifth year LCWR published a daily reflection book with contributions written by 53 members. *At the Edge of Tomorrow* focuses on moving into the future with a sense of deep hope, a desire to be creative, a willingness to dwell with unanswered questions, and a sense of possibility as religious life stands at the edge of tomorrow. Approximately 23,000 copies were distributed throughout the country and beyond.



Resolutions to Action, published four times a year, provides theological reflection, social analysis and suggested actions on various justice issues.

LCWR Resource Sharing Forum

The conference offers its members the option of participating in the LCWR Resource Sharing Forum, a listserv where LCWR members and associates may ask one another a question or share information. One hundred-fifty people now participate in the forum.

The InterAmerican Committee

The InterAmerican Committee, representing the women and men religious of the Americas, held its annual meeting in Washington, DC in March. The committee is comprised of the presidents and executive directors/general secretaries of the Confederation of Latin American Religious (CLAR), the Canadian Religious Conference (CRC), the Conference of Major Superiors of Men (CMSM), and LCWR.

At the meeting the committee updated one another on important events taking place in each organization and continued the conversations from previous years around significant matters in religious life today. The committee also spent time exploring global ecological issues, particularly the issue of water.



History Exhibit

LCWR has committed a significant amount of time and resources to the creation of an exhibit to chronicle the largely untold story of the vast contributions of Catholic sisters to US history and culture. Through the efforts of the LCWR History Committee, much progress has been made in working toward the goal of opening an exhibit in 2009 that will travel throughout the country for a period of three years. Some of the work of this year included:

- Replacing the working title for the exhibit, *Pioneers, Poets & Prophets: Catholic Sisters in America*, with the new title, *Women & Spirit: Catholic Sisters in America*
- Raising more than \$3.8 million for the design, construction, and traveling of the exhibit for three years
- Contracting with the firm Seruto & Company of Pasadena, California to design and construct the exhibit
- Initiating a website for the exhibit: www.womenand-spirit.org that will be expanded to serve as a valuable resource for the public and the media
- Collaborating with the firm Lord Cultural Resources to research possible venues for the exhibit across the country
- Visiting various museums in order to publicize *Women & Spirit*, initiate application processes, and tour other creative exhibits. These venues have included the Smithsonian, the Ellis Island Immigration Museum, the Chicago Museum of Science and Industry, the Autry National Center in Los Angeles, and the Cincinnati Museum Center
- Working with leaders, archivists, and communications directors of institutes of women religious throughout the country to secure artifacts and other historical and contemporary information about the lives of Catholic sisters
- Researching, writing, editing, and critiquing all of the content of the exhibit so that it adequately reflects the rich and diverse history of Catholic sisters in this country
- Communicating with donors, members and others about the progress of the exhibit through a special donor newsletter



Women & Spirit website



Cover of brochure designed to inform museums about the exhibit specifics



LCWR Advocates for Justice Globally and Nationally

Significant Issues Addressed since the 2007 Assembly

Debt Cancellation for Impoverished Countries: Many LCWR member congregations participated in the Jubilee Sabbath Fast and Advocacy days for a congressional hearing on the Jubilee Act and celebrated passage of the act by the House of Representatives.

Iraq War: Many members signed the petition “Catholics for an End to the War in Iraq” and some participated on local panels; many also lobbied against increased funding for the war. LCWR was represented at one of the events in Washington, DC marking the fifth anniversary of the war. Following the conference’s participation in the Catholic Relief Service delegation to Lebanon and Syria, LCWR intensified efforts on behalf of Iraqi refugees, with focus on increased funding for assistance and acceleration of resettlement processes by the United States.

State Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP): Although many members participated in successful efforts to get the legislation passed by both the House and Senate, it was vetoed by the President.

Immigration: Since there is no possibility of the passage of comprehensive immigration reform with this Congress, there were ongoing efforts to support the Development, Relief and Education for Alien Minors (DREAM) Act, and to oppose the SAVE Act, an enforcement only bill.

Darfur: Members advocated for the Sudan Accountability and Divestment Act which passed both houses of Congress unanimously, and for emergency funding for UN peacekeepers in Darfur.

Torture: Both the House and Senate approved legislation that would outlaw torture tactics by all US government agencies, but the bill was vetoed by the President. Following the veto, Marie Lucey, OSF testified on behalf of LCWR at an anti-torture rally in Washington, DC.

Nuclear Weapons: Members supported the Cluster Bomb Ban; also, LCWR and a number of member congregations signed on to a public comment by religious leaders, with some also offering their own comments, in opposition to the “Complex Transformation” nuclear program proposed by the Department of Energy; Marie Lucey testified at the DOE hearing in Washington, DC on behalf of LCWR.

Global Concerns Committee

The LCWR Global Concerns Committee focuses the justice efforts of LCWR. Its work this year included the following:

- Collaborated with the CMSM Justice & Peace Committee to develop a resolution on climate change for the 2008 assembly
- Developed, disseminated, and reviewed region response forms for the implementation of LCWR 2007 assembly resolutions
- Identified and invited writers for Resolutions to Action for October 2007 and January, April, July, October 2008.
- Met in Kansas City in August and Aston, Pennsylvania in October 2007; coordinated joint meeting with CMSM justice committee in Federal Way, Washington in April 2008, including an invitation to Linda Haydock, SNJM to share the work of the Intercommunity Peace and Justice Committee of the Northwest, particularly on climate change.
- Offered suggestions to Region 5 for possible public witness during the 2008 assembly and/or a table with materials on climate change and other ecological issues.
- Formed a dialogue group to give input to the development of a platform to be presented at the Convention for the Common Good to be held in Philadelphia, July 2008. Also promoted formation of dialogue groups by others, particularly groups evidencing diversity of culture, race, gender, and age.



Members of the LCWR Global Concerns Committee and the CMSM Justice and Peace Committee

Assembly Resolutions Committee

The LCWR Assembly Resolutions Committee reviewed the two resolutions presented at the 2007 assembly: 2007 Sabbath Year: Debt Cancellation for Impoverished Countries and Preserve and Renew U.S. Wetlands and Coastlands, and presented these at the assembly.

LCWR Representation on Boards and Committees

Marie Lucey, OSF, LCWR associate director for social mission, represented the conference as she served on boards and committees of many organizations working for justice, including:

- NETWORK board as well as service on the coordinating council and advocacy committee. Also promoted participation in the Convention for the Common Good in collaboration with NETWORK, Catholics in Alliance for the Common Good, and other endorsing organizations.
- Catholic Health Association: participated in the September and November 2007 and April 2008 board meetings as a participating observer and presented reports of LCWR activities.
- National Coalition on Catholic Health Care Ministry (NCCHCM): With five LCWR members, attended a meeting in March which reaffirmed the continuation of the coalition for three years with some adjustments in purpose and focus.
- USCCB Committees: Participated in two of the three yearly meetings of the Coalition of Catholic Organizations Against Human Trafficking, and in the monthly meetings of the Justice for Immigrants Campaign.
- Religious Working Group on Water: attended meetings of the RWG and promoted the Water for the Poor Act, as well as meetings of the sub-committee on extractive industries and water which worked particularly for passage of the Hardrock Mining and Reclamation Act, a revision of the existing 1872 Mining Law.

LCWR was also represented on the Catholic Mission Forum, Jubilee USA, National Religious Coalition Against Torture, and Faithful Security: The National Religious Partnership on Nuclear Weapons Danger.

LCWR signed on to a number of letters and statements:

August to December 2007:

- LCWR Presidents wrote a letter to Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice urging diplomacy with Iran rather than any military action.
- Delete funding for the Reliable Replacement Warhead (RRW) in 2008
- Support a Comprehensive Nuclear Posture Review by Congress
- Letters in support of SCHIP funding
- Water for the World Resolution
- Support Clear Water Restoration Act

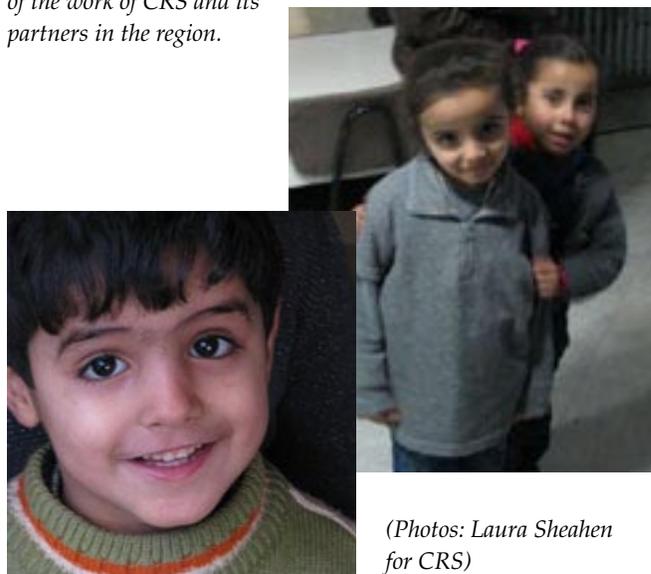
January to April 2008:

- Redirect funds from Pentagon to human needs
- Public comments by religious organizations to Department of Energy regarding Complex Transformation
- Delete funding for the RRW in 2009
- Opposition to the SAVE Act by Catholic organizations
- Letter of faith-based organizations to Senate in support of Hardrock Mining and Reclamation Act
- Support for Health Equity and Accountability Act
- Letter of US and Colombian faith-based organizations urging inclusion of human rights components in aid to Colombia and opposition to the Colombian Free Trade Act

LCWR Represented at Dialogue with President of Iran

LCWR executive director Carole Shinnick, SSND, along with other North American religious leaders from a variety of faiths, met with Iranian president Mamoud Ahmadinejad in New York City in September. The meeting focused on improving East-West relations through informal diplomacy. The approximately 140-member delegation, organized by Pax Christi USA, met at the Church Center at the UN amidst heightened security.

The photos below are of some of the many children visited by a delegation sponsored by Catholic Relief Services that included some LCWR current and former members and LCWR staff member Marie Lucey, OSF. The purpose of the visit was to experience the reality of the Iraqi refugees in Lebanon and Syria, to increase understanding of the factors impacting their lives, and to become aware of the work of CRS and its partners in the region.



(Photos: Laura Sheahen for CRS)

New Frontiers in the LCWR Regions

The 15 LCWR regions respond to the questions:

- What new frontiers in religious life has your region discovered since the 2007 assembly?
-
- What new frontiers of religious life would your region like to see further explored?



Region I

Daniel Webster describes the frontier as “an advance or not fully explored region.” The members of Region 1 realize the opportunities that such a description open for us as women religious. As we struggled with images of this next frontier, we embraced the image of the cosmos. We hoped to model a new way of being together in our prayer, in our focus, and in our actions.

Both our fall and spring meetings asked the membership to reflect on the possibilities that call to us in our congregations, parishes, places of ministry, and dioceses. What is it that groans in our hearts, that makes us yearn for more? Where are we being led? As leaders, it is our hope that we will lead the way in our congregations, and that we will encourage those women who call to us to be leaders into the next frontier of justice and peace.

Region 1 continues to support Wisdom’s Way. Since its founding by the members of Region I in 1998, scores of women of limited financial resources have been helped with more than \$100,000 in funding for their educational needs. In this past academic year that began in September, Wisdom’s Way assisted 31 women with a total of \$25,269.

In the fall we called upon local members of the National Communicators Network for Women Religious to discuss their ministry and the ways in which we could collaborate. Together, we prepared the spring meeting. This meeting focused on the work of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) at the United Nations. Sharon Altendorf, PBVM, NGO; Rita Larivee, SSA, representative to UNANIMA and publisher/editor-in-chief of the *National Catholic Reporter*; and Prema Antony PBVM, NGO intern from India challenged the membership to keep open minds and hearts, to read, to learn about the issues, and to take action.

We committed ourselves to mailing monthly postcards to the presidential candidates urging them to support the UN Millennium Development Goals. If we can ensure the living out of these goals, what a frontier we will have provided for the next generation.



Region 2

New Frontiers Discovered

It seems that the ground is shifting under the feet of American women religious, and those of us in Region 2 are supporting one another in efforts to be aware and centered in the midst of it.

In October, our region was happy to have time with Karen Kennelly, CSJ who helped us look at the implications of the Congress on Religious Life: Passion for Christ, Passion for Humanity that took place in Rome in 2004. This presentation impacted us with the beauty and diversity of the global communities represented in the video presentation that Karen included in her talk.

At our spring conference, we were grateful for a presentation by Donna Markham, OP. The presentation, "Unleashing the Charism of Religious Life; Implications for Mission," gave us the chance to look at the centrality of mission in the lives of our congregations. A renewed sense of mission will carry us into the future and point us in the direction of the unmet needs of our times.

Frontiers to be Explored

New frontiers include:

- the intentionality and generative nature of our vowed lives
- the relationship of vowed members and associates
- the international reality of religious congregations
- corporate responses to justice issues



Region 3

New Frontiers Discovered

At our fall meeting, we were enriched and challenged by Elaine Prevallet, SL whose presentation "Enlarging the Vision: Faith and Vowed Religious Life in a Global Context" invited us to integrate learning from the cosmos into a contemporary spirituality of the vows. Her presentation raised our awareness of the interconnectedness of our vowed life as religious with all of life. In the spring, Anne Meyers, SSJ led us to an encounter with our own selves, and a self-awareness that incorporates skills to help us become better, more inspiring leaders. Her presentation, entitled "Learned Optimism for Leaders," encouraged us to evaluate the challenges of leadership with optimistic thinking patterns whenever appropriate. We gained new, useful information and updating about the challenge to elect LCWR national leadership, the new dues structure in LCWR, the LCWR history project, dialogue with Rome regarding our traditional and new ministries, and about NRRO's new direction. We encountered support from one another and helped find solutions with one another regarding the termination of sponsored works, the loss of parish convents, the care of our elderly, money management, reconfiguration, and strategic planning. We helped one another keep informed about social justice issues, especially immigration and human trafficking, and rejoiced with one another when new initiatives emerged from collaborations, such as the residence for trafficked women in Philadelphia.

Frontiers to be Explored

As a region, we believe there is a need to explore religious life in the future, especially the implications for younger members and for the call to be prophetic. We see this exploration as requiring attention to global spirituality, the universe story, social justice issues (e.g., trafficking, immigration, sustainability) and how they impact our decisions regarding investments and our sponsored works and how to keep our mission central to those works. Important aspects of our identity in the future are our relationship to the hierarchical (institutional) church and to other faith traditions, collaboration with one another and with other lay people, public witness, and the way we live the common life.



Region 4

In the past year, the members of Region 4 have broadened their knowledge, appreciation, and understanding of the frontier of globalization and its impact on religious life into the future. The realization has dawned that women religious were multinational long before corporations. This insight affords us the opportunity to work together to influence global issues for the common good. Gradual though the discovery has been, it both challenges and encourages us and our members to live into the future with hope and enthusiasm.

Conscious of a kinship among all life forms, our religious life is lived in solidarity with a suffering planet. We are challenged to live in more sustainable ways so that future generations can thrive.

Additionally, we are called to heighten our awareness of the global South as its people struggle toward mutuality with first world superpowers. We are challenged to be ever more reverent, responsive, and generous toward the poorest, most needy, and oppressed.

We continue to grapple with our role as women religious in our local and global church. We strive to balance our busyness with contemplation, looking for the ways in which we are being called to define more clearly who we are and how we are called to live the charism of religious life as a gift to God's people.



Region 5

New Frontiers Discovered

The members of Region 5 continue to discover the new frontier of religious presence in crisis areas. We have begun marking time as “before the hurricanes” and “after the hurricanes.” We continue to work toward cleanup and reconstruction, or new construction. The assistance we have received and continue to receive from LCWR itself and so very many member congregations has been a real blessing. We are most grateful to each and every one for their prayers, their verbal and written support, their love, and their financial support. We are where we are because of all who have been with us.

Many of our congregations are in the process of beginning exploration of reconfiguration, merger, or some other way of joining together to continue the missions of our congregations. Other congregations have almost completed that process and have become new congregations. Religious life may take on new and different forms, and we must be open to that frontier when we meet it.

Frontiers to be Explored

We, like women religious all over the country, have become leaders in earth sustainability, in eco-justice, in ways of helping to protect our environment and earth. This must continue if we are to remain viable in this day and age.

We would like to see LCWR research reconfiguring the regions in some way since there will be fewer congregations and, therefore, fewer leaders. Some regions run the risk of becoming very small in membership. We would like to explore ways of sustaining our vibrancy and our visibility even in the midst of our diminishment.



Region 6

New Frontiers Discovered

- We have experienced more collaboration among congregations regarding justice issues, especially trafficking.
- We have noticed more collaboration in ministry initiatives in civic communities.
- There have been more gatherings to look at the future of congregations and dialogue with the laity about non-canonical and ecumenical forms.
- There have been refounding and reconfiguration processes.
- We claim our rich legacy in spirituality and the deep hunger in the world for healing

Frontiers to be Explored

- We need to listen to the needs of others regarding simple living, greening, how to stand with the undocumented.
- What can we learn from communities who have gone through a “refounding” process?
- How can we be a source of hope to disenfranchised members of the church.
- How can we witness prophetically as the institutional church dwindles?
- Be open to and explore non-canonical ways of religious life.



Region 7

New Frontiers Discovered

Members of LCWR Region 7 have focused on using Engaging Impasse: Circles of Contemplation and Dialogue in their fall and spring meetings.

The fall session focused on “Impasse and the Specific Experience of Impasse as Women Religious within the Church.” The flow of the sessions included times for individual and communal contemplation and dialogue. Members found themselves strengthening and learning new leadership skills of shared contemplation and dialogue. In a setting that nurtures community the members were able to share experiences from their local areas and gain insights from others.

The spring session focused on “Engaging the Experience of Impasse Both Individually and Communally.” Members were encouraged and experienced positive responses to engagement within various areas. They also shared ways they will move ahead as elected leaders in the church that develop from communal contemplation and dialogue.

Frontiers to be Explored

Topics that will continue the outward focus of Region 7 are collaboration in the church, immigration, and leadership mentoring.



Region 8

New Frontiers Discovered

We in Region 8 see the contrasting hope and poverty of our present time calling us to greater integrity and creativity. While we live in the frontier of unknowing, we need to remain open to the possibilities before us. We need to continue our support of one another, and stay in the conversation as we all seek to know what God is asking of us. In Region 8, we have remained in the conversation with our bishops as we continue to develop a joint public statement against human trafficking. We have continued to support Project IRENE, influencing state legislation on behalf of women and children.

At the same time, we also see the poverty of the present, where women religious are losing church-related positions often without recourse. We need to find new ways of standing on the edge and speaking to the places where the church needs to be church. We are challenged to re-examine the meaning of sponsorship when our members are no longer present, while at the same time welcoming and mentoring the increasing number of non-English speaking religious congregations to our dioceses.

Frontiers to be Explored

- How do we sustain our passion and energy for mission in the midst of the challenges before us?
- How do we prepare others to carry on the mission when we can no longer be present?
- Are there ways that congregations can come together to address ministerial needs?
- How can LCWR promote religious tolerance and foster dialogue among women of various faiths/religions, but especially between Catholicism/Christianity and Islam?
- In the midst of employment/personnel issues, how can we address the spiritual hunger within the church without “turf issues”?
- As ecumenical congregations are forming, what impact do they have on the current models/forms of religious life?

Underlying all our reflections, we in Region 8 see our present and future frontiers as opportunities for transformation. Together, we look forward in hope, relying upon the support of one another and open to the possibilities before us!

Region 9

New Frontiers Discovered

- Greater involvement in global issues that have local effects, e.g., championing the passage of anti-trafficking legislation in Wisconsin.
- Greater understanding of the boundaries we need to maintain with our members and those with and to whom we minister.
- Greater grounding in collaborative thinking and acting as a region.
- More purposeful living of the essence of our lives as women religious.
- Greater efforts to build and sustain relationships among our members through informal leadership support groups.

Frontiers to be Explored

- Focusing our resources toward building a peaceful presence in a world of conflict.
- Working toward greater collaboration with our brother religious in the region.
- Maintaining a hope-filled tension between our older and newer members.
- Exploring ways to welcome the new generation of women into our midst.
- Exploring ways of reaching beyond our comfort zones and asking our various stakeholders to give us feedback about our presence and mission in their midst.
- Exploring ways to further the collaboration between our LCWR-9 Communicators Network and Legislative Network.
- Sharing our future planning processes with each other and looking for more opportunities to collaborate. This will be the focus of our fall 2008 regional meeting.



Region 10

“When all is said and done, the only change that will make a difference is the transformation of the human heart.”

— Presence by Peter Senge, C. Otto Scharmer, Josephy Jaworski, and Betty Sue Flowers

Within the last year, we have responded to the call of change and witnessed the mystery of transformation. Our renewed collaborative efforts create new challenges such as with Theresa Shelter, Marian Middle School, and housing initiatives. Our collaboration was demonstrated in hosting an inter-congregational pre-retirement workshop for our sisters. With the changing face of healthcare, there has been a renewed collaboration to care for our aged sisters. This spirit has engaged more lay women, associates, and inter-faith leaders.

Another frontier that has appeared is the growing ecological crisis. This has been creatively approached by our sisters by walking the streams, deepening our awareness which has led to varied means of advocacy and forming congregational stances. Our challenge will be to “live simply that all might simply live.”

Yet, we ask, “Is this the time to risk more, to be bridge builders spanning what is to what could be?”

The frontier calls forth more transformation of our hearts as leaders. As the world changes, how do we re-imagine our mission and the living of our vowed religious life? Within our increasingly violent world, we need to deepen communal contemplative spirituality. Will our contemplation lead us to speak prophetically with the hierarchical church about the church’s mission? New membership, canonical status, and ministry to the poor and marginalized are issues that need our attention. Our earth cries for our healing presence and touch. Leadership development will be critical as we go forth.



Region 11

New Frontiers Discovered

- Four associates and three vowed members are grappling with the question of how to give birth to a new form of religious life.
- Leadership pilgrimages to Assisi are offered to employees of sponsored institutions. Upon returning from the pilgrimage they express a hunger for ways to develop their own spirituality as individuals and as couples. The sisters have created follow-up programs for those who have participated in a pilgrimage. Many congregations are hearing a similar hunger from their employees and from sponsored missions.
- One congregation adopted a corporate stance on human trafficking and another is working on a corporate stance to work against torture.
- Some congregations which have had a collaborative relationship with the bishop have concerns about the appointment of new bishops. They used the 2007 LCWR assembly keynote address by Laurie Brink, OP on reconciliation in their internal conversations about how to be proactive in establishing a relationship with the new bishop.
- Looking at responses to the immigration issue.
- Mentoring new leaders is an issue for the congregations present. Further conversation will be held at a future gathering.

Frontiers to be Explored

- The significant gaps between the generations of the members of our congregations as well as the need to expand the dialogue and reconciliation within our congregations.
- What is involved in the creation of safe houses for trafficked victims? Leslie Wolfe director of the Center for Women Policy Studies believes that women religious have a call to provide safety for victims.



Region 12

New Frontiers Discovered

- We continue to go to the border for our fall meeting and to provide an experiential approach to border issues. We find there are always new sisters in leadership and we value exposing Region 12 leadership to border issues and to the local realities, to listening to local residents, city officials, sisters, and local organizers regarding immigration and other border issues.
- Region 12 Border Committee continues to fund border projects. We visited one such project, Proyecto Desarrollo Humano, run by the ICM sisters in La Joya, Texas. The committee has assisted with funds toward the education of Aneth Delgadillo to become a lawyer in the border city of Reynosa. Aneth will focus on issues with women working in maquiladoras.
- For our spring meeting we scheduled a two-day workshop entitled "Media Relations & Crisis Communications" to provide effective communications in good times and in crises. Our presenter was Linda Macdonald, director of communications, Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word.

Frontiers to be Explored

- For the 2008 fall meeting we plan to travel Albuquerque, New Mexico to educate ourselves on the issues of that part of our region and in particular the water issues and ecology concerns.



Region 13

We, sisters of Region 13, have focused this year on immigration as a new frontier. At our spring meeting, Esther Pineda, CSJ led us through a process to discuss what is happening with immigration in Kansas, Colorado, Oklahoma, and western Missouri, the states represented in our region. Several immigrant women shared the difficulties they have encountered in trying to work through the system. Ten peace and justice representatives of the various communities attended the immigration part of the LCWR meeting and then had their own meeting alongside ours.

In December, leadership and social justice representatives of most all religious communities working in Kansas met with Governor Kathleen Sebelius to express our concern about the negative attitude with which immigrants are treated in the press and within the US system. Governor Sebelius seemed appreciative to discuss this topic with religious and promised to work with us as the immigration topic appeared on the legislative agenda.

Our first meeting of this past year was held at a time so that national speakers from RFC (Joe Nangle, OFM and Marie Dennis) would be able to speak with all of us about theological reflection and social analysis.



Region 14

As we consider the past and now look to the future, we are sustained by one another and the journey we walk together. The frontiers are new and the terrain uncertain; but our sister-companions help us chart the way, clear the paths, and keep our focus centered. Together we are better!

New Frontiers Discovered

- building bridges with immigrant members and immigrant religious communities;
- recognizing diminishment of regional membership and its impact on collaborative ministerial projects;
- questioning roles of women in the church;
- emerging models of religious life in the 21st century.

Frontiers to be Explored

- engaging in interfaith and intercultural dialogue to understand and minister more effectively in our global world;
- focusing on justice issues, for example, anti-trafficking, so as to make a greater impact nationally and regionally;
- promoting prayer and contemplation as a means of individual and communal healing in our fragmented world;
- restructuring LCWR to become a more effective organization.



Region 15

Region 15 continues to explore the frontiers and margins of religious life, ecclesial life, and the cultural milieu in which we live. At our fall and spring meetings we educated ourselves on spiral dynamics, a model for thinking, acting, and deciding in light of the new universe story. Linda Haydock, SNJM of the Intercommunity Peace and Justice Center (IPJC) in Seattle facilitated both sessions.

Each year Region 15 sponsors an education day for all of its members in the geographic areas of Portland, Spokane, and Seattle. Our 2007 program, "United Nations: The Voice of Women Religious Makes a Difference!" brought Catherine Ferguson, SNJM; Susanne Golas, CSJP; and Lucianne Siers, OP to the Northwest to address the critical issues of human trafficking, HIV/AIDS in Africa, the Middle East and water. The 2008 education day is planning to have Mary Jo Leddy, author of *Radical Gratitude*, address the theme of living simply in a consumer-oriented world.

Through the continued work of IPJC, current issues affecting our global community – war, economy, violence, etc. – are brought before us in a scholarly and challenging manner through AMOS (A Matter of Spirit) publications. Members of Region 15 are active in demonstrations, vigils, letter-writing, responding to justice alerts, and other activities related to peace and justice. At our spring meeting we affirmed unanimously the LCWR resolution on climate change, and we continue to explore new ways for using technology creatively to help reduce our carbon footprints. Region 15 will collaborate with IPJC in sponsoring in 2009 the 4th Northwest Women's Convocation.



Stewardship of LCWR's Financial Resources

During 2007, the LCWR Finance Committee (under the leadership of Maryann Summa, OP) and the office staff have worked diligently to ensure wise stewardship of LCWR resources. The conference was able to conclude the fiscal year in the black. (See charts and tables for details)

Auditor's Report

Linton, Shafer, Warfield and Garrett, PA performed an audit of LCWR rendering an opinion that the LCWR financial statements were properly presented; the firm also reviewed the building fund. Joseph McCathran, CPA, partner, met with the Finance Committee to discuss the audit and the review.

Investments

The LCWR Finance Committee has, as one of its responsibilities, the oversight of the investment of the funds of the conference. The committee meets twice a year with Eileen O'Connell, representative of Christian Brothers Investment Services (CBIS). At each meeting the committee evaluates the performance of the managers and works with Ms. O'Connell to ensure fiscal responsibility for the LCWR funds. In April 2008 the committee also had the opportunity for a conversation with Julie Tanner, corporate advocacy coordinator at CBIS, to discuss the socially responsible investment strategies employed by CBIS.

Despite the volatility in the markets during 2007, the conference's investments did well. The committee is quite conscious of the continuing market fluctuations and will continue to monitor the investments carefully.

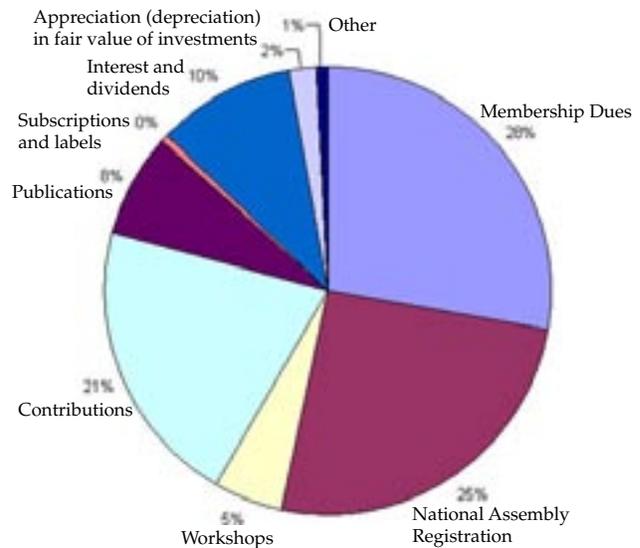
Budget

To date the LCWR operating income and expenses are in line with the budget. On page 26 of this report is a statement of financial position and of operating revenue and expenses for 2007. (The New Orleans Project funds were consolidated in the LCWR audit report. They are restricted for a specific purpose in order to fund the operation of the project.)

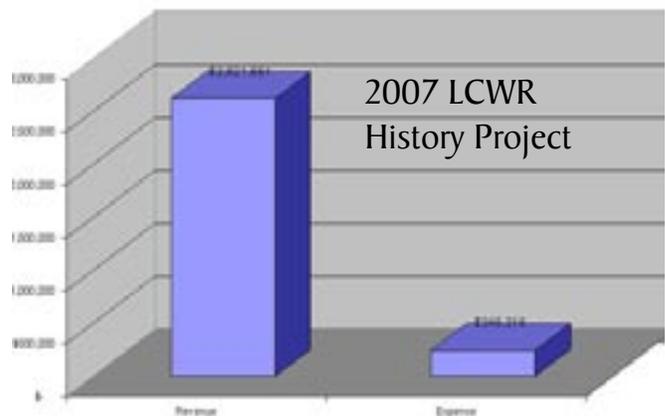
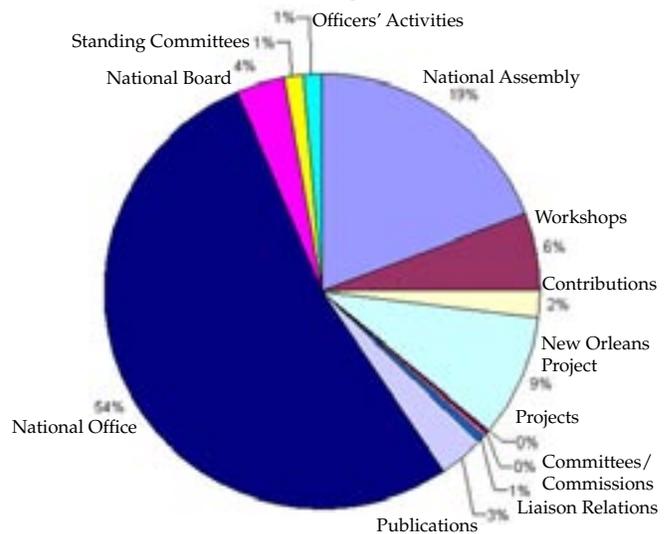
History Project

During 2007, the capital campaign to support the history project, Women & Spirit: Catholic Sisters in America, continued to receive donations. At the same time project expenses increased as implementation moved forward. These funds were consolidated in the LCWR audit report. Because the income is restricted for a specific purpose and the expenses will be incurred for that purpose, their impact on conference income and expense is illustrated by reporting them separately in the charts used here.

2007 Revenue



2007 Expenses



Dues Structure

As noted in the 2006-2007 report last year, the dues structure was adjusted by the LCWR board. The adjustments and the reasons for doing so were reported to the membership at the spring 2008 regional meetings. The adjusted structure will be implemented in 2009.

LCWR Building

Each year the CMSM and LCWR national boards review the capital needs of the office building and budget resources to assure that the building is safe and secure for the tenants. In addition to housing the offices of LCWR and CMSM, the building's tenants are the Legal Resource Center for Religious, the Religious Formation Conference, and the National Association of Treasurers of Religious Institutes.



The LCWR Finance Committee: (standing) Mary Persico, IHM; Geraldine Hoyler, CSC; Pat Cormack, SCSC — staff; (seated) Maryann Summa, OP; and Alice Coté. Missing: Pam Chiesa, PBVM and Rose Jochmann, OSF



LCWR Statement of Financial Position

December 31, 2007 and 2006

ASSETS	2007	2006
Current Assets		
Cash	1,450,505	1,028,809
Accounts Receivable-other	15,303	14,390
Promises to Give	1,247,897	40,262
Prepaid Expenses and other	47,942	4,600
Total Current Assets	<u>2,861,647</u>	<u>1,088,061</u>
Furniture & Equipment at Cost		
Furniture and equipment	42,175	37,000
Less: Accumulated depreciation	(32,300)	(28,568)
Furniture and equipment, net	<u>9,875</u>	<u>8,432</u>
Other Assets		
Investments	4,214,675	3,105,166
Investment in common fund	15,764	15,197
Investment in real estate, net	325,835	315,922
Total Other Assets	<u>4,556,274</u>	<u>3,436,285</u>
TOTAL ASSETS	7,427,796	4,532,778
LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	2007	2006
Current Liabilities		
Accounts Payable and Accrued Expenses	30,726	27,087
Deferred Revenue	455,694	394,435
Total Current Liabilities	<u>486,420</u>	<u>421,522</u>
Fund Development Loans Payable	342,050	342,050
Total Liabilities	<u>828,470</u>	<u>763,572</u>
NET ASSETS		
Unrestricted		
Undesignated	544,946	374,374
Board designated-support fund	2,573,260	2,573,260
Unrestricted Net Assets	<u>3,118,206</u>	<u>2,947,634</u>
Temporarily Restricted	3,481,120	821,572
Total Net Assets	<u>6,599,326</u>	<u>3,769,206</u>
TOTAL LIABILITIES/NET ASSETS	7,427,796	4,532,778

Statement of Operating Revenues and Expenses

	Dec 31, 2007	Dec 31, 2006
REVENUE		
Membership Dues	408,945	436,168
National Assembly Registration	373,973	361,572
Workshops	76,412	64,753
Contributions	2,947,395	1,126,018
Publications	110,851	92,706
Subscriptions and labels	5,432	6,270
Interest and dividends	147,279	89,026
Appreciation (depreciation) in fair value of investments	28,698	254,328
Other	13,336	9,646
Net assets released from restrictions	(371,505)	
TOTAL REVENUES	<u>4,112,321</u>	<u>2,440,487</u>
EXPENSES		
PROGRAM EXPENSES		
National Assembly	206,261	309,860
Workshops	61,166	60,437
LCWR History Project	245,215	84,346
New Orleans Project	97,127	
Projects	2,583	6,618
Committees/Commissions	3,480	3,696
Liaison Relations	6,044	4,615
Publications	35,339	46,070
TOTAL PROGRAM EXPENSES	<u>657,215</u>	<u>515,642</u>
MANAGEMENT & GENERAL		
National Office	558,622	512,130
National Board	37,411	37,875
Standing Committees	13,682	12,487
Officers' Activities	15,271	28,472
TOTAL MANAGEMENT & GENERAL	<u>624,986</u>	<u>590,964</u>
TOTAL EXPENSES	1,282,201	1,106,606

Collaborating for the Mission of Religious Life

The directors of seven organizations working with women and men religious reflect on the new frontiers in religious life that their conferences have been exploring since summer 2007.

Conference of Major Superiors of Men

Paul Lininger, OFM Conv — Executive Director

Spiritual writers have long spoken of the consecrated or vowed life as an invitation to be living witnesses. It is a call to manifest what it means to be living on the edge of what is yet to be, and knowing it is already fulfilled. The response makes faith real by taking what is verbally affirmed and giving assent in action. Accomplishing this end requires commitment of mind, heart, and deed as total gift.

Today, being a leader in religious life means learning to live with more questions than answers and a willingness to move into new spaces complete with new understandings of what is unfolding towards a future belonging to the many. Getting there stretches a leader's willingness to be shaped and formed by the Spirit of God. It may mean learning new skills or discovering new resources. And in so doing, it requires risk and the willingness to go deeper than ever before in the pursuit of faith.

Being available to support those undertaking the journey is one of the principal roles of the CMSM leadership conference. The goal is to assist leaders traversing the multileveled challenges and needs of religious life in a changed world milieu. Getting there entails relationship-building with a variety of organizations. The design incorporates personal and communal growth intended to help move a religious institute – members and ministries – along the road towards a greater realization of God's presence.

Religious Formation Conference

Violet Grennan, MFIC — Executive Director

The Religious Formation Conference board and national office staff participated in an immensely challenging board meeting in April 2008. Conversations and planning included significant movement toward a two-phased implementation plan of the mission, goals, and strategies approved by the board in April 2007.

The explicit challenge of our mission "... rooted in the Gospel, called by God's prophetic Spirit and responsive to the signs of the times ..." called us to explore new frontiers in the service of initial and life-long formation of members. Reflection on religious life as a prophetic undertaking not initiated by us, but challenging us nonetheless, evoked courageous conversations and actions.

As we reflected on the challenge, we explored how this might be done most effectively in collaboration with our partner organizations who essentially serve the same stakeholders albeit each with its unique identity and focus. We look forward to further exploration with our partners of concrete ways to broaden and deepen that relationship.

Legal Resource Center for Religious

Donna Sauer, JD, JCL — Associate Director for Civil Law

Since summer 2007, LRCR has explored new frontiers as it prepares to join with NATRI. We will continue to provide the same dependable services, and we look forward to the new services that our joint entity will offer.

NATRI and LRCR already are operating as one in many facets. Our joint national conference (November in Denver) will have workshops on both financial and legal topics. LRCR's staff members participate on NATRI's listserv and have presented talks on protecting tax-exempt status at several regional CORT meetings. We have assisted numerous institutes and societies in their respective explorations by holding two successful workshops on reconfiguration since last summer. We also are planning a new manual on civil law issues to assist leadership and attorneys. There are always new frontiers to be explored when it comes to the law.

National Association of Treasurers of Religious Institutes

Barbara Matteson, OP — Executive Director

NATRI has been experiencing a number of new frontiers from the aspect of financial management. At our 2007 NATRI national conference attendees were presented “best practices” to show compliance with revised IRS guidelines. Auditors have been providing more detailed examinations of our financials looking especially at internal controls, whistle-blower policies, and board composition, to name just a few. Compliance became a by-line for our conference theme, “Transformation: Envisioning the Future.”

Reflecting the action of many of the religious institutes that are our members, NATRI began serious work on merging with the Legal Resource Center for Religious. Meeting almost quarterly since October 2007, members of both boards have worked on resource committees. Examining every aspect of the organizational structure of both groups provided information on numerous aspects of our purpose. As religious institutes tend to reconfiguration, NATRI and LRRC are reconfiguring to meet the new look of our members. This is expressed in the theme of our 2008 NATRI/LRRC joint conference, “New Beginnings: Emerging Realities.” This is indeed living on the “Edge of Tomorrow.” For finance people this is not a comfortable position to be in, so we are happy to be sharing the edge with our member religious institutes and subscribers.

Center for the Study of Religious Life

Mary Charlotte Chandler, RSCJ — Director

The Center for the Study of Religious Life invites congregations to ponder what living into the new frontiers of religious life might mean for them. Our generational cultures project challenges religious institutes to be open to younger generations of religious with their own visions, passions, and experiences of church. Essays produced by our interdisciplinary scholars roundtable raise questions about the elephants in our own living rooms and point to possible future directions. PowerPoint presentations on the future of religious life suggest that we may find clues about our future by considering both the history of religious life and the new developments in our current ecclesial context.

National Religious Vocation Conference

Paul Bednarczyk, CSC — Executive Director

This past year NRVC explored the “global” frontier of vocation ministry as we strengthened our international ties with Catholic Vocations Ministry Australia and the European Vocation Services. Although the United States, Australia, and Europe have various ecclesial and cultural differences, there are many nuanced similarities in our common mission of vocation ministry. Hopefully, these relationships will further enhance our vocation efforts in the universal church.

NRVC, together with CARA, has also just begun its major study on religious vocations in the United States. We look forward to this important data to help inform religious communities as they invite new membership to the “tomorrow” of religious life.

National Religious Retirement Office

Janice Bader, CPPS — Executive Director

During 2007-08 the National Religious Retirement Office continued intensive planning for 2009 and beyond. We followed the path mapped by Andrée Fries, CPPS prior to her death in July 2007. We’ve outlined strategies that we hope will reduce the unfunded retirement liability significantly over the next 10 years.

Benefactors responded generously with \$31.5 million in 2007. NRRO services included a workshop on property usage and elder care delivery and publication of a planning manual and DVD.

We deeply appreciate the support of LCWR members, and we look forward to continuing toward the next frontier with you.



Generous Service to the Leadership Conference

LCWR thanks all who have contributed their time and talent to the conference through service on its national board and committees.

LCWR National Board

Officers

Mary Whited, CPPS* -- President
J. Lora Dambroski, OSF* --

President-Elect

Mary Dacey, SSJ* -- Past President
Jeanne Bessette, OSF* -- Secretary
Maryann Summa, OP* -- Treasurer

Regional Chairpersons

Dorothy Scesny, PBVM -- Region 1
Barbara Starapoli, SSJ -- Region 2
Kathryn Clauss, IHM* -- Region 3
Susan Schorsten, HM -- Region 4
Nancy Reynolds, SP -- Region 5
Barbara Hagedorn, SC* -- Region 6
Mary Jo Nelson, OLVM -- Region 7
Valerie Kulbacki, SSJ-TOSF -- Region 8
Debra Sciano, SSND -- Region 9
Connie Probst, OSF -- Region 10
Catherine Bertrand, SSND -- Region 11
Bernadine Reyes, OSB -- Region 12
Marianna Bauder, SCL -- Region 13
Raya Hanlon, OP -- Region 14
Beth Taylor, CSJP -- Region 15

Executive Director

Carole Shinnick, SSND*

*Members of the Executive Committee

Committees

2007 LCWR Assembly Planning Committee

Denise Ann Clifford, SL
Susan Hadzima, IHM
Pat Rayburn, OSF
Susan Swain, SL
Carole Shinnick, SSND (LCWR Staff)

Assembly Resolutions Committee

Michele Morek, OSU
Susan Jordan, SSND
Marie Lucey, OSF (LCWR Staff)

Finance Committee

Alice Coté, RJM
Geraldine Hoyler, CSC
Rose Jochmann, OSF
Pam Chiesa, PBVM
Mary Persico, IHM
Maryann Summa, OP (Treasurer)
Pat Cormack, SCSC (LCWR Staff)

Global Concerns Committee

Carol Descoteaux, CSC
Jacquelyn Doepker, OSF
Andrea Nenzel, CSJP
Joy Peterson, PBVM
Susan Schorsten, HM
Kathleen Storms, SSND
Marie Lucey, OSF (LCWR Staff)

Jubilee History Committee

Barbara Cervenka, OP
Mary Charlotte Chandler, RSCJ
Mary Dacey, SSJ
Helen Maher Garvey, BVM (Chair)
Karen Kennelly, CSJ
Constance Phelps, SCL
Annmarie Sanders, IHM (LCWR Staff)
Carole Shinnick, SSND (LCWR Staff)

Nominations and Elections Committee

Ann Rehrauer, OSF (Chair)
Mary Lou Barba, MCDP
Vivien Linkhauer, SC
Tierney Trueman, OSF
Carol Wagner, RDC
Marianne Benson (LCWR Staff)

Liaisons to Other Organizations

Center for the Study of Religious Life
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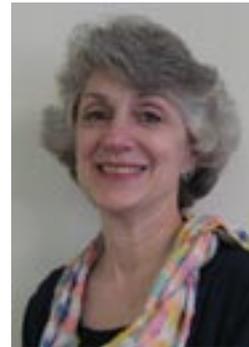
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