

April 2015



2015 LCWR Assembly Spirings of the Great Deep Burst Forth: Meeting the Thirsts of the World

August 11- 14, 2015
(Travel day: August 15)
Houston, Texas

Keynoters:

Janet Mock, CSJ
Surprised by Joy: Spirings of the
Great Deep Illuminating Religious Life



Stephen Bevans, SVD
The Spirit Moving Over the Great Deep:
What the World is Thirsting For



Registration materials are in the Members' section
of the LCWR website (lcsr.org)
Registration for the assembly and for the hotel
must be completed online.

More Than 100 LCWR Members Explore Leadership in the Context of Change and Challenge

More than
100
LCWR
members
gathered from
March 19-22 at
the University
of St. Mary of
the Lake Con-
ference Center
in Mundelein,
Illinois for the
LCWR New
Leader Workshop.



*Prayer, reflection, and a Eucharistic
liturgy were integral to the workshop*

Set in the context of contemplation and reflection, the participants received input on critical topics for religious life leadership from presenters with a wide range of expertise and experience. Topics and presenters included:

- Dimensions of Spiritual Leadership (*Nancy Schreck, OSF*)
- Mission Now and Into the Future: Realities and Possibilities (*Janice Bader, CPPS; Mary Haddad, RSM; and Mary Hughes, OP*)
- Leaders and the Two Laws: Canon and Civil (*Simone Campbell, SSS and Christine Rody, SC*)
- Leaders and Personnel Issues: A Survival Guide for Leading in a Time of Transition (*Lynn M. Levo, CSJ*)
- Working Together as Teams (*Lynn M. Levo, CSJ*)
- Helping Members Read the Signs of the Times (*Nancy Schreck, OSF*)
- The Doctrinal Assessment of LCWR and Its Impact on US Religious Life (*Joan Marie Steadman, CSC*)

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From the LCWR Presidency

The Journey Through Middle Space

by Sharon Holland, IHM — LCWR President

As we continue our Lenten journey toward Easter, we are aware once again of being in “middle space.” We are on the way, but have not arrived. We hope to participate in our transformation and to contribute to the transformation of our war-torn world.

I am reminded of the recent 50th anniversary of the Selma March for racial justice, now commonly referred to as “bloody Sunday.” In his address to the crowds, John Lewis, who narrowly survived that event, also spoke of a middle space. We have come a long way, he declared, but there is still much to do to redeem the soul of America. This is a journey much longer than 40 days, or even 40 years.

Certain lines from the poetry of Gerard Manley Hopkins speak to me of what might be termed the end points, beginning and end of our Lenten – and of our life -- journey.

In one of the so-called “terrible sonnets” Hopkins writes of a struggle with God in the darkness – seeking to maintain hope, to find meaning, direction, peace.

Not, I'll not, carrion comfort, Despair, not feast on thee;
Not untwist – slack they may be –
these last strands of man
In me, or, most weary, cry I can no more. I can;
Can something, hope, wish day come,
not choose not to be.



As we continue our
Lenten journey toward Easter,
we are aware once again of be-
ing in “middle space.”
We are on the way,
but have not arrived.

These words could be on the lips and in the hearts of so many courageous, but struggling, souls, from Selma to Syria to South Sudan. Many have only the slightest glimpse of the possible Easter-like end of their journey.

In his long and complex poem, “The Wreck of the Deutschland,” Hopkins commemorates the drowning death of five Franciscan nuns in 1875, exiles by the Falck Laws. It seems, in a sense, a boast of victory, or perhaps a hope-filled challenge to allow Christ to be and do in us, what it is beyond our human strength to be and do.

Let him easter in us, be a dayspring to
the dimness of us, be
A crimson cresseted east...
Our hearts' charity's hearth's fire,
our thoughts' chivalry's
throng's Lord.

The words of a mystic, poetic tradition, speak of uplifted spirits, transformed by the risen Christ. While our own words may be less poetic, Hopkin's praise of “eastering” easily brings to mind our LCWR Call for 2015-2022. We speak of the perennial call of the Gospel, made ever new by the Spirit.

In the Prologue, we affirm: “As we live the years ahead, we remain inspired by the radical call of the Gospel, filled with hope, and committed to discerning together the leading of God's Spirit.”

This is our way forward, our strength for the journey through middle space.

More Than 100 LCWR Members Explore Leadership in the Context of Change and Challenge

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Nancy Schreck facilitated reflections following each presentation that assisted participants to integrate the materials into their understandings of themselves as spiritual leaders of their religious institutes. Participants who came as leadership teams also had opportunities throughout the workshop to meet together to begin integrating the new learnings into their leadership ministry.

The workshop will be offered again from May 12-15, 2016 in Mundelein.



Nancy Schreck, OSF presented at and facilitated the workshop



Nancy Schreck, OSF; Janice Bader, CPPS; Mary Haddad, RSM; and Mary Hughes, OP



LCWR Mourns the Passing of Former President Bette Moslander, CSJ

Former LCWR president and Sister of St. Joseph of Concordia Bette Moslander died on March 22 at age 92. She was renowned as a strong leader and powerful advocate for women religious both nationally and internationally.



Born in 1923 in Grand Island, Nebraska, she held a bachelor's degree from Marymount College in Salina, Kansas. In 1953 she completed her doctorate in religious studies and theology at St. Mary's College at Notre Dame, and then joined the faculty of the theology department at St. Teresa's College in Kansas City. In 1958 the Sisters of St. Joseph received her into their community. She was later sent for a year of study at the Lumen Vitae International Institute of Religious Education in Brussels in order to ensure that her community was prepared for the changes that would come out of the Second Vatican Council.

Shortly after her return from Brussels, she was elected to community leadership where she served for 18 years, including two terms (1973-83) as president. During that time, she was elected to LCWR's board and executive committee and then served in the LCWR presidency from 1980-83. She was also named one of the US representatives to the International Union of Superiors General.

Shortly after she completed her LCWR leadership, Pope John Paul II named Archbishop John Quinn to lead a Vatican-mandated study of religious life in the United States. The archbishop asked Bette to join the advisory committee to what became known as the "Quinn Commission," as its official liaison to LCWR. In that capacity, she directed the study of the decline of vocations, an interdisciplinary effort that revealed the cultural phenomena changing religious life in radical and rapid ways. When she delivered the final report, she became

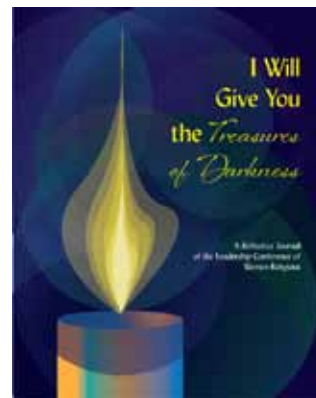
the first woman to address the body of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops.

In 1989 she moved to Manna House of Prayer, a spiritual retreat center in Concordia, Kansas, where she developed and directed a number of new programs, and in collaboration with Marcia Allen, CSJ, worked as a facilitator for numerous congregations of women religious. She also developed her community's *agrégée* movement, a form of membership that is non-canonical, but vowed.

More information about Bette and her contributions to religious life can be found at www.csjkansas.org/sister-bette-newsobit/.

Additional Copies of 2015 LCWR Reflection Books Available for Purchase

Copies of the 2015 LCWR reflection book, *I Will Give You the Treasures of Darkness*, are in the mail to all LCWR members, associates, and subscribers, as well as those who ordered copies.



Due to a printer overrun, some additional copies are available for purchase. The books sell for \$5.00 each, plus shipping and handling. Discounts are available for orders of more than 10 books. Books may be purchased at lcsr.org/publications/i-will-give-you-treasures-darkness.



Imagining Justice: Catching God's Dream

From March 2 to 5, 36 women and men from around the country gathered at Presentation Retreat Center in Los Gatos, California to imagine justice. Participants included women in elected leadership, justice promoters, and communicators from LCWR congregations.



Kathleen
Pruitt, CSJP



Former LCWR president Kathleen Pruitt, CSJP, a contemplative in action, a seasoned and committed peacemaker, and a Zen master, led the group in reflection and exploration of the deep grounding of the work for justice. Together the group reflected on what it might mean to truly believe that contemplation is action for justice and action for justice is contemplation. They explored the call to be contemplative critics, prophetic risk-takers, and radical reconcilers as well as the essential interrelatedness of these three activities. They looked at the dynamic interaction of critique, lament, and vision in the effort to bring about God's vision of the world.



36 women and men participated in *Imagining Justice* at the Presentation Center in Los Gatos, California



Kathleen called on participants to remember that the world is already saved, to look at the world and at the struggle for justice with Easter Eyes, to practice outrageous hope, and to remember that the work for justice is God's work and God's agenda.

At the end of the experience participants commented that they felt renewed and refreshed. They found that the attention to the contemplative grounding of the work for justice provided a touchstone that can sustain them in their ministry. They felt strengthened by the experience of finding companions and fellow travelers on the journey.



Upcoming LCWR Dates

LCWR Assembly
Houston, Texas
August 11—15, 2015

Leading from Within Retreat
Redemptorist Retreat Center
Tucson, Arizona
January 17 — 22, 2016

LCWR New Leader Workshop
Conference Center
University of St. Mary of the Lake
Mundelein, Illinois
May 12 —15, 2016

LCWR Assembly
Atlanta, Georgia
August 9—13, 2016

LCWR Assembly
Orlando, Florida
August 8—12, 2017

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

LCWR to Co-Sponsor SHARE El Salvador's Pilgrimage to El Salvador

At its February meeting, the LCWR board voted to co-sponsor the 2015 SHARE El Salvador pilgrimage,



November 28-December 5, commemorating the 35th anniversary of martyrdom of the four church women in El Salvador. LCWR will send a representative of the national organization and will encourage each of its 15 regions to send delegates as well. In addition, the board voted unanimously to commemorate the four church women during this year of consecrated life by contributing \$5000 to the SHARE legacy fund which provides opportunities for Salvadorans committed to social justice, especially women and girls, to access education, leadership workshops, and technical training.

SHARE plans a delegation of 65-100 including women religious, sister parish members, and others. The LCWR board hopes that the delegation will include representatives from each of the LCWR regions including younger religious, associates, and young women exploring religious life, noting the opportunity to share the rich legacy of the four women martyred in El Salvador during this year of consecrated life.

The program will include a pilgrimage to the site of martyrdom of the four women, opportunities to speak with those who knew them, and a visit to the sites of the martyrdom of Archbishop Romero and the Jesuits and their co-workers. Delegates will learn about the root causes of migration to the United States and the current challenges facing impoverished communities. They will visit and lend support to grassroots movements of women, human rights defenders, mothers of the disappeared, and anti-mining and environmental activists. SHARE has lead the initiative to declare the site where the four US churchwomen were martyred a national historic monument and is working to make this effort come to fruition during the pilgrimage.

The cost for the programs is \$1200.00 plus airfare. Partial scholarships and group discounts may be available from SHARE. Details about the delegation will be posted soon on SHARE's website at www.share-elsalvador.org.



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Cardinal Turkson Previews Pope's Encyclical on Integral Ecology

In a lecture delivered March 5 at St. Patrick's Pontifical University, in Maynooth, Ireland, Cardinal Peter Turkson, president of the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace previewed many of the themes expected to feature prominently in Pope Francis' highly anticipated encyclical on ecology.



Cardinal Turkson's Trócaire 2015 Lenten Lecture, entitled "Integral Ecology and the Horizon of Hope: Concern for the Poor and for Creation in the Ministry of Pope Francis," highlighted four principles of integral ecology reflected in the ministry and teaching of Pope Francis since his pontificate began two years ago.

1. The call to all people to be protectors of both creation and the human person is all-embracing and integral to real sustainable development.
2. Care for creation is a virtue in its own right. At its heart it is about the threefold relationship which lies at the heart of justice: right relationship with the Creator, the neighbor, and the natural environment in which all live.
3. Human beings are called to care for what they cherish and revere. While international regulations and policies are essential to addressing poverty and climate change, they are likely to be ineffective without moral conversion and a real change of heart.
4. Dialogue and a new global solidarity are essential to integral ecology. Everyone has a part to play and every action, no matter how small, will make a difference.

If Cardinal Turkson's remarks are a preview of the Pope's encyclical expected to be released before the summer, it will be a comprehensive call to care and protection that embraces all of creation: the human person and the natural environment. The full lecture is available at: tinyurl.com/ke6tc9s.

Governments Commit to Scale-up Investments in Women's Empowerment

Government representatives meeting at the United Nations in New York issued a political declaration committing to actions to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls by 2030. Delivered during the 59th session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women, the political declaration marks the 20th anniversary of the 1995 Beijing World Conference on Women and its landmark Platform for Action.

Governments pledged to: strengthen the implementation of laws; bolster institutions vital to women's empowerment; transform discriminatory norms and stereotypes; close resource gaps; boost accountability; and enhance capacities to track progress.

The political declaration expresses concern with the slow and uneven rate of progress since the Beijing Platform for Action detailed comprehensive commitments on 12 issues critical to gender equality, and emphasizes the essential roles of men and boys and the contributions of civil society.

While 189 countries endorsed the Platform for Action, 20 years later, no country has achieved gender equality. At the current pace of change, it will take 81 years to achieve gender parity in economic participation and 50 years to reach parity in parliamentary representation. In adopting the political declaration, member states agreed that full, effective, and accelerated implementation of the Platform for Action will be essential to the post-2015 sustainable development agenda expected to enumerate all major issues of global progress for the next 15 years.

"The disappointing gap between existing commitments and their implementation points to a collective failure of leadership," says UN under-secretary-general and UN women executive director Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka. "The declaration says we will not continue to let down the women and girls of the world. It is time to step up commitment and action." She adds, "By 2030 at the latest, we want to live in a world where women are equal."

The political declaration is available at tinyurl.com/ka-su9rq. More information about the Commission on the Status of Women may be found at tinyurl.com/m338fel.



SOLIDARITY with South Sudan

by Joan Mumaw, IHM
US Regional Development Director

This has been a disappointing time for the people of South Sudan. The leaders of the government, including the president Salva Kiir and the deposed vice-president, Riek Machar, failed to reach an agreement on a transitional governance structure for South Sudan. The African Union, The Troika (USA, Great Britain and Norway) and IGAD, a group made up of leaders of surrounding nations, have been unsuccessful in moving these leaders to compromise.

While the leaders and negotiators have been meeting throughout the year in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, the people of South Sudan have suffered the ravages of war, displacement, and now extreme hunger. Children as young as eight are being abducted from their homes to serve in the army or opposition forces. The opposing sides will continue to fight to gain as much territory as possible prior to any further negotiations. The role of neighboring countries is questionable. Uganda is supporting the government and Sudan (Khartoum) is accused of arming the opposition. The stakes are high for them.

The bishops of South Sudan together with other church leaders have spoken in very strong terms about the non-action by the leaders and the plight of the people. The recent pastoral letter of the Catholic bishops of South Sudan was a heartfelt cry to the leaders of this young nation:

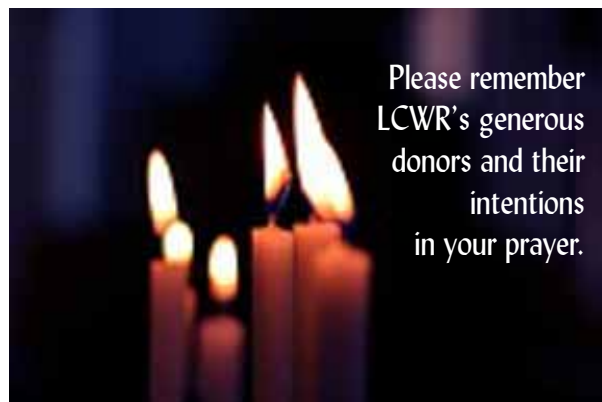
The War Must Stop: We Will Finish Ourselves and Finish the Nation. South Sudan has always been considered a God-fearing nation, whether Christians, Muslims or followers of traditional religion. But in this senseless and inhuman war the nation has abandoned the ways of God. This war is evil. As a people we must not be afraid to name sin for what it is, and we hereby name this war as a sin...

Once again we say that this war must stop immediately. Some people sit in Addis Ababa discussing politics while on the ground other people are fighting and dying. The political negotiations cannot be allowed to continue with "business as usual"

while the killing continues. Only when the killing stops will it be acceptable to negotiate for posts and positions. Concessions must be made; no political advantage is worth killing more innocent civilians, nor even killing soldiers. The Church is like a Mother who mourns the death of any of God's children.

Let us join with the people in South Sudan in prayer for peace during the remainder of this Lenten and Easter season. The Solidarity pastoral team has prepared this material for parishes in South Sudan in collaboration with the pastoral leaders of the dioceses. www.solidaritytyssudan.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/From-Lent-to-Easter-Liturgy-with-South-Sudan.pdf.

For more information about the work of Solidarity and how your congregations can become involved, contact Joan Mumaw, IHM at jmumaw.solidarity@gmail.com.



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

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.