

Update

*A Publication of the
Leadership Conference of Women Religious*

April 2020

Let Us Pray for the Whole Earth Community



"How might our prayers and intentions be joined across congregations for the common good of the whole Earth community to help lift the spirits of a people, especially in the wake of closed churches, synagogues, mosques, and other places of worship? What would happen if elder Catholic sisters ... were to unleash the power of their lifetime of prayer and contemplative practice to hold the safety and protection of all peoples across the world as a sacred intention?"

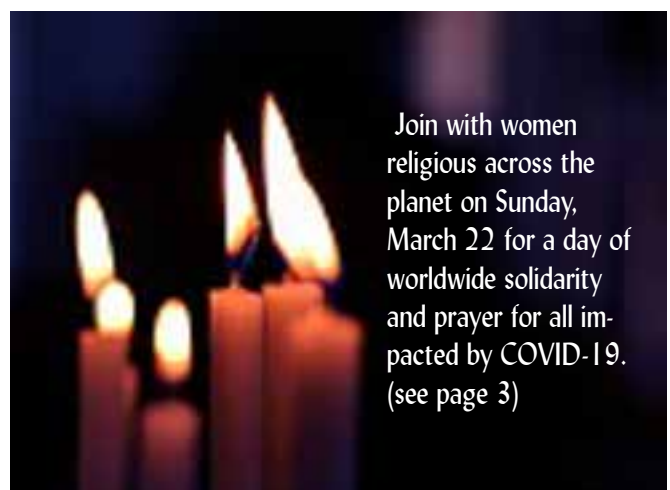
-- from "A Call to Spiritual Bonding," by Elise D. García, OP (see page 2)

LCWR Responds to the Global Health Crisis

LCWR thanks all of its members for the extraordinary ways in which they are responding to the COVID-19 global health crisis. So many leaders have been sharing the steps they have taken to assure that their senior sisters remain safe and well. These measures are strong indications of how valued these elders are.

At the same time women religious are also working

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Join with women religious across the planet on Sunday, March 22 for a day of worldwide solidarity and prayer for all impacted by COVID-19. (see page 3)

From the LCWR Presidency
A Call to Spiritual Bonding

by Elise D. García, OP — LCWR President-Elect

As I write this column, the disruptive impact of the COVID-19 pandemic is rocking our nation and the world.

Social distancing is the catchword. We leaders of religious institutes, along with leaders of governments, schools, parishes, businesses, civic organizations, industries, and nonprofits, are challenged with making daily, if not hourly, determinations about the breadth of its application as a proactive form of quarantine.

That this time of global sickness and quarantine has come during Lent gives us cause for deep spiritual reflection. The term “quarantine” comes from the Italian *quarantena* – meaning a 40-day period – and it originates from the days of the Black Death in the 1300s. As we are called to engage in social distancing for the common good of all, our 40-day Lenten journey this year includes the sacrifice of missing significant gatherings, weddings, birthdays, funerals, liturgies, and the daily social interactions we so take for granted. Concerns about the impact of isolation heighten awareness of the precious gift of simply being with one another.

All of us in leadership are acutely aware that our motherhouses are full of elderly sisters who comprise the population most vulnerable to the ravages of this novel disease – and we are all taking every precaution to protect them and the larger communities we serve. *These very same women, however, are also among the world's most resilient spiritual practitioners!*

As we women religious take the prudent measures this global pandemic requires, perhaps we might also take



a leadership role in countering the ill effects of social distancing by advancing the practice of *spiritual bonding*. Our motherhouses are powerhouses of prayer and presence. How might we join together to find ways of uniting the human spirit in faith, love, and solidarity among ourselves and others across the globe as we all face this common viral threat?

We are already seeing marvelous examples of this: As Italy moved into complete lockdown, **Italians**

spontaneously came out on their balconies to join in song, banging pots and pans in expressions of gratitude to healthcare workers. To raise morale in their beleaguered nation, **Iranian** healthcare workers tweeted videotapes of themselves dancing in full protective gear.

What witness to the presence of God in the midst of all this suffering might we women religious offer at this time? How might our prayers and intentions be joined across congregations for the common good

of the whole Earth community to help lift the spirits of a people, especially in the wake of closed churches, synagogues, mosques, and other places of worship? What would happen if elder Catholic sisters, among those most susceptible to fatality from exposure to COVID-19, were to unleash the power of their lifetime of prayer and contemplative practice to hold the safety and protection of all peoples across the world as a sacred intention?

How might a call to spiritual bonding witness to our oneness as a global community, helping to allay fears and touch the isolation of social distancing?

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LCWR Members Respond to the Global Health Crisis

(continued from page 1)

to the extent possible to help persons whose lives have been upended by the crisis and have limited resources to cope with the upheaval, especially those who are employed by religious institutes and their ministries. Many religious are carrying in their hearts and prayer the worry for children whose safest hours are when they are in school, the frail elderly whose daily existence is threatened on multiple levels, and so many others who are living with great anxiety about the future of their own lives and their loved ones.

LCWR, like so many others, extends its deepest gratitude to all people who are on the front lines of the crisis as they care for the sick and prepare for what might be required of them next. Gratitude goes as well to all who are working tirelessly on the research needed to halt the spread of the virus, and, of course, to all people in the many roles of service that keep society functioning throughout the pandemic.

The International Union of Superiors General (UISG) has called upon all women religious throughout the planet to spend Sunday, March 22 as a Day of Worldwide Solidarity and Prayer. "This is a special time for prayer and for witness through practical solidarity and awareness of our responsibility to care for one another....," said UISG president Jolanta Kafka, RMI. "We therefore invite all the member congregations of UISG to make March 22 a day of worldwide solidarity and prayer especially for all those directly affected."

LCWR encourages all leaders to ask their members to join intentionally their own prayer with Catholic sisters throughout the world who will also be praying for those directly impacted by this crisis. Through the mystery of God, may this action of solidarity contribute in some way to an increase in healing, compassion, and love throughout the planet.

Given the increasing need for hospital beds/space across the country and the call for the Army Corps of Engineers to help create additional such spaces, LCWR members who have unoccupied buildings (former ministry sites, housing, etc.) are asked to consider contacting their governors as soon as possible to offer the site for consideration of such use.

LCWR National Office Remains Available to Serve the Members

As LCWR members assess their needs in the midst of the pandemic, LCWR will remain attentive to how the conference might respond to those needs. Although the LCWR offices are closed and all events are cancelled through June 30, the staff is working remotely and will be available to the members.

Members are encouraged to contact any staff member with questions, needs, or suggestions for what might be of assistance to them during this crisis. If there is a need or desire for education, networking, spiritual bonding, or other matters, members may contact the office at any time.

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Ann Scholz, SSND
Associate Director for Social Mission
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Calls may also be placed to the office number: 301-588-4955 and messages will automatically be forwarded to the appropriate staff member.

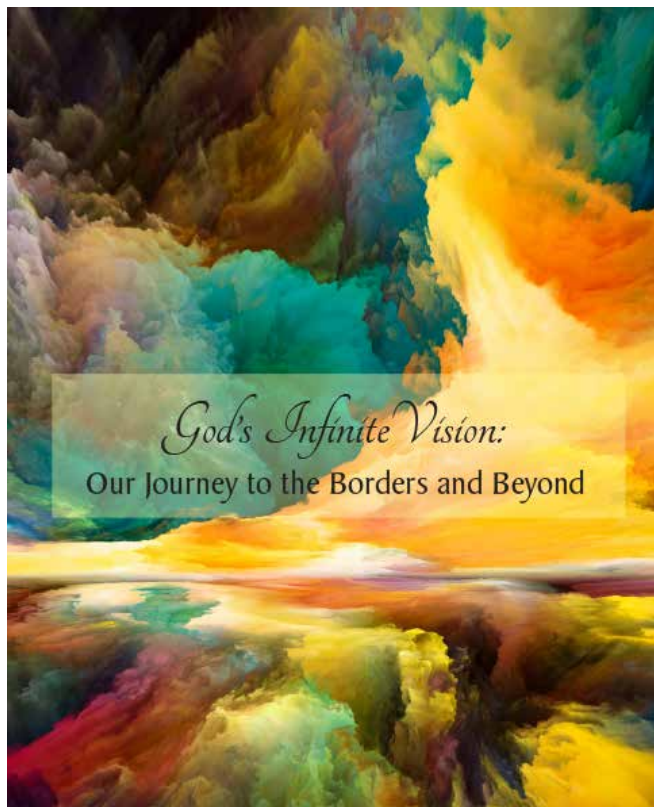
LCWR Assembly Still Scheduled for August 11-14, 2020

In light of the global health crisis and its potential impact on the 2020 LCWR assembly, LCWR will monitor the situation carefully to determine whether to hold the assembly. At this point, it is too soon to make any decision.

In consultation with Nix Conference & Meeting Management, who work in collaboration with LCWR on the assembly, a decision was made to open registration on May 1. While this is a much later date than is normally set, this decision seems most reasonable with the unpredictable nature of COVID-19.

All LCWR members and associates are asked to hold the assembly dates of August 11-14 on their calendars with the hope that the assembly will take place. The LCWR office will apprise all of any changes as the next weeks and months unfold.

In the meantime, members and associates are encouraged to read about the assembly plans that are available on the [private side of the LCWR website](#).



God's Infinite Vision:
Our Journey to the Borders and Beyond

LCWR members and associates are encouraged to view a description of the 2020 LCWR assembly on the [private side of the LCWR website](#).

The content about the assembly from the website is also available on the last four pages of this newsletter.

Sexuality:
An Evolving Understanding

A WEBINAR FOR
LEADERSHIP TEAMS

April 30, 2020

**Time: 2:00—3:15 PM EDT, 1:00—2:15 PM CDT,
11:00 AM – 12:15 PM PDT**

Presenter: Lynn M. Levo, CSJ

Registration information will be sent soon

LCWR is offering a webinar to assist leadership teams with a better understanding of what is evolving in the area of sexuality, especially with issues and questions related to lesbian, gay, bi-sexual, transgender, questioning, and intersex (LGBTQI) persons. The information shared will assist leaders and members to explore implications for relating with current members, new members, our church and those with whom we minister, especially in our sponsored institutions.

Lynn Levo has presented nationally and internationally to women and men religious, intercommunity novitiates and seminaries, on fostering healthy integrated sexuality, celibacy, relationships, intimacy, and mutuality in community.



LCWR National Board Explores the Emerging Future of Religious Life

The LCWR national board met in February for rich conversations and planning for the emergence of religious life in these changing times. Meeting at Mater Dolorosa Retreat Center in Sierra Madre, California, the LCWR board and staff also had opportunities to interact with the board and staff of the Conference of Major Superiors of Men (CMSM) who gathered at the same time.

Along with conducting the business of the board, the members spent significant time, along with the staff, exploring these questions:

- How do we make sure that all we do moves forward in a grounded theology, a contemplative stance and developing anticipatory leadership skills?
- As we consider the 2019 LCWR assembly and attend to the realities of our members, the region chairs, and the national office resources, what really is the work of LCWR?
- How do we create the space for the emergence of religious life throughout the LCWR organization?

These conversations were followed by a two-hour session conducted by videoconferencing with the 15 LCWR regional chairs. In virtual breakout rooms the chairs, board, and staff conducted contemplative dialogues centered on the questions:

- How do we create the space for the emergence of religious life throughout the LCWR organization as we further the emerging orientations? What resources are needed in order to do so?
- In what ways can we create greater synergy between the LCWR regions and national office so that there is a solid connection between LCWR members at the grassroots level and the national office ministers/ministry? What is needed?

In addition to sharing prayer, Eucharistic liturgies, and meals with CMSM, the two conferences held one joint meeting. Within a contemplative context, the group shared reflections on an excerpt from *New Wine in New Wineskins*, a publication of the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life, focused on the question: Considering the call to men and women religious to respond to the needs of today's world, what are you seeing today in religious life?

CMSM president Adam Gonzales, OCD and LCWR president Jayne Helmlinger, CSJ provided updates on how each conference is visioning and planning for the future. This was followed by a discussion on what is needed for the two conferences to best assist women and men religious leaders.

Among the business conducted by the board was the appointment of two LCWR members to the Contemporary Religious Life Committee: Ricca Dimalibot, CCVI (Houston, Texas) and Lisa Kane, OP (Racine, Wisconsin).



LCWR national board and staff



CMSM and LCWR boards and staff

LCWR Executive Director Addresses Leadership Roundtable

The Leadership Roundtable, an organization founded in March 2005 to promote best practices and accountability in the management, finances, communications, and human resources development in the US Catholic Church including greater incorporation of the expertise of laity, held its second Catholic Partnership Summit from February 28-29, 2020 in Washington, DC. The theme of the Summit, *“From Crisis to Co-Responsibility: creating a New Culture of Leadership,”* explored the topics:

- Envisioning a New Culture of Leadership
- A Culture of Co-Responsible Governance and Leadership
- A Culture of Ethical, Financial Management and Stewardship
- A Culture with Young Adult Catholics at the Leadership Table

The summit brought together 260 Catholic leaders across parish, diocesan, business, and academic sectors. This gathering of young adults, religious, laity, and clergy provided processes of panel presentations, contemplative quiet, listening and small group conversation. The learnings from each of the panel sessions will be published and made available on the [Leadership Roundtable website](#).

One of the significant aspects of this year’s summit was the invitation of lay Catholic organizations to co-host the event. LCWR, Council of Major Superiors of Women Religious, Conference of Major Superiors of Men, Catholic Health Association, Catholic Charities, Catholic Relief Services, Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities shared the co-hosting with the Apostolic Nuncio Archbishop Christophe Pierre, Cardinals Cupich, O’Malley, and Tobin; Archbishops Gregory, Gomez, Scicluna; and other bishops from across the United States.

LCWR executive director Carol Zinn, SSJ accepted the invitation to participate on the panel, *Envisioning a New Culture of Leadership* with Christina Lamas of the National Federation of Catholic Youth Ministry and Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin of Newark, New Jersey. A rich and vibrant conversation focused on the need to

create relationships within the church that truly honor the gift of diversity among the People of God. The panel also emphasized the need for mutuality, dialogue, and meaning-making.

The topic of change versus transformation as it related to the topic of how a new culture of leadership within the church might be cultivated became the focus of [an interview for the National Catholic Reporter](#) by Tom Roberts with Carol Zinn, SSJ and Archbishop Charles Scicluna from the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. An article about the event also appeared in [Crux](#).

Susan Francois, CSJP represented the LCWR board at the summit.



Leadership Roundtable panel: Kim Daniels (moderator); Christine Lamas; Carol Zinn, SSJ; Cardinal Joseph Tobin

LCWR 2020 Reflection Books Are On Their Way

Copies of the new 2020 reflection book, *You Will Have Light for Your First Steps* will be mailed during the week of March 23.





Jolanta Kafka, RMI and Carol Zinn, SSJ at the LCWR office

LCWR Welcomes New UISG President

On February 25 LCWR welcomed Jolanta Kafka, RMI to its offices in Silver Spring, Maryland. Jolanta is the newly elected president of the International Union of Superiors General (2019-2022) and a Claretian Missionary from Poland. Jolanta is the superior general of her congregation and was in the United States to visit her community members in Florida. LCWR eagerly welcomed her as she asked to visit and learn more about the members and ministries of LCWR.

Jolanta's warmth, easy manner, and deep desire to learn the scope of LCWR's realities as a national conference was met with delight as LCWR shared information about the conference. She was interested to learn of LCWR's recent planning process and the emerging orientations noting that women's religious life throughout the world is being asked to step into a future filled with hope in new and life-giving ways. Jolanta's visit left the LCWR staff with a sense of hope and enthusiasm for the global sisterhood.



April 1 Deadline to Apply for Pilot Program: Rivers of Hope

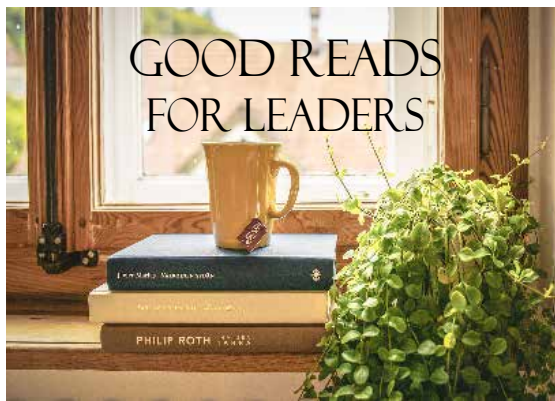
LCWR members are reminded to send to the national office by April 1 names of any members fluent in both English and Spanish who would benefit from attending a pilot program for women and men religious currently serving the Latino population in the United States. This one-week gathering, entitled Rios de Esperanza/Rivers of Hope, will provide 25 religious the space and time for deep reflection on the challenging ministry of accompaniment of the Latino people who often are living with trauma and fear.

This collaborative effort of the Association of Latin American Missionary Sisters (AHLMA), the Conference of Major Superiors of Men (CMSM), the Leadership Conference of Women Religious (LCWR), the Mexican American Catholic College (MACC), and the Religious Brothers Conference (RBC) is funded by a grant. Costs for registration, the program, housing, and food will be covered by the grant. Participants will be asked to pay for their travel expenses.

The one-week program will be offered two times, each to a different group of 25 religious. The sessions will be:

- July 5-11, 2020 -- Bon Secours Conference and Retreat Center, Marriottsville, Maryland
- October 18-24, 2020 -- Mexican American Catholic College, San Antonio, Texas

Participants will be selected through a lottery process from the names submitted by LCWR members.



Shackleton's Way: Leadership Lessons from the Great Antarctic Explorer

by Margot Morrell and Stephanie Capparell

Reviewed by Cyndi Nienhaus, CSA

"He is a model of great leadership and, in particular, a master of guidance in crisis."

--From the Introduction to *Shackleton's Way*

What does an exciting adventure story of a man's ship stuck in the Antarctic have to tell us today as leaders of religious institutes? Plenty.

Shackleton's Way, a 2002 biographical account by Margot Morrell and Stephanie Capparell, tells the true story of Sir Ernest Shackleton (1874-1922). From 1914-1916, Shackleton, an Irish explorer, led a group of British explorers on an expedition to the Antarctic and became stranded in the ice. During those two years until their rescue, Shackleton, through his unique leadership style, kept up people's spirits, helped them find meaning in their circumstances and, most importantly, made sure each one of them came out of the harrowing experience alive.

Those of us in leadership may find ourselves in a crisis, maybe not as drastic as Shackleton's, but nonetheless as challenging. We can lean upon Shackleton's story to lead in a self-sacrificing manner that gives rise to our ability to empower others, call upon people's strengths, act confidently, and change our minds from time to time. The book has a spiritual undertone; that is, while Shackleton and his crew had only had one another and their personal thoughts to keep them company, they also surrendered their entire beings to the will of God without knowing the final outcome.

Upcoming LCWR Dates

Sexuality: An Evolving Understanding

LCWR Webinar

April 30, 2020

LCWR Assembly

Dallas, Texas

August 11 — 14 2020

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

Bethany Center | Lutz, Florida

September 14 — 16, 2020

Leading from Within Retreat

San Pedro Retreat Center

Winter Park, Florida

January 10 – 15, 2021

LCWR New Leader Workshop

Conference Center

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

March 25 — 28, 2021

LCWR Assembly

Orlando, Florida

August 10 — 13, 2021

Leading from Within Retreat

Redemptorist Renewal Center | Tucson, Arizona

January 16 — 21, 2022

LCWR Assembly

St. Louis, Missouri

August 9 — 12, 2022

CNS Article Focuses on Care of Elder Religious During COVID-19 Outbreak

Catholic News Service released [an article](#) about the care of elder religious during the pandemic that quotes LCWR executive director Carol Zinn, SSJ and LCWR board member Susan Francois, CSJP.

LCWR Submits Testimony to House Judiciary Committee in Support of Refugee Resettlement

Interfaith leaders welcomed the February 27 [hearing](#) in the House Judiciary Committee's Subcommittee on Immigration and Citizenship, *The Current State of the US Refugee Program*. Auxiliary Bishop Mario E. Dorsonville of Washington, chairman of the USCCB's Committee on Migration, was among those who testified at the hearing. In his [testimony](#) Bishop Dorsonville reviewed the Catholic Church's history of resettling refugees in the United States, described the assistance provided by Catholic organizations to resettle and welcome refugee families in US communities, and discussed Catholic social teaching which urges the welcome of newcomers.

LCWR was among a number of faith-based and refugee resettlement organizations that submitted written testimony to the committee. The [LCWR statement](#) reads in part:

"The United States has a long and proud history of welcoming immigrants and sheltering refugees. Women religious have been blessed to be able to accompany immigrant and refugee communities across this country for almost 300 years and they continue to welcome those who come to this country seeking safety after passing through the US government's rigorous screening processes.

"As Americans we firmly oppose the continued attempts by this administration, and some members of Congress, to dismantle the US refugee resettlement program. As Catholic sisters we strongly object to President Trump's efforts to limit our ability to heed the scriptural command to welcome the stranger and care for those in need."

According to the [UNHCR](#), in 2018 there were 70.8 million displaced people in the world, including 25.9 million refugees. Fewer than 1% of refugees will ever be resettled to a third country. Since the program's inception, the United States has set an average refugee admissions goal of 95,000 refugees and has resettled up to 200,000 refugees in certain years. In fiscal year 2019, the United States welcomed only 30,000 refugees and this year committed to resettling only 18,000.

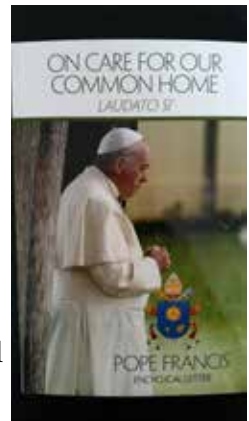
Refugees give back to their new communities. They start working as soon as possible, pay taxes, start

businesses, and become active members of society. They are even running for elected office--and winning. Communities across the country support refugees. Faith leaders, educators, business leaders, and local, state, and national elected officials, as well as thousands of community members have demonstrated welcome for refugees in every state.

Plan to Celebrate Earth in April and May

Catholics will join millions around the world in April and May to celebrate God's creation and honor "Our Common Home."

The US-based Catholic Climate Covenant's 2020 Earth Day program, "Earth Day at 50/ Laudato Si' at 5: An Urgent Appeal for Action," is a free, one-hour educational program designed to complement the Earth Day Network's 50th anniversary theme, "Climate Action," and to commemorate the fifth anniversary of the Pope Francis's encyclical letter, *Laudato Si'*. The program includes prayers, readings, discussion questions, a short video, and suggested actions. Materials, including a facilitator guide, program guide, and editable flyer, can be downloaded [here](#).



On March 2, Pope Francis announced [Laudato Si' Week](#) with a [video](#) calling on all Catholics to celebrate the fifth anniversary of the encyclical May 16-24. Laudato Si' Week is a global campaign sponsored by the Vatican's Dicastery of Integral Human Development. All Catholic communities are encouraged to take new and bold action to protect "our common home" in celebration of the fifth anniversary of Laudato Si'.

The Global Catholic Climate Movement (GCCM) is helping to promote the week for the dicastery. They are suggesting prayer services, divestment from fossil fuels, commitments to carbon emission reductions, tree plantings, and other activities that demonstrate care for "Our Common Home." Those interested in celebrating the anniversary will find materials in a [toolkit](#) to plan and implement their actions and a template of [promotional materials](#) to share the word about activities with their communities.

SCOTUS Allows MPP Policy to Remain in Force

On March 11 the US Supreme Court dealt another blow to migrants seeking safety in the US. The court ruled that the Trump administration can continue to enforce its deadly Migrant Protection Protocols (MPP) also known as “Remain in Mexico” policy until a lawsuit challenging its legality makes its way through the federal court system.



Since the creation of the “Remain in Mexico” policy in January 2019, [more than 57,000 people](#) have been forced to wait in Mexico for asylum hearings in the United States and at least [816 asylum-seekers](#) have been raped, kidnapped, assaulted, and even murdered in Mexico, including 201 children. The Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals had briefly blocked the policy questioning its legality and pointing to the dangers faced by those forced to await their asylum hearings in Mexico.

According to [Vox media](#), “In the almost three years since President Donald Trump took office, the US asylum system has almost become unrecognizable. The administration has built up, layer by layer, a series of impediments in Central America, at the border, in detention centers, and in the immigration courts that have made obtaining asylum nearly impossible.”

Faith leaders are calling on Congress to block the administration’s dangerous asylum policies by cutting funding for anti-asylum policies and engaging in vigorous oversight. Interfaith Immigration Coalition (IIC) members are also urging Congress to restore asylum and refugee protections by passing the Refugee Protection Act and the Asylum Seeker Protection Act.

LCWR’s associate director for social mission, Ann Scholz, SSND, was quoted in an interfaith press release: “As Catholic sisters we are called by our faith to welcome the stranger and care for the most vulnerable, and we are challenged by our national values to offer protection to those fleeing violence and persecution. The Trump administration’s attack on asylum violates that faith and threatens those values.”

Congress Prepares to Tackle 2021 Budget Appropriations Process

The House of Representatives is scheduled to tackle appropriations beginning in late April. House appropriators have scheduled subcommittee markups for FY21 on April 21. They plan to follow up with a full committee markup and adoption of subcommittee allocations on April 28.



The Senate Appropriations Committee will follow tradition and allow the House to begin the process. They have said that they would like to finish markups before the August recess.

The appropriations committee will divvy up nearly \$1.4 trillion in discretionary spending among the various federal agencies. This is a roughly \$5 billion spending increase over FY20. Last year lawmakers agreed to a two-year spending deal setting topline spending levels for FY21 and allowing appropriators to exceed debt limits set in place through the 2011 Budget Control Act.

The Administration released its proposed [FY2021 budget](#) outline on February 20. The President’s budget makes huge human needs cuts affecting millions of people. The Administration is proposing these drastic reductions to social safety net programs including Medicaid, SNAP, housing, help for people with disabilities, education and job training, social services, and public health programs.

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.



- Testimony from faith community for the House Homeland Security Committee Border Security, Facilitation, and Operations Subcommittee Hearing, “Examining the Effect of the Border Wall on Private and Tribal Landowners.” LCWR (3/27/20)
- Letter to members of Congress requesting the inclusion of an initial, five-year designation of Temporary Protected Status (TPS) for Venezuela, the Bahamas, and Guatemala in the FY 2021 appropriations package, protecting approximately 814,000 nationals from these countries. LCWR (2/28/20)
- Letter to members of the House of Representatives urging passage of the NO BAN Act as reported out of committee and without further amendment. LCWR (2/28/20)
- Letter from faith organizations calling for the protection of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge and a halt to plans for oil exploration and drilling in the refuge. LCWR (2/28/20)
- Comments on the Council on Environmental Quality’s proposed changes to the regulations for implementing the procedural provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act registering concern for the environment and for those who suffer most from the ill effects of pollution, climate change, and the destruction of our natural world. LCWR (3/6/20)
- Letter to Chad Wolf, acting director of Department of Homeland Security (DHS) urging DHS to end the “Migrant Protection Protocols” (“MPP”), and to allow asylum seekers to pursue refugee protection while safely in the United States as required by US law and treaties. LCWR (3/5/20)
- Letter to Attorney General Barr on the occasion of his keynote to the Catholic Prayer Breakfast raising two moral issues of concern: his role in reinstating the federal death penalty and in challenging the religious liberty of Scott Warren and for his faith-based care for migrants. Carol Zinn, SSJ (3/10/20)

- Letter to Congressional leaders and appropriators calling for cuts in funding for all immigration enforcement, increased accountability for the administration in fiscal year 2021, and defunding of programs like MPP, ACA, and PACR and HARP. LCWR (3/11/20)
- Letter to members of Congress calling on them to prioritize individuals most in need and enable all people to live with dignity and the opportunity to flourish as they continue to address the COVID-19 crisis. LCWR (3/12/20).
- Petition to Senators urging them to pass a clean Dream Act as expressed in the bi-partisan bills HR 6 and S 874. Ann Scholz, SSND (3/14/20)

Supreme Court to Hear Affordable Care Act Case

On March 2 the US Supreme Court agreed to hear a constitutional challenge to the Affordable Care Act in *Texas v. Azar*, now known as *California v. Texas*. The Supreme Court will address both the constitutionality of the mandate and its severability from the ACA. The Catholic Health Association has joined with the other national hospital associations to file briefs supporting the ACA at each step of this litigation, including the request for Supreme Court review, and will do so again when the briefing schedule is set. Oral arguments will likely take place in October with a decision expected by late 2021. Additional background on the case can be [found here](#).





2020 Study of Newer Entrants

A new NRVC/CARA study of sisters, brothers, and priests who entered between 2003-2018 will be released on the NRVC website on March 25. Every religious institute will receive a booklet and special issue of the NRVC *Horizon Journal* to disseminate the information. The key findings about newer members include:

- An endless story of call: women and men continue to respond to the call to religious life
- Drawn by prayer, spirituality, charism, community life and mission
- Community life as embracing intercultural and intergenerational living
- Committed to living simply and in solidarity with the poor
- Filled with abundant hope for religious life amid changing demographics

NRVC looks forward to sharing this report with all religious through the generosity of the GHR Foundation.

NRVC Education

Registration for NRVC's [annual summer institute](#) at Catholic Theological Union in Chicago is now open. The offerings are:

- Orientation Program for New Vocation Directors, July 8-12, 2020
- Ethical Issues in Vocation and Formation Ministry, July 13-14, 2020
- Behavioral Assessment 1, July 16-18, 2020
- Is it Generational, Cultural, Personality or Pathology? July 16-18, 2020

ForMission Application Deadline: April 10

ForMission is a two-year program offered by the Religious Formation Conference intended for women and men:

- formation ministers currently accompanying new members at any stage of initial formation;
- preparing to become a formation minister;
- in elected and informal leadership who actively support and oversee the effectiveness and quality of the congregation/province initial formation program.

The goal of the program is personal and communal transformation for the sake of religious life and mission in the context of religious life, the church, and the world in the 21st century.

The next ForMission class will take place *May 28-June 5, 2020* at Catholic Theological Union in Chicago. The deadline to apply for the new cohort is Friday, April 10. **Application materials are available [here](#).**



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Updates from NRRO

On May 19 at 1:00 PM EDT, the National Religious Retirement Office (NRRO) and the Avila Institute of Gerontology will offer a webinar entitled *The Relationship Between Staffing and Census: How to Tie Staff Levels to Your Census*. This free, one-hour presentation will furnish guidance on how to match staffing budgets with census needs. [More information is available here.](#)



The NRRO's quarterly webinar series addresses a wide range of eldercare and retirement-planning topics, such as promoting well-being for dementia sufferers and approaching caregiving from a spiritual perspective. Just 60 minutes long, webinars offer support and resources for caregivers and elders alike. Those interested may visit the [webinar archives](#) to see the entire series and explore topics they may have missed.

News from the UN

April 22—International Mother Earth Day

In 1972 the United Nations organized the first UN Conference on the Human Environment in Stockholm. It marked the beginning of a global awareness of the interdependence that exists among human beings, other living species, and the planet.



In 2009, the United Nations General Assembly recognizing that Earth, and its ecosystems, is home to the global community and acknowledging that in order to achieve a just balance among the economic, social, and environmental needs of present and future generations, it is necessary to promote harmony with Earth, designated April 22 International [Mother Earth Day](#).



Cycling with Sisters Initiates a Pilgrimage of Prayer and Action

A new initiative called Cycling with Sisters is rolling out in North America this year. The initiative is a series of bike rides in which Catholic sisters, friends, and neighbors share a pilgrimage of cycling, friendship, and prayer.

Four rides are slated for 2020: in Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island (June); Monroe, Michigan (July); Clinton, Iowa (July); and Chicago, Illinois (September). Each ride includes stops along the route for prayer and conversation about the urgent needs of people and the planet. The rides are open to the public, and details are available on the [Cycling with Sisters website](#).

Cycling with Sisters, a project of A Nun's Life Ministry and the Communicators for Women Religious (CWR), in partnership with the GHR Foundation, offers many ways for people to participate — even if they are not at the bike rides. During the rides, there will be activities such as livestreaming at the prayer stops and live tweeting from the road so that people at a distance can join via internet. Cycling with Sisters is present online throughout the year on major social media platforms as well as its website.



by Joan Mumaw, IHM
President
www.solidarityfriends.org

Urgent Need for Solidarity Staff

Solidarity with South Sudan is in urgent need of staff members to carry on a variety of ministries in the country. Solidarity is a new model of ministry among the poor: priests, brothers and sisters from various congregations and countries working together to build the capacity of South Sudanese as primary school teachers, nurses and midwives, farmers and diocesan pastoral teams at the request of the Sudan Bishops Conference. The length of time required to prepare South Sudanese to assume responsibility for projects and institutions developed by experienced religious since 2008 has taken longer than anticipated due to the civil war engulfing the country from 2013-2019. Many Solidarity staff need to rotate home leaving openings in key staff positions. These include: nursing tutors and clinical tutors in Wau, agricultural training project director and financial administrator for the agriculture project in Riimenze, and community bursar in Juba. Job descriptions are available on the [Solidarity website](http://www.solidarityfriends.org).

The Rome office of Solidarity is also seeking a religious to act as mission promoter to religious congregations. This person would be based in Rome, but travel to meet leaders in Europe and Africa. [Mission Promote JD](#)

These are opportunities for religious to share expertise for a limited amount of time, e.g. three years, and to further the vision and mission of Solidarity to which members of UISG and USG committed themselves in 2006. This is also an opportunity to enrich the life of the community as it supports member(s) involved in a challenging and yet rewarding ministry. *Please share these opening with your members.* For those who do not have personnel to share, financial support for those “on the ground” is greatly appreciated.

For additional information about these openings contact jmumaw.solidarity@gmail.com.

Please continue reading the following pages for information on the 2020 LCWR assembly

2020 LCWR Assembly

GOD'S INFINITE VISION: OUR JOURNEY TO THE BORDERS AND BEYOND

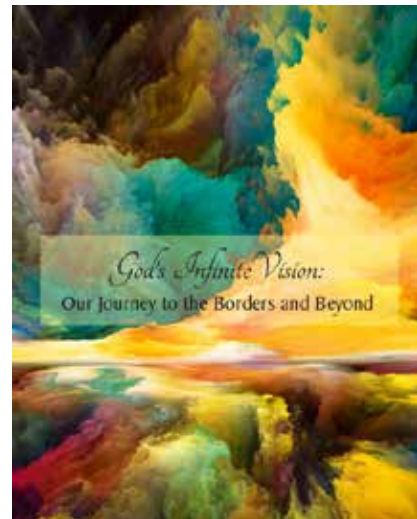
Hyatt Regency Hotel -- Dallas, Texas

August 11 — 14, 2020

The 2020 LCWR assembly theme, **God's Infinite Vision: Our Journey to the Borders and Beyond**, invites us to gather in the spirit of these times in profound and creative ways. As we witness the realities in our world, our nation, our church, our neighborhoods, and our communities, we see and feel the impact of polarization, cultural conflicts, economic divides, and climate crisis, as well as unprecedented suffering, vulnerability and oppression. At the same time, we see and feel the yearning for compassion, inclusion, respect and unity. Deep within the human spirit lies the beating heart of oneness.

This goal of oneness – surely a part of God's Infinite Vision – impels humanity to embark on a journey that takes us to the borders of our own mind, heart and will. Those borders, once acknowledged and visited, can – with God's grace – become crossing places into a way of being in the world that leads us more deeply into the vision God holds for us.

This LCWR assembly will be a journey to the borders and beyond. It will be a journey to crossing places. It will be a journey that we trust will lead us more deeply toward the God of the Future who beckons us to catch even a glimpse of the Infinite Vision and allow it to transform us.



Assembly Highlights

National Discernment of the Emerging Future

The assembly will provide significant time for the national discernment on the significant transition being experienced by all religious institutes. The processes will include the following:

1. A report from a representative of the Center for Applied Research for the Apostolate (CARA) on the findings of the surveys submitted by LCWR institutes on their capacity for governance. The national profile and its implications will provide important data for all to have as we continue our discernment together as a national body of women religious.
2. Discussion on: Where do we wish to see ourselves in the near future as a national body and what do we need to do to move toward that vision?
3. Opportunities for facilitated contemplative dialogue about the implications of what we are learning during this historic and unprecedented time in religious life. How might we move forward together?

Present at this assembly will be women religious guests from a variety of cultures as well as a number of women religious under the age of 50. These guests will join with us in some of our conversations so as to expand the perspectives of all present. These conversations will provide an opportunity for all LCWR members to engage with others who are passionate about religious life and have ideas for how it may best be supported in the future.

Keynote Address

This assembly will feature Daughter of the Holy Spirit of Mexico, **Mercedes Leticia Casas Sánchez**, as the keynote speaker. For those who have participated in events of the Confederation of Latin American Religious (CLAR), Mercedes is well-known for her leadership, wisdom, and creativity, having served as CLAR president. After completing her term in community leadership, Mercedes was invited by the Vatican's Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life to join its staff in 2018 in Rome where she now resides. She will bring a wealth of experience as a seasoned leader in religious life and will expand our horizons as she addresses us from her rich, global perspective.



Mercedes will address the assembly in her native language, Spanish, and we will provide simultaneous interpretation in English. Translation equipment will be available to any participant who wishes to use it.



Presidential Address

Jayne Helmlinger, CSJ will deliver the LCWR presidential address.



Deepening Groups

On the afternoon of August 13, the participants will have an opportunity to participate in a deepening group, an experience designed to provide personal reflection time and an opportunity to share with and learn from the wisdom of others as we continue the national discernment of the emerging future. The deepening groups will be held in various spaces throughout the hotel.

Within these sessions, participants, in groups of six, will engage in a contemplative dialogue, that will be guided by a facilitator.

Participants have the option of being in a deepening group with others with whom they have something in common – i.e., leaders from international communities, leaders of congregations who are currently in the completion process, leaders of religious institutes of 50 or fewer members, leaders who are Spanish-speaking, leaders who are the major superior, or leaders who are age 60 or younger. Other participants may simply indicate that they wish to be placed in a more mixed group of leaders. (Please be sure to indicate on your registration form the type of group to which you wish to be assigned.)

Table Facilitators Needed

As with recent LCWR assemblies, the 2020 gathering will incorporate contemplative processing so that participants may collectively listen carefully for the movement of God's Spirit among them. Processing will be especially directed to assisting members to find meaning in their own ministry of leadership as well as empowering them to support their own institute members find meaning in this era of significant challenge and change. **We are looking for LCWR members willing to serve as facilitators at their tables. If you are open to serving in this way, please indicate this on your registration form.** Table facilitators need to participate in a 30-minute orientation on Tuesday, August 11 at 4:30 PM.



Assembly Resolution 2019-23: Reflection and Justice Action

This year as we mark the fifth anniversary of Laudato Si' and the 50th anniversary of Earth Day the assembly will take time to examine the intersectionality of racism and migration through the lens of climate crisis. The program will feature a diverse panel of young people who will reflect on their work to address the climate crisis and their experience at the intersection of race and migration. At the close of the program those present will be invited to take a collective advocacy action.

Outstanding Leadership Award

LCWR will honor one of its members, **Patricia Chappell, SNDdeN** with its 2020 Outstanding Leadership Award. Patricia has spent nearly 30 years committed to anti-racism training and dismantling white privilege, where she modeled inclusivity and witnessed to the truth of the dignity of the human person. She served as executive director of Pax Christi USA and the president of the National Black Sisters Conference. Over the years she has worked with countless religious congregations and lay groups on diversity-racism issues. A member of the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur, Patricia served previously on the provincial leadership team. Recently she was elected to the leadership team of the East-West unit based in Baltimore, Maryland.



New Member Orientation

Any LCWR member who is attending an LCWR assembly for the first time, or any current member who has been out of leadership for a few years is encouraged to attend the New Member Orientation on Tuesday, August 11 from 2:00 to 4:00 PM. Participants will receive valuable information, not only about the assembly, but also about the organization.

Spanish Language

Since Spanish is the first language of several LCWR members, we will provide both translation services as well as the opportunity for those leaders to be at tables where they can process the assembly in the language that is most comfortable for them. In order to have diversity at those tables, we invite any member who speaks Spanish to consider participating at a Spanish-speaking table. (Those wishing to utilize the translation services and/or sit at a Spanish-speaking table are asked to indicate this on their registration form.)

Lifetime Achievement Awards

LCWR initiated a new way of honoring women religious who have given themselves unwaveringly to dreams and goals for a better world and have been undaunted by obstacles they have confronted along the way. For the first time, this new Lifetime Achievement Award will be given to:

Helen Prejean, CSJ who has been instrumental in initiating national dialogue on capital punishment and in shaping the Catholic Church's opposition to use of the death penalty. She continues her work of campaigning against capital punishment, counseling death row prisoners, and working with murder victims' family members.



Amata Miller, IHM, a professor of economics, who has written and lectured extensively on domestic and global economic justice issues, socially responsible investment and Catholic Social Teaching, both nationally and abroad. Her impact has extended to the world of economists and academics as well as to agencies advocating for social and economic justice.



Joyce Meyer, PBVM who has worked to foster a global sisterhood, particularly through her service as executive director of the Conrad N. Hilton Fund for Sisters, and now as the international liaison to women religious for Global Sisters Report. Her work has helped to bring the voices of women religious of the global south to the world.



Being in Communion with the Global Community

The intention of the entire LCWR assembly will be for the global community, especially those parts of this community that are suffering in any way. We will keep reminders before us that our very act of gathering has the potential to place love on the currents of consciousness and direct it to the places of greatest pain, sorrow, and loss in this wounded world.

Participants will be invited to intentionally hold various fractured parts of the world in their thoughts, their moments of quiet, and their times of prayer throughout the assembly. Various experiences of communal prayer and contemplation for the needs of the world will also be woven through the events of these days.

A room in the hotel will be dedicated as contemplative space and will be available for our use at any time of the day or night throughout the assembly. Participants are encouraged to spend time in that space and consciously join their contemplative prayer with others for the needs of the world. Optional sessions will also be offered when members may gather together in that space for a period of more focused contemplation.

Assembly Schedule

Tuesday, August 11, 2020

1:00 PM	Registration Opens
2:00 PM	New Member Orientation
3:00 PM	Orientation for Deepening Group Facilitators
4:30 PM	Orientation for Table Facilitators
7:00 PM	Opening of the Assembly
8:30 PM	Social with Light Refreshments

Wednesday, August 12, 2020

7:30 AM	Eucharistic Liturgy
9:00 AM	Opening of the Day Keynote Address <i>Mercedes Leticia Casas Sánchez, FSPS</i>
11:15 AM	Keynote processing
12:30 PM	Lunch on your own
2:30 PM	Justice Reflection and Action
4:00 PM	Candidates' Forum
4:30 PM	LCWR Matters (Executive Session)
4:30 PM	Conversation Circles for Associates and Guests
5:40 PM	Reflection on the Day
5:45 PM	Closing
8:30 PM	Communal Contemplation (outdoors & optional)

Thursday, August 13, 2020

8:45 AM	Voting on Candidates
9:00 AM	Opening of the Day Presidential Address <i>Jayne Helmlinger, CSJ</i>
11:15 AM	Processing of the Presidential Address
12:30 PM	Lunch on your own
2:30 PM	Deepening Groups: National Discernment of the Emerging Future
4:45 PM	Eucharistic Liturgy (Lifetime Achievement Awards)
6:00 PM	Closing
8:30 PM	Communal Contemplation (optional)

Friday, August 14, 2020

7:30 AM	Communal Contemplation (optional)
9:00 AM	Opening of the Day God's Infinite Vision and Our National Discernment of the Emerging Future
11:00 AM	LCWR Matters (Executive Session)
11:00 AM	Deepening Groups for Associates and Guests
12:15 PM	Lunch on your own
2:00 PM	National Discernment of the Emerging Future Blessing of Leadership Ritual
3:45 PM	Eucharistic Liturgy
7:00 PM	Banquet Outstanding Leadership Award Presentation Adjournment of the Assembly

In Service of the Assembly

Pat Kozak, CSJ will serve as the assembly facilitator. Pat currently works as a facilitator for religious institutes in the United States and Canada and previously served in leadership for her congregation. She lives in Cleveland, Ohio.



Kathy Fletcher Wray will serve as the assembly liturgist. She is the coordinator of worship and director of the St. Joseph Spirituality Center for the Sisters of St. Joseph of Baden, Pennsylvania.



Professional Facilitators

Professional facilitators working with institutes of women religious are being invited to attend this assembly. Their presence at past assemblies has been beneficial to LCWR members and to the facilitators as well. Leaders may wish to check with any facilitator who is working with them whom they think would benefit from attending to be sure they have received registration information. If they have not, please submit to Carol Glidden (cglidden@lcwr.org) the facilitator's name and contact information and we will send the materials to the person.

Registration Fees

Before June 19	\$495.00 USD
June 20-July 15	\$505.00 USD
After July 15	\$540.00 USD
After August 1	\$565.00 USD

For cancellations before June 19 all but a \$50 processing fee will be refunded. Only a 50% refund will be made for cancellations between June 20 and July 15. No refunds will be made for cancellations after July 15, 2020. We cannot make exceptions to the cancellation policy.

After you register online, a confirmation e-mail will be sent to you. After completing the online registration, you must send a check for the assembly registration fee made payable only in USD to LCWR Assembly and mail it to:



LCWR Assembly
8737 Colesville Road, Suite 610
Silver Spring, MD 20910

A growing number of congregations no longer have the funds to afford the costs of attending an LCWR assembly and request financial assistance from LCWR. We ask you to consider making a donation to the LCWR Financial Assistance Fund so that the conference can offer some assistance to leaders who request help. Please include your donation with your check for your own assembly registration and indicate on the check that the donation is included. For more information, contact Christine Beckett, SCN at 301-588-4955 or cbeckett@lcwr.org. If your congregation needs financial support to attend the assembly, you may also contact Christine.

Hotel Information

Hyatt Regency Dallas
300 Reunion Blvd
Dallas, TX 75207

The rate for a double/single occupancy room is \$139.00 plus tax (current tax is 15%).

All hotel reservations must be made online at: <https://www.nixmeetings.com/lcwr20>

To ensure that you receive these rates please make your reservation by the cut-off date of July 10, 2020. After that date you may be required to pay full price for these rooms. The hotel will honor sleeping room cancellations received 24 hours prior to arrival. Cancellations after this time will incur a charge of one-night and tax. Check in is at 4:00 p.m., check out is at 11:00 AM.

LCWR's room rates, as well as its payments for meeting spaces, are dependent on filling a set number of rooms as specified in our contract with the hotel. Assembly costs will be much higher if LCWR does not meet the room count. Rooms may also be reserved at this price for three days prior to and three days following the assembly dates based on availability.



Other Information

The Exhibit Hall will be open to attendees:

Tuesday, August 11	1:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.
Wednesday, August 12	8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.
Thursday, August 13	8:00 a.m. – 11:15 a.m.

Transportation Information

Nearest airport is Dallas/Fort Worth International Airport.

Transportation to / from DFW International Airport

Taxi fare is approximately \$45-50

Go Shuttle shuttles are for \$16 and are located on the front drive. Sedan, SUV and cab service also available. Please call 866-903-1900 to make a reservation.

The DART (Dallas Area Rapid Transit) orange line leaves from the airport and goes to the West End station, and guests can take either the red or blue line to get to Union Station (attached to the hotel via underground concourse). For transportation to DFW Airport from the hotel, guests can take either the red or blue DART lines from Union Station to the West End station and switch to the orange line to take to the airport.

Parking

Valet Parking is available at the hotel entrance. In and out privileges for hotel guests only.

Self-parking in the outdoor Radish Lot is located on the north end of the hotel at the intersection of Hotel Street and Reunion Boulevard West. In and out privileges for overnight guests only, operated by PMSI.

