

2021-10-11 WRC Exec.Dir. Semi-Annual Report to LCWR-Region 9

Happenings/progress since April 2021 Report:

Lyn Korte resigned in late April. Search Committee results hired me July 1. I attended the July 9 Board meeting, listened to the recorded previous meetings of the board and reviewed all reports on file.

At the July 9 board meeting S. Marlene Weisenbeck reported the results of the research she was asked to perform regarding public juridic persons in behalf of religious institutes contemplating downsizing toward completion. Her findings concluded that in canon law the primal concern is the autonomy of the religious institute to make its own decisions which likely precludes the ability of the WRC to serve as a PJP (public juridic person=canon law's parallel to corporation/corporate person in civil law). A chapter decision is needed for an institute to suspend its own governance. A commissary would then need to be appointed to carry out the care of the institute and its mission. At this point the Vatican allows only a religious or cleric to be appointed a commissary. However, if an institute does not suspend its governance, it can look wherever it wishes to obtain or contract whatever help it needs, including to the WRC. This presumes the elected leaders can still function for the canonical responsibilities.

In the previously recorded board meetings needs surfaced for help recognizing signs and symptoms of mental illness and also how to assist members afflicted with hoarding issues. The WRC Mental Health Advisory Committee was convened to assist and surfaced several resources to address both topics.

Previous meetings also indicated interest in organizing a Governance THINK TANK meeting with outsiders experienced in canonical and civil law issues facing current members of the WRC in each of their varied circumstances. This THINK TANK would have no formal presentations but discussion of what might be applicable and useful for each given that they have researched and observed similar evolutionary issues in other institutes. This event is being planned for our Nov.12 board meeting date. Each member institute is authoring their specific scenario parameters and challenges due to me by Oct.12 to relay to our invited experts. Our invited experts need time to contemplate their responses prior to meeting with us Nov. 12. Our invitees are:

S. Anne Munley IHM - San Antonio, TX – currently on staff with LCWR

S. Lynne McKenzie OSB – Cullman, AL – President of the Federation of St. Scholastica (one of three in the USA).

S. MaryJo Nelson OLVM – Huntington, IN – in joint congregation arrangement

S. Bonnie MacLellan CSJ – Ontario, CA - JCD Canonist/trained by Rev.Frank Morrissey

S. Emma Bezaire SNJM – Ontario, CA -Facilitator, recommended by S.Mary Hughes,LCWR

We anticipate this THINK TANK to be an educational day for our Board, and our Governance Advisory Committee to help us to better help each other.

Plans for the March 28, 2022, meeting include an annual education day with the full Leadership Teams of each member institute to glean more of the expertise of canonist S. Bonnie MacLellan CSJ. March is also the annual meeting for election of WRC officers needed this year and for considering the annual budget needs for 2022-23.

Currently the board's search committee is at work with recruitment ads and efforts to hire a long-term Executive Director for the WRC to takeover when my interim position contract expires the end of December. Please refer any qualified religious that may be interested to Therese Malm (tmalm.tmcg@gmail.com) who is working with members of the Search Committee, Sisters: Pat Cormack, Beverly Heitke, Sue Ernster and Jean Steffes.

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