

LCWR-9 Fall 2016 Meeting Minutes
Hosted by Sisters of St. Agnes
Jesuit Retreat House, 4800 Fahrwald Road, Oshkosh, WI 54902

Monday, October 17, 2016

Call to Order

Chairperson Theresa Sandok, OSM, called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m. on Monday, October 17, 2016. The agenda was previously provided (Attachment - Agenda).

Attendance

33 members representing 13 congregations attended (Attachment - Attendance).

Welcome

A welcome was extended by Deacon John Ingala, Associate Director of Development, Hospitality and Marketing for the Jesuit Retreat House, who provided us with a history of the retreat house.

Introductions

The sisters introduced themselves by name and by community.

Opening Prayer

Mary Alice Willems, OSM, led the group in prayer, with sections entitled "You Are Always Present," "Now Is the Time," and "Blessing."

Announcements

Chairperson Theresa Sandok, OSM, made the following announcements:

- Members were invited to list focus group topics on the large newsprint pad provided; focus group discussions are scheduled for Tuesday, October 18, 2016.
- An invitation was extended by Anne Marie Sanders, IHM, to LCWR members to write a contemplative reflection of 250 words, to be included in a book of reflections; interested writers should let Theresa know by October 19, 2016.

Approval of Minutes

Ellen Sinclair, SDS, presented the draft of the minutes of the April 18 & 19, 2016 LCWR-9 Spring meeting, which were approved unanimously.

Treasurer's Report

Agnes Johnson, OP, distributed finance reports for 07-01-15 through 08-31-16 and for 09-01-16 through 10-01-16; both were accepted without any changes (Attachment – Treasurer's Report).

Liaison Reports

Written liaison reports were available on the private LCWR-9 member website before the meeting.

Wisconsin Anti-Human Trafficking Consortium – Report provided by Margaret Kruse, OSF; at this time it appears that Margaret will be able to continue to represent LCWR-9 as a member of the consortium.

LCWR-9 Communicators of Women Religious and Anti-Human Trafficking Task Force – Liaison Jomarie Zielke, CSA, reported that minutes from the *Communicators* group cannot be located. For the *Anti-Human Trafficking Task Force*, Jomarie reported on the distribution and evaluation of the tool kits. Only 25 people responded to the toolkit evaluation survey, which was sent in August. Disappointment was expressed at the low number of respondents. It is possible that the fact that no specific name was addressed for the evaluation may have resulted in the low response. Diana DeBruin, OSF, raised the question as to whether or not we members of LCWR-9 have done all we could in regard to promoting the toolkits.

Jomarie reported that the bus ads displaying the national human trafficking hotline, which began in June of 2015, will continue through August of 2017. A billboard ran in Wisconsin Dells from 07-04-16 through 08-04-16. The Communicators are hoping to complete their work on the ad hoc Anti-Human Trafficking task force, so they can move on to another topic.

Legislative Network Committee – Liaison Susan Seeby, CSA, reported that six persons attended the October 5, 2016, meeting of the committee. Region 9 members were asked to check the contact list in the lobby, to make certain that all justice promoters are listed and willing to participate in the committee meetings, either through physical presence or via electronic means. No pending legislation is currently before the state, due to the elections. Region 9 members were invited to “dot” three of five issues which they prefer for focus topics for the Legislative Network Committee. Choices were: Human Trafficking, Racism, Migrants and Refugees, Care for Creation (Fracking), or Gun Violence. Sue also invited LCWR-9 to consider a \$200 donation to the March 5-7, 2017 Justice Promoter Conference in Chicago.

Wisconsin Catholic Conference Public Policy Advisory Committee – Liaison Jean Steffes, CSA, reported on the Men in Poverty and Pay-Day Lending initiatives, with further details included in the written report. Jean recommended that LCWR-9 consider a \$500 donation to the March 28, 2017 Catholics at the Capitol, which will feature Colleen Stratton, a survivor of human trafficking, as the keynote speaker.

Wisconsin Council of Churches Public Life Commission – Liaison Susan Seeby, CSA, reviewed climate and energy efforts, and the fact that the state biennial budget reflects zero growth other than specified exceptions, such as K-12 schools. LCWR-9 members are invited to write our representatives, urging their commitment to increased energy efficiency and use of renewable energy. The commission is concerned about efforts to overturn Wisconsin's Burial Sites Preservation statute; see report for internet site with further information. Sue informed LCWR-9 that she is happy to continue as our liaison to WCC. Her statement was met with applause.

Theresa Sandok, OSM, expressed gratitude to the liaisons on behalf of Region 9.

Sisters without Borders

Deborah Fumagalli, OSF, provided details on the next Sisters without Borders gathering, "Becoming Who We Are Called to Be: *The Spirit Lives Among Us*, November 12, 2016, at St. Joseph Center, Milwaukee, WI. Deb spoke on behalf of the other planning committee members: Susan Seeby, CSA, Marilyn Ketteler, OSF, and Sylvia Anne Sheldon, OSF. Mary Soher, OP, will serve as the presenter. Twenty-eight post-Conciliar religious are registered to date. Deb requested a financial contribution from LCWR-9 to assist with airfare and stipend expenses for the speaker.

National LCWR Board Items:

Endorsement of NVJP (Nonviolence and Just Peace) Appeal – Chairperson Theresa Sandok, OSM, spoke of the national LCWR board's decision to endorse the NVJP *Appeal to the Catholic Community to Recommit to the Centrality of Gospel Nonviolence*, which shifts discussion from just war to just peace.

Jubilee Year of Mercy – A time of quiet reflection and discussion preceded an opportunity to respond in writing to the question: What is the most significant fruit that has come forth from the Jubilee Year of Mercy for me as a leader of a religious congregation? Region 9 members shared specific examples of fruits of the Year of Mercy in large group. All of the written responses will be collated, sent to Joan Marie Steadman, CSC, and posted on the private LCWR-9 member website. (Attachment – Jubilee Year of Mercy)

Tuesday, October 18, 2016

Presentation by Caroljean Willie, SC, Ph.D.

Vice-Chairperson Ellen Sinclair, SDS, welcomed the group to the October 18, 2016, session of the LCWR-9 Fall meeting. Ellen introduced our speaker for the morning, Caroljean Willie, SC, Ph.D., who spoke to us on the topic, "God Calls Us from Our Cultures." Caroljean led us in prayer, using a Zimbabwe song, a story about a school for animals, a sharing on welcoming women of different cultures or being welcoming in ministry, and a prayer, "Weaver Woman God."

Caroljean's presentation included "The Iceberg Analogy of Culture;" "The Culture Web;" "Key Problem Areas;" "Characteristics of Low- and High-Context Communication Styles;" and a series of questions entitled "Thinking about Culture." Region 9 members selected a photo which spoke to them of an image of God and shared in small groups the reason for their choice. Caroljean had the group use a Mutual Invitation Process, calling on someone else by name, after one is finished speaking. "A Cultural Diversity Bibliography" was also provided. Caroljean's handouts will be posted on the private LCWR-9 member website.

Announcements

Theresa Sandok, OSM, reminded the group to add their “dots” to the Legislative Network issue preference list. Theresa also shared information which she had received from Laura Jean Spaeth, SSND, inviting all members of LCWR to enter into eight minutes of contemplative prayer each Tuesday until the election, opening to the divine within us and envisioning our nation healing its divisions, choosing the common good and respecting each other. All Region 9 community leaders were asked to send the prayer request to their congregations. Theresa explained that the afternoon session would include the Collaborative Project and Focus Group topics.

Jean Steffes, CSA, stated that the Agnesians had received a request from the National Catholic Reporter for a significant donation. Jean asked if other congregations had received the same request, and it appeared that none had.

Prayer for Afternoon Session

The prayer prepared by the OSM's and opening the afternoon session focused on the song, “Behold, the Holy One.”

Announcement

Chairperson Theresa Sandok, OSM, introduced the members of the Executive Committee: Ellen Sinclair, SDS – Vice-Chairperson; Agnes Johnson, OP – Treasurer; Maria Vinton, SSM – Corresponding Secretary; and Diane Baumann, ANG – Recording Secretary.

Wisconsin Religious Collaborative (WRC)

Pat Cormack, SCSC, shared information with Region 9 members about the collaborative project. The working group is designing an approach which would benefit Region 9; membership will be determined later. Development of the collaborative project is an organic process involving consultation. The collaborative will be flexible, provide creative responses to real needs, and establish a framework for collaboration for any needs that might arise.

Pat commented on the document, “Resource materials for Collaborative Project,” which lists items available in the Resource Center for Religious Institutes (RCRI) toolbox. Pat also mentioned the “Outline – Reflection Sheet – for a DVD,” “Religious Life Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow” by Carol Zinn, SSJ. The outlined process was prepared for LCWR-9 Collaborative Project by Maureen Gallagher. The “Navigating Change” document was also prepared by Maureen Gallagher of the Reid Group.

Attention was drawn to the collaborative survey results previously received and to the working draft “Wisconsin Religious Collaborative Foundation Documents.” The project has progressed from Region 9 to the entire state of Wisconsin, allowing more congregations to participate. Should anyone wish to add to the survey, please contact Pat.

The members of Region 9 were invited to engage in table discussion around the following three questions from the draft:

- 1) What are some ways you'd like to see the WRC develop?
- 2) What are some concerns you have about the WRC?
- 3) From your perspective, what would it take to make the WRC fully functional?

After large group discussion, notes from the table discussions were handed to Pat Cormack, SCSC, who collated them. (Attachment – Wisconsin Religious Collaborative)
The next meeting of the Wisconsin Religious Collaborative will take place on November 17, 2016 in Milwaukee.

Focus Group Discussions

LCWR-9 members chose one of six focus groups in which to participate. Topic choices and the person initiating the topic were:

- Formation of Public Juridic Persons (PJP) – Helen Elsbernd, FSPA
- Associate (affiliate) relationships in the future – Agnes Johnson, OP
- Pastoral care for sisters – Pat Cormack, SCSC
- Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation (JPIC) collaboration – Marcia Lunz, OSF
- Durable power of attorney – Laura Jean Spaeth, SSND
- Policies/experiences of having sisters from other countries living with us – Carol Crosby, SCSC

A summary of the focus group discussion is contained in the Attachment – Focus Group Discussions and will be posted on the private LCWR-9 member website.

Legislative Network

The number of “dots” assigned to each of the five potential issues for the Legislative Network, with each Region 9 member allowed three dots for her top choices, were reported as follows:

- Migrants and refugees – 30
- Racism – 21
- Anti-human trafficking – 20
- Gun violence – 19
- Care of creation/fracking – 7.

Toni Harris, OP - Sinsinawa, raised a question in regard to the original purpose of the Legislative Network and how the potential issues relate to that purpose. Historically speaking, the network was founded to make us aware of what is coming before the Wisconsin legislature, so that Region 9 could decide which bills we would support. It is also possible that legislators would be willing to sponsor bills that would be promoted by religious communities. We were reminded that LCWR-9 established the Catholic Sisters for Justice account some years ago to use for lobbying purposes. The account is administered by the FSPA's.

Wednesday, October 19, 2016

Opening Prayer

“A Prayer for the Earth” was led by the OSM congregation for the Wed., Oct. 19, 2016, opening prayer.

National LCWR Board Items:

2016 Assembly Resolution - Chairperson Theresa Sandok, OSM, reviewed the material pertaining to the 2016 Assembly Resolution. LCWR-9 members responded to the following questions during table discussions:

- Briefly explain what particular aspects(s) of the 2016 resolution your region plans to address.
- List some specific actions that you hope to undertake.

Written notes were handed in, will be collated on the "Assembly Resolution Action Response Form," posted on the private LCWR-9 member website, and sent to the national LCWR office. (Attachment – Assembly Resolution Action Response)

Decisions on Proposed Donations

Sisters Program South/House of Hospitality – District 3 - Milwaukee

\$1,703.44 remains from the grant provided by the Sisters of the Sorrowful Mother, for anti-human trafficking efforts. \$296.56 was recommended as a donation from LCWR-9, creating a possible total donation of \$2,000.00. Diana DeBruin, OSF, provided further information about the Sisters Program South/House of Hospitality. LCWR-9 members unanimously agreed to donate \$2,000.00 to the effort.

Wisconsin Council of Churches – A \$100.00 donation was unanimously approved by LCWR-9 to WCC for upkeep of the office for policy.

Sisters without Borders – LCWR-9 unanimously approved a \$1,000.00 contribution to the Sisters without Borders Conference, to be held Nov. 12, 2016. The funds would cover speaker and plane fare expenses, and keep participant fees as low as possible.

Catholics at the Capital – A \$500.00 donation to the Mar. 28, 2017 session of Catholics at the Capital was unanimously approved by LCWR-9, making us a sponsor for the event, which will focus on anti-human trafficking.

National Justice and Peace Coordinators – LCWR-9 unanimously approved a \$500 donation to the JPIC Mar. 5-7, 2017 conference for the coordinators.

Upcoming Meetings

Vice-Chairperson Ellen Sinclair, SDS, led a discussion of upcoming LCWR-9 meeting dates, sites, hosts, and prayer leaders with the following results:

- Spring 2018 – April 9-11 – Milwaukee – Host: OSF Lake – Prayer: SCSC
- Fall 2018 – October 15-17 – Sinsinawa – Host: OP Sinsinawa – Prayer: OP Racine.

Details were shared regarding accommodations for the LCWR-9 Spring 2017 meeting on Apr. 3-5, where the topic will be "Embracing This Moment with Fidelity & Hope," by Carol Zinn, SSJ. The meeting will be held in Milwaukee, hosted by the SSSF congregation, with prayer by the SDS community.

Future topics and speakers proposed for consideration were:

- working with Sisters who have personality disorders or mental illness (Lynn Levo, CSJ);
- racism (Fr. Bryan Massingale);
- how congregations can continue their missions into the future without Sister presence (Mary Haddad, RSM);
- ensuring that associate programs are sustainable into the future (Marlene Wiesenbeck, FSPA, or Lynn Jarrell, OSU).

Thank You

Theresa Sandok, OSM, expressed deep appreciation to the Sisters of St. Agnes for serving as hosts at our Fall meeting and to the Servants of Mary for preparing the prayer experiences.

All were reminded to respond to the Survey Monkey evaluation of this meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Diane Baumann, ANG
Recording Secretary