



U.S. Sisters Meet: How to Reimagine the Future with COVID-19 a reality

'Religious life is made for times of upheaval'

by Soli Salgado, Global Sisters Report

Today's world, struggling with the urgent needs emerging from the Coronavirus, can learn from the witness of sisters, said the presidential team for the [Leadership Conference of Women Religious](#).

"Women religious have a history and a genius for looking outward beyond ourselves, for responding to need, for taking a situation that we did not choose but for which we find ourselves dealing," said Holy Cross Sr. Sharlet Wagner, past-president of the LCWR, whose members are leaders of communities constituting nearly 80% of women religious in the U.S.

"That is where the world is now."

Wagner shared her reflections in a May webinar, speaking alongside the rest of LCWR's leadership.

A world in crisis can learn much from the experiences of women religious – a global community that historically found their stride in times of chaos, as Sr. Carol Zinn, SSJ, LCWR Executive Director, explained. The pandemic leaves no lifestyle untouched, including that of sisters.

"Whatever we could say about COVID-19 in our country and around the world right now, we could say about religious life in our country and perhaps, around the world," Zinn said.

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~ Sr. Carol Zinn, SSJ

The LCWR leaders shared the practical and spiritual implications of this pandemic on US religious life: the economic challenges facing their sponsored ministries, fears for their elderly sisters, the poverty and societal injustices that demand collective response and the need for a transformative sisterhood – one that goes beyond collaboration and instead prioritizes true partnership.

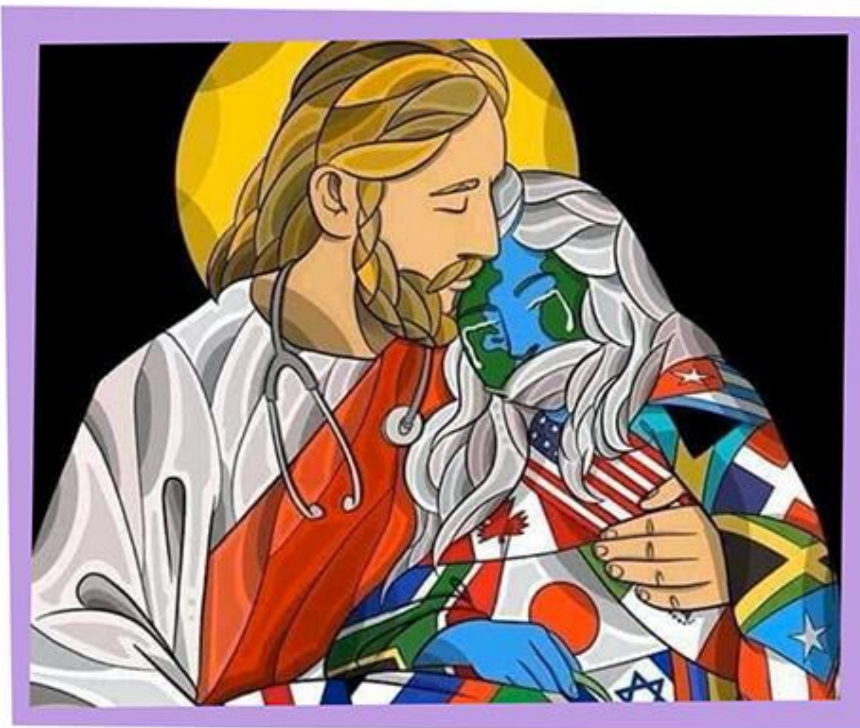
Recalling how the Spanish flu (1918-1919) was an impetus for more sisters getting involved in healthcare, Sr. Jayne Helmlinger, current president of the LCWR, said the response to today's pandemic should not be merely "with ourselves, our congregations," but with collective action.

Pope Francis said that the coronavirus had put everyone "in the same boat", Sr. Helmlinger said,

she's reminded that from Earth to the cosmos, "we are one. So how do we respond as one, not simply with our congregations, but [to] the needs of the world?"

As women religious, they need to pay attention to the newly marginalized and to emerging needs as they consider their role in responding to the crisis.

"Many of us have long struggled with what it means to live simply, and we may be forced by realities into deeper examining of simple living and the choices we will need to make," Sr. Wagner said.



To best serve those disproportionately affected by the virus, religious leadership will have to consider how their direct service, advocacy and spiritual leadership can be pooled across borders in a coordinated response.

"What new ministry and new ways of ministering will emerge as we move through this crisis and beyond?" Wagner said.

Image from cabriniworld.org

Now that COVID-19 is likely to influence emerging expressions of religious life, Sr. Zinn cited four characteristics particular to U.S. culture that LCWR membership must now confront as they reimagine the future:

- First is the illusion of autonomy shattered by the pandemic.
- Religious life in the U.S. will be shifting from feeling competitive (within charisms, for example) to becoming partners. "What does it mean to be partners, be sisters together?"
- Going from a sense of ownership to a sense of mutuality. Cross-charisms and cross-congregations ought to become trans-charisms, trans-missions, trans-cultures – a sense of mutuality that younger sisters already understand.
- A shift to a greater appreciation for vulnerability as she reflects on the essential workers who the pandemic has thrown to the forefront.

"The DNA of religious life is that we are born in and out of chaos," concluded Sr. Zinn.

To read the entire article click [here](#)

Lending a Helping Hand during COVID-19

So often we hear, “In a matter of a moment, everything can change.” The Coronavirus has certainly proven that point. One day, life went on as usual and then the next day, life as we knew it, changed completely.

Cabrini Immigrant Services (CIS), Dobbs Ferry, NY, had to close its doors due to the ‘Pause Order’ in New York State. The lives of our clients changed. So many businesses closed, therefore, jobs were no longer available. The majority of our clients are not eligible for unemployment nor can they receive the government stimulus check as it was clearly written, only American citizens are eligible for the checks.

We are very fortunate in Dobbs Ferry as we have many available resources. Each month, many Dobbs Ferry families receive a food card to the Stop & Shop through the Family to Family program. In addition, SPRING Community Partners assist with food cards and emergency funding. The school district continues to distribute ‘Grab and Go’ breakfast and lunch food bags for the students.

Despite the fact that CIS is closed, many of our adult tutors stay connected with their students through Zoom or phone calls. Some reach out to make sure that



We do not know what the ‘new normal’ will look like or when we can reopen our doors. All we can do is pray for one another.



Cabrini Immigrant Services in Dobbs Ferry recently sent food gift cards to their clients, along with a letter wishing them well during this challenging time and assuring them they were being held in thought and prayer.

their students’ children are able to complete their assignments now that they are doing distance learning.

Despite COVID-19, CIS continues to reach out in many ways. This week, CIS was able to help 56 families with food cards. Thanks to a grant that CIS had received, each family received a \$100 food card to Stop & Shop.

We are so grateful to be able to help our families in a much-needed way. One can only imagine the stress of having everyone at home 24/7, perhaps not having any income, plus, trying to navigate the school system so the children can go to school on-line.

~ submitted by: Lorraine Campanelli, Director, CIS

All is well! Well, actually, not always.



We hear so many heartwarming stories about family experiences during this stay-at-home time: parents having more time to spend with children; families reaching out together to help others in need; families finding that cooking, playing games, creative crafting and movie watching is bringing them closer together.

But there are other stories as well... stories of dysfunction, tension and even violence...**ABUSE.** And when abuse rears its ugly head, safety is not always possible. For some, there are family members or even agencies that can help.

For immigrants, however, the situation may be more tenuous. There is often a lack of resources and support; fear of financial insecurity or inability to find a job as a single parent; limited childcare options. Sometimes it's a matter of difficulty because of language, and trust and ability to reach out.

Often, it's a concern because of immigration/citizenship status...fear of hurting their progress in their status seeking, or worse, fear of detention or deportation.



In this unstable time, all of us need to keep our eyes, our minds and our hearts open to the needs of our families, yes, but also to the situations of the most vulnerable around us. If we are safe and secure, how can we reach out to others without overstepping privacy boundaries? Can we offer

a listening ear, information about services available, trusting concern, encouragement? Knowing that "someone out there" cares, knowing there is someone who will listen and not judge may be the one support needed to help someone through a very frightening, insecure situation amidst all the chaos going on in the world at this time.



Safe houses and shelters are still functioning in these days but at limited capacity. Sometimes a hotel room is offered as a temporary shelter. It's good to find out what is available in your area, to be able to offer a glimmer of hope to someone.....or for your own information. ~ by Sr. Cathy Fedewa, CSFN, Cabrini Retreat Center

Volunteers are LOVE in Motion

Over the last two years, I have discovered that one of my favorite things to do is to volunteer. I have always enjoyed the outcome of serving others from my heart. Currently, I am volunteering at Cabrini Immigrant Services - NYC. I help with the packaging of food and the distribution of the food to the clients the following day. Like David, who says in Psalm 34:8, “taste and see the goodness of the Lord,” there is always goodness in serving others in the Lord. Having tasted this goodness, I would encourage others to give volunteering a try.



Evarlyne Ndeti, an MSC candidate and Cabrini University student (I.) is currently volunteering at the Cabrini Immigrant Services-NYC food pantry located in Lower Manhattan.

Here are four reasons that keeps the helping spirit moving within me:

1. Volunteering is an opportunity for gaining experience and skills.

By volunteering, I gain valuable skills and experience which are likely to be useful in the future, such as working as part of a team.



Evarlyne takes time for a photo with Susan a fellow CIS-NYC volunteer.

2. Meeting with new people and getting outside of a comfort zone.

One of the best things about volunteering is meeting with other volunteers! I enjoy their company as we work together. Volunteers are likely to be very interesting and inspiring people and they might just turn out to be great friends too.

3. Volunteering paves the way of gaining confidence in oneself.

At times, I tend to be a shy person especially in a new environment, however, my volunteer experience has helped me gain confidence in talking to new people and even in front of a crowd!

4. Experiencing fun and enthusiasm for the cause

Knowing that I am doing something for a good cause has brought me joy. I try to bring enthusiasm in all that I do.

These are just a few of the many reasons why I suggest that you look for volunteering opportunities in your local town or city. There are many different causes with which you can become involved. If you like, you can start with something small and who knows what it will lead to! The most important thing to remember is that as well as helping others, you can get a great deal out of it, too!

~ submitted by Evarlyne Ndeti, MSC Candidate and a Cabrini University student

New Work on Mother Cabrini's Educational Practice

Maria Williams' doctoral thesis *The Contribution of Saint Frances Xavier Cabrini (1850-1917) to Catholic Educational Practice in the Late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries* is now available to download for free from the website of University College London (UCL).

To download the thesis click [here](#)

It includes maps and tables showing the expansion of MSC educational provision in the period as well as case studies of Rome, New Orleans, and London.

Maria would like to thank the many sisters and Cabrinian laity for their advice, assistance, encouragement, and prayers as she worked on this project. The idea was initially discussed with Missionary Sisters Mary Gough, Rafael Sharkey and Maria Regina Canale in the 1990s. In retirement, with the support of Sister Benedict O'Donnell, Maria approached then General Superior Sister Patricia Spillane in 2009. Sr. Patricia gave her full support, as has Sister Barbara Staley, MSC, current General Superior. The assistance of archivists Sister Giuditta Pala, MSC and Anne Schwelm, the Director of the Holy Spirit Library at Cabrini University, was invaluable.

Any comments, questions and queries on the thesis may be sent to Maria at maria.williams.14@alumni.ucl.ac.uk



Maria Williams



**This Year...
the
Gala
will be VIRTUAL**

More details to follow!

From the Province Vocation Promotion Team...

National Religious Vocations Conference releases 2020 Study

At the end of a decade of steady entrances to religious communities, the NRVC has released its *2020 Study of Recent Vocations to Religious Life*. This latest research provides information on those men and women who entered religious life from 2013 – 2018. For the past three weeks, we have been sharing some elements of the study; this week we explore some further findings.

Attraction to Religious Life

Newer members are likely to say they were attracted to religious life by a desire for prayer and spiritual growth and by a desire for a deeper relationship with God. To only a slightly lesser degree, most new members also say they were attracted to religious life by a sense of call to consecrated life, a desire to be of service, and a desire to be part of a community.

They were attracted to their particular religious institute by its prayer life and mission, followed by community life and the example of its members. Although the ministries of the institute are also important to most new members, they are less important than those previously-listed factors.

Newer members in religious life first became acquainted with their religious institutes in different ways. As in NRVC's 2009 *Study on Recent Vocations*, the most common way to meet a religious community was in an institution such as a school, where the members served. Besides institutional settings, other relatively common ways of becoming acquainted with the Institute were through their own Internet search of websites, through a relative or friend in the Institute, through working with a member of the Institute, or through print materials.

"I started thinking about religious life because living on my own, it just felt like something was missing. I was attracted to living in community with other people with the same charism, with the same spirit, with the same hopes for the world with our differences. I wanted to be in community. That was really important to me."



Living in community is a major component of religious life and one of the key factors to those who are discerning. MSC communities are enriched by their cultural diversity.

Prayer Requests

Katie Lambertz

A good friend of many of the Missionary Sisters from Seattle, WA who was hospitalized and is critical. Katie formerly worked at St. Cabrini Hospital in Seattle and later when the hospital closed became Administrator of our senior sisters at the Villa. Please hold Katie in your prayers during this time.

Prayer to end the Coronavirus

Jesus Christ, you traveled through towns and villages “curing every disease and illness.” Come to our aid now, in the midst of the global spread of the coronavirus, that we may experience your healing love. Jesus Christ, stay with us as we endure and mourn, persist and prepare. In place of our anxiety, give us your peace. Jesus Christ, hear our prayers. Be with us and heal us. Amen. ~ adapted from *America Magazine*

With Grateful Hearts

Ariana and Theresa Campanelli

Our regular Update readers will remember that last fall we were asked to pray for the safe delivery of twin girls, the daughters of John and Michelle Campanelli. John is the nephew of Lorraine Campanelli, the Director of Cabrini Immigrant Services in Dobbs Ferry, NY. John and Michelle, the proud parents of Theresa and Ariana, want to thank everyone for their prayers for their twins. They are now 5 months old and doing great. (And, they are very patriotic as they celebrated Memorial Day!) John and Michelle are so grateful for the blessing of their daughters and are most thankful for the prayers of the Missionary Sisters and the Cabrinian community.



Twins Theresa (l.) and Ariana Campanelli



June is the Month of the Sacred Heart of Jesus

To access the novena to the Sacred Heart, please click [here](#)

In Loving Memory

Antoinette Iadarola, PhD

It is with deep sorrow that the Cabrinian community mourns the passing of Dr. Antoinette “Toni” Iadarola, President Emerita of Cabrini (College) University. Toni passed away on Saturday, May 23rd after a long illness. Toni served as president of Cabrini College from 1992 – 2008. During her tenure the campus witnessed remarkable growth in student enrollment, both graduate and undergraduate, and in campus buildings and amenities. The campus science center built during Toni’s tenure was renamed in her honor: The Antoinette Iadarola Center for Science, Education and Technology. A funeral Mass for her family will be held in Connecticut. Due to the pandemic restrictions, further memorials to honor Toni’s memory will be held at a later time.



PLEASE MAKE A NOTE

Change of email address for Sr. Beatriz Santos, MSC

Her new email address is:

Sr. Beatriz <external3@netspace.net.au>

May 31st is Pentecost Sunday



Pentecost commemorates not only the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the Apostles and Disciples, but also the fruits and effects of that event: the completion of the work of redemption, the fullness of grace for the Church and its children, and the gift of faith for all nations.

And when the days of Pentecost were drawing to a close, they were all together in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a violent wind coming, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. And there appeared to them parted tongues as of fire, which settled upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in foreign tongues, even as the Holy Spirit prompted them to speak (Acts 2, 1-4).

