



Newsletter

Women Religious

Fall 2017

Vol: 8 Issue 1

The Culture of Encounter

As religious who have joined a group of like-minded strangers in pursuit of an ideal, we offer a concrete example of what it means to live in a culture of encounter. Among us, we find Sisters of various ethnic backgrounds. Yes, and even some from other faith traditions who have been attracted to consecrated life because of the promise of a deeper union with Christ. By the grace of God, we learn to appreciate the differences and so, in many ways, we are prophets calling all to “love one another as I have loved you.”

As religious, we accept Pope Francis’s invitation to live in and create a culture of encounter. Francis tells us, “For me this word is very important: Encounter with others. Why? Because faith is an encounter with Jesus and we must do what Jesus does: encounter others.” As members of the Body of Christ, we are each created in the image of and loved by God. We are called to form relationships with one another we are called to “create a culture of encounter. How can we do this? By forming relationships with members of your faith community, or with members of a wider community. Listening and understanding the “joys and hopes, sorrows and anxieties of the community. In other words, getting to know the dreams — and also the fundamental problems and issues that keep people up at night.”

Eastern Conference of the Vicars for Religious

From October 16-19, the members of NCVR’s Eastern Region met in Wappingers Falls, NY. Among the highlights of the meeting was an address by Sister Mary Hughes, OP on “Options for the Future.”

NRRO has identified at least 84 communities that are small, poor, and not connected to anyone. Sister Mary has been visiting with these religious in an effort to assist them in making a good evaluation of their situation and to offer them options for the future. For many, support comes not from shared charism, but rather from the people in the geographic area in which they live.

Religious are definitely older but, as Mary pointed out, Pope Francis is in his eighties. We are lighter, and more collaborative than ever. Now, our lives are more focused on “MISSION” rather than on ministry. Presence is all important. Mary asked many important questions

of these small communities:

- ◆ Are you currently able to carry out your mission.
- ◆ How do you promote and provide for the spiritual life of your members?
- ◆ Are there sufficient members available and capable of serving the various leadership roles? How many years can they continue?
- ◆ Have you had any novices in the last 10 years?
- ◆ Does your institute have sponsored ministries?
- ◆ What plans are you making concerning your properties?
- ◆ Is your retirement fund adequate?
- ◆ What provisions are you making concerning the care of your cemetery?

Welcome and

Farewell . . .

Bishop Dennis J. Sullivan, D.D. and the religious communities involved have begun three new enterprises in our Diocese:

Holy Spirit Missionary Cenacle in Barrington—

Four Sisters of the Missionary Servants of the Most Blessed Trinity are in the process of getting acclimated there.

St. Michael's in Atlantic City—

Four Franciscan Sisters of the Renewal are ministering there.

The Sisters of St. Joseph will open a "Welcome Center"

with a community of Sisters who will live in Christus House in Pennsauken.

The following Sisters have also been missioned to serve in our diocese:

Sr. Margaret Conboy, SSJ

Sr. Sarah Lodge, RSM

Sr. Joanne Wallace, IHM

Sr. Patricia Anne Hughes, IHM;

Sr. Sister Monica Kemirembe, SMI

With gratitude for their years of service within the Diocese of Camden, we say a fond farewell to the following Sisters who will be continuing their ministry elsewhere:

Sr. Margaret Garvin, SSJ

Sr. Dianne Simons, IHM

Sr. Oralia de La Paz, MDPVM

Sr. Alma Delia Rosas, MDPVM

Sr. Maryann Ronneburger, OP

Sr. Deborah Vignulo, RSM

Sr. Mary Kamau, SMI

National Retirement Fund for Religious December 9-10



- By 2027, religious past age 70 are projected to outnumber religious under age 70 by more than three to one.
- There are more than 32,000 religious past age 70 living in the United States. In 2016, the average annual cost for their care was more than \$42,000 per person.
- Since 2009, the annual cost to support senior women and men religious has exceeded \$1 billion.
- In 2016, 67 percent of the religious communities providing data to the National Religious Retirement Office (NRRO) had a median age of 70 .

- The average annual Social Security benefit for a religious is \$6,116.22, while the average U.S. beneficiary receives \$16,321.56.

Catholics in the United States have donated more than \$816 million to the RFR since the first appeal.

- Roughly 94 percent of donations to the RFR aid elder religious, with the remainder used to administer and promote the appeal.
- ◆ Since 1989, more than \$775 million has been distributed to support the day-to-day care of elderly sisters, brothers, and religious order priests. An additional \$91 million has been allocated toward self-help projects initiated by religious communities, including collaborative health-care facilities.

A New Tool for Religious Communities



Sister Maria Clara Kreis, CDP, PH.D.,L.P. was awarded a grant of \$390,000 from the Conrad Hilton Foundation to create a manual for the Life Satisfaction Scale for Apostolic Women Religious (LSSAWR).

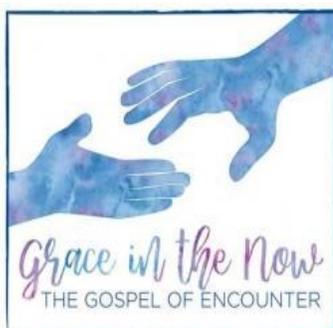
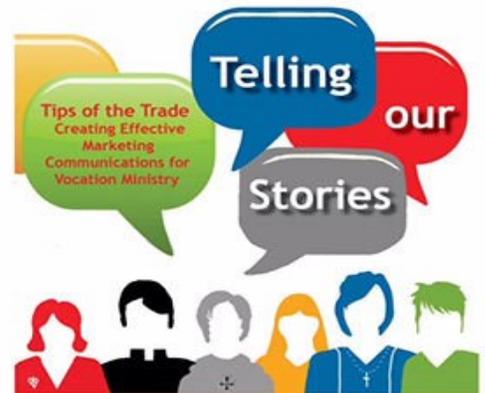
The purpose of the instrument is to assess satisfaction levels of different generations of religious women both individually and communally as they discern their commitment to religious life. The following areas are :

- ◆ Congregational Character—the viability of the community in moving forward.
- ◆ Individual Wellbeing: Sense of well being with this life choice.
- ◆ Membership Viability: Personal—communal efforts to sustain and increase membership.
- ◆ Holistic Growth & Commitment: Personal and professional growth and commitment to this life choice.
- ◆ Interrelationships: Relationships within the congregation and external to it.

The LSSAWR provides a total score that reflects one's overall level of satisfaction. You will find the link at www.duq.edu/lssawr



Delaware Valley - December 6
Mount St. Joseph Convent, Philadelphia
Cynthia Krohn, communications professional
Brothers "Telling Our Stories: Marketing Tips
for Vocation Ministry"
Coordinators for Delaware Valley member area:
Celeste Mokrzycki, S.S.J., 215-248-7200,
Maryanne Tracey, S.C., 973-290-5325,



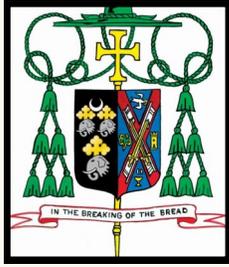
The Religious Formation Conference will hold its annual meeting in Milwaukee, WI at the Hotel Hilton Conference Center from November 16-18. The theme is **Grace in the Now—The Gospel of Encounter**.

Keynote speakers are: Presenter: Stephen Bevans, SVD

Becoming Prophets of Encounter: The Culture of Encounter and Religious Life Today

Encuentro: A Call for Our Time

Presenter: Teresa Maya, CCVI



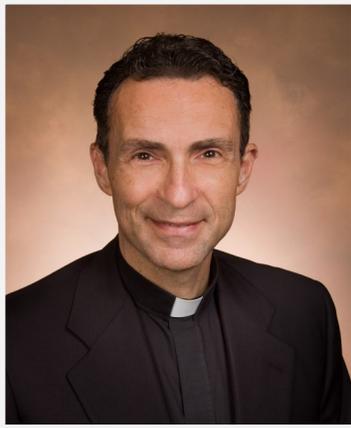
DENNIS J. SULLIVAN, D.D.
BISHOP OF CAMDEN

Sister Mary J. McGarrity, IHM
Bishop's Delegate for Women
Religious
631 Market St.
Camden, NJ 08102
Phone: 856-583-2841

Pope Francis - On Religious Life

Tenderness is good for us -Since we are witnesses of a communion beyond our vision and our limits, we are called to wear God's smile. Community is the first and most believable gospel that we can preach. We are asked to humanize our community. "Build friendship between yourselves, family life, love among you. May the monastery not be a Purgatory but a family. There are and there will be problems but like in a family, with love - search for a solution with love; do not destroy this to resolve that; do not enter competitions. Build community life, because in the life of a community it is this way, like a family, and it is the very Holy Spirit who is in the middle of the community. (...) And live community life always with a big heart. Let things go, do not brag, be patient with everything, smile from the heart. And a sing of this is joy." (48)

Advent Day of Reflection Make the Journey



Father Joseph Capella, a beloved priest of the Diocese of Camden, will journey with us this Advent. Presently, Father ministers to students at Camden Catholic High School where he is Director of Catholic Identity, teaches theology and celebrates Mass. Before this latest assignment, Father was the pastor at Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish in Lindenwold. Fluent in Spanish due to his early missionary travels to the Dominican Republic and Puerto Rico, he lives with one of the legacies of those experiences: an illness which has resulted in three liver transplants. As a result of the medications and treatment Father Joe developed post-transplant lymphoma and renal cell carcinoma. In one interview, he shared that illness made him "become very understanding of people who are having any sort of distress or suffering." Despite all this, Father lives every day with gratitude and joy.

December 2, 2017

St. Charles Borromeo

176 Stagecoach Road

Sicklerville, NJ 08081-9421

SCHEDULE

9:30 Arrival—Registration -

Continental Breakfast

10:00 Welcome—Opening Prayer

10:15 Presentation—Rev. Joseph Capella

Reflection - Sacrament of Reconciliation

11:15 Mass

12:00 Lunch

12:45 Presentation -

Reflection—Discussion—Evaluation

1:30 Closing Prayer / departure

**\$20.00 per person registration
required Call 583-2841 or mail
check to Diocese of Camden c/o**

Sister Mary J. McGarrity, IHM

