

**NCVR Board Meeting
November 20-22, 2015
Chicago Illinois**

Present: Sisters Nancy Mathias, OSU, Joyce Candidi, OSHJ, Ellen Dunn, OP, Eymard Flood, OSC, Mary McGarrity, IHM, Mariette Moan, ASCJ, and Marlene Weidenborner, OSF, and Brother James McVeigh, OSF.

Nancy welcomed all and we began with Daytime prayer.

We reviewed the Minutes from the May, 2015 Executive Board meeting. Sister Mary made a motion to approve of the minutes and Sister Marlene seconded the motion. All were in favor of the motion to approve the minutes. We reviewed the Agenda with Sister Eymard suggesting that we briefly discuss the USCCB's *Guidelines for Receiving Pastoral Ministers in the United States* with respect to the lack of specific reference to international religious.

Reports:

President – Sister Nancy Mathias, OSU – Sister Nancy noted that her bishop has given her some additional responsibilities – Coordinator of Events dealing with Clergy, Consecrated Life and Vocations and Coordinator of Mission Activities. She reported having assisted the secretary in preparing the Directory and welcoming new members to the Conference. Sister Nancy participated in a conference call in July for the Commission on Religious Life and Ministry. She also prepared a report for the Committee on Clergy, Consecrated Life and Vocations and a report for the Commission of Religious Life and Ministry for the meetings in Baltimore on November 13-14. This report included statistics regarding Delegates/Vicars for Religious, the number of dioceses having a Vicar and the number of dioceses having a bishop or other person listed as the contact person. These statistics will be included as an addendum to the minutes. Sister Nancy also reported that Bishop Joseph Tobin of Indianapolis has been elected Chairman for the Committee on Clergy, Consecrated Life and Vocations. In preparation for the meeting in Rome in 2016 with the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life (CICL/SAL), Sister Nancy has been communicating with several persons regarding arranging a meeting time with CICL/SAL, with the Congregation for Clergy, a possible Papal Audience, etc. She noted that the meeting with the CICL/SAL will take place on March 8, 2016 at 10:00 a.m. She also noted that the Holy Father will not have a papal audience on the Wednesday the Board is there. She was unsuccessful in obtaining tickets to attend one of the Holy Father's Masses in Santa Marta. She also has been in communication with Sister Mariette regarding flight and lodging possibilities.

Vice-president – Brother James Mc Veigh, OSF – Brother James reported researching some Franciscan residences in Rome where the Board may lodge during its time in Italy. He also made the report of the Eastern Region at their regional gathering in October. He has been working on the NCVR Website and trying to contact Father Robert Herbst, OFM, Conv. in order to remove the old website from the internet.

Secretary – Sister Joyce Candidi, OSHJ – Sister Joyce reported working on the annual membership renewal. She prepared and shared a list of both retiring and new vicars for religious. She noted that there are 86 memberships this year; last year there were 88 memberships. She reported that seven dioceses from last year did not renew that included nine vicars not renewing this year. Sister Joyce reported having compiled, printed and mailed the 2015 *Proceedings*. She also compiled and e-mailed the Summer Newsletter and updated, printed and mailed the 2015-2016 NCVR Directory. This included updating the NCVR data base that contains contact information for members and other contact persons in every diocese within the country. Sister also reported recording the minutes of the National Business meeting in March 2015. She kept Sister Nancy apprised of new vicars; she sent membership renewal checks to the treasurer and provided the Board with a six month expense report for the Office of Secretary. At the request of the president Sister Joyce sent various documents and messages to the membership.

Treasurer – Sister Mariette Moan, ASCJ – Sister Mariette thanked the Board for their prayers, support and flowers at the passing of her dear mother into eternal life. She shared some precious moments with us about her mother's last and holy exchanges before going to God. She also noted having had a website training session with Sister Kieran Foley, FSE and Alora of Synergic Systems. She too researched some possible venues for lodging in Rome. Sister Mariette reported having made deposits of the membership dues during the months of August, September, and October. She has been in dialogue with Tom Smith of the Knights of Columbus regarding information on a possible investment of the NCVR certificate of deposit that will mature in July 2016. Currently the interest rate on the CD is minimal. The Board discouraged investing in the stock market. Sister Mariette made a two part motion: 1 – to consider investing the CD in the market or not. The Board unanimously voted “No.”; 2 – to consider having the CD rollover or to close out the CD, put the funds in the checking account and to wait for something better. The Board decided to allow the new Board, which will meet in May 2016, to make the final decision. This decision will be posted in the NCVR Summer Newsletter.

Region Reports:

Eastern Region – Sister Mary McGarrity, IHM – Sister Mary reported on the Eastern Region gathering of 18 vicars at Mt. Alvernia Retreat Center in Wappinger Fall, NY on October 27-29, 2015. At this gathering Sister Mary welcomed new vicars and then invited everyone to give a brief update on the religious life activities in their respective dioceses. She noted that Brother James reported on the May National Board meeting; that vicars shared their *Year of Consecrated Life* activities and *Year of Mercy* plans. The gathering also included a panel discussion on the letter, *Keep Watch*, evening prayer in

the chapel, small group discussions on the *Year of Mercy*, the website and how to best assist international congregations newly arriving in the USA, a presentation of a case study in Canon Law, a keynote presentation from Sister Lynn Levo, CSJ titled: *Living with an Evolutionary Relationship to Life: Insights from Spirituality and Psychology*. Sister Mary reported the results of the regional elections held at this time. They are: Sister Mary McGarrity, IHM, Chairperson; Brother James McVeigh, OSF, Vice Chairperson; Sister Patricia Moran, CIJ, Secretary; Sister Catherine Cleary, PBVM, Treasurer. Sister Mary noted that all had an opportunity to evaluate the regional gathering and were also asked for suggestions/topics for the next meeting.

Southern Region – Sister Marlene Weidenborner, OSF – Sister Marlene noted that she e-mailed all in her region in order to discuss possible meetings. She noted that due to the shortage of funds and time most felt that physically meeting together was difficult. She noted that the vicars in the region saw the need to keep in touch and at this time, the best way seems to be via telephone or electronic mail. Sister Marlene described the election process she used. She sent a letter asking for nominees for Chairperson and Vice Chairperson. She noted that one needed at least three nominations to become a nominee. Sister Marlene said that since she was the only one to receive three nominations she remains the Chairperson and the Vice Chairperson is Sister Elizabeth Ann Vasquez, SSCJ.

Midwestern Region – Sister Ellen Dunn, OP – Sister Ellen reported conducting a telephone conference meeting with eight Vicars for Religious participating. Each vicar reported on some of the activities taking place in her respective diocese. She also noted that the region conducted its elections. The new officers are: Sister Marilyn Kerber, SNDdeN, Chairperson; Sister Rita Wenzlick, OP, Secretary, Sister Ellen Dunn, OP, Treasurer. No vice chairperson was elected. Sister Ellen noted that the vicars shared information on international spiritual directors, a special self-discernment retreat made available through Vision Magazine, and possibly organizing a spring 2016 gathering in Minneapolis–Saint Paul with Sister Carol Puccio, CSJ hosting the group.

Western Region – Sister Eymard Flood, OSC – Sister Eymard noted that the Western Region is comprised of thirty-six dioceses, twenty-five of which have a vicar for religious with eighteen of these who are active within the NCVR Conference. She also reported on their regional gathering at Mission San Jose Dominican Motherhouse from October 6-8, 2015. Sister Eymard noted that the topic for the regional gathering was the document, *Keep Watch* with each vicar offering a brief synopsis and allowing time for discussion. She reported on a brief discussion resulting with some suggestions for the NCVR website, that is including information coming from CARA, the Global Sisters Report, articles/talks given by Vicars for Religious, *Proceedings*, photos of activities at the diocesan level, etc. She also noted having explained the rationale and process involving the latest questionnaire that should provide some information/talking points for the 2016 visit to CICL/SAL. She reported that the region began discussing the 2017 National Assembly that the Western Region will host. Suggestions for a possible theme and speakers emerged. Sister Eymard shared her region's concern on the lack of specific

reference to religious entering the United States in the document, *Guidelines for Receiving Pastoral Ministers in the United States*. Lastly she reported that the same officers were elected to represent the Western Region. They are: Sister Eymard Flood, OSC, Chairperson; Sister Cecilia Canales, OP, Vice Chair; Sister Rosina Conrotto, PBVM, Secretary; Sister Mary Francis Coleman, RSM, Treasurer.

Old Business:

Elections – Sister Nancy will invite Sister Maryann Lopiccolo, SC to chair the national elections process with the instruction to obtain an updated e-mail list from Sister Joyce. To insure accuracy the ballots will be numbered. On January 6, 2016 Sister Maryann will send a letter to the membership describing the process since this election will not take place during a National Assembly but rather via electronic and land mail. This is due to the 2016 visit to CICL/SAL that will take the place of the annual National Assembly. This letter will include a self-nomination option. Sister Nancy will send a cover letter that will include the dates of the National Board meetings and the 2017 National Assembly that will all take place at the Felician Convent in Chicago, Illinois. The following are the 2016-2017 dates:

- May 20 -22, 2016 National Board Meeting
- November 18-20, 2016 National Board Meeting
- March 19-22, 2017 National Assembly
- May 19-21, 2017 National Board Meeting
- November 17-19, 2017 National Board Meeting

The website will have an “Elections” tab that will post election directions and the slate. Sister Mariette and Brother James will set this up on the website. The following timetable will be posted on the website: All nominations need to be in by January 20, 2016; these will be submitted electronically to Sister Maryann. Should only one person be nominated for an office, Sister Maryann will inform Sister Nancy who will poll the Board for any suggested persons. If the nominee remains only one, then the ballot will read: “Yes, I affirm....” or “No, I do not affirm....” She will then ask the nominees to submit a brief bio and a photo that can be posted on the website. Alora at Synergic Systems – the website host – will have these by February 17th and will post these on the website by February 24th. The ballots will be electronically sent out on March 1st. The elections need to be concluded by March 15, 2016. Should Sister Maryann become a nominee, the president will assign another vicar to count the votes. Sister Maryann or her appointed replacement will submit the results of the elections to Sister Nancy who will contact those elected. Sister Nancy will install the newly elected officers at the May 2016 Board meeting.

Website – The Board noted that the website password needs to be changed every October and sent to the current membership.

New Business:

Visit to Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life (CICL/SAL) – Rome, March 3 to March 11, 2016. The National Board will participate in this visit. The scheduled appointment with the Congregation is on March 8th. Sister Mariette's community in Rome will be celebrating the birthday of their foundress Clelia Merlonie, on March 10th; she invited the Board to attend this celebration. Sister Mariette will e-mail the information regarding flights, lodging, currency exchange, etc. Sister Mariette notes that the *Domus Marie* is close to the Vatican (behind the Paul VI auditorium) and seemed to be a promising possibility for lodging. Besides visiting CICL/SAL, Brother James suggested trying to obtain an appointment with the Congregation for Catholic Education and the Congregation for Bishops. It was also suggested trying to obtain a meeting at the North American Seminary and possibly having a panel discussion with some of the seminarians. The question would be how knowledge on consecrated life can be integrated into seminary curriculum and why this is important? Sister Nancy will try to arrange for the additional meetings. The following topics were noted as important to include in the discussion with the above congregations/seminary:

- Bishops and diocesan institutes
- Associations of the Faithful (see Article by Sr. Rose McDermott, SSJ)
- Mutual Relations

Document for the Congregation Presentation – Much discussion took place on just exactly would be presented to CICL/SAL. The Board decided that the goal of the meeting would be to help the Congregation understand the face of consecrated life in the USA. A brief description could be given on the National Conference of Vicars for Religious. Sister Nancy could possibly do this. Then each chairperson could write a brief profile of her region. These documents would be submitted prior to the meeting in order for the Congregation officials to have time to formulate any questions. Then a brief presentation could be given on the summary of the responses issuing from the questionnaire that Sister Eymard sent to the membership. Brother James would present on the topic of vocations; Sister Eymard would present on the topic of international religious; Sister Mary would present on the topic of current challenges of Vicars for Religious and Sister Joyce would present on the topic of strengthening of the relationship with bishops. Sister Eymard suggested that each presentation note a positive aspect and then present an area presenting a challenge. The Board suggested that a draft of each presentation be submitted to the entire Board for reflection and comments by January 15, 2016. The final document should be sent to Sister Nancy by February 1, 2016 who will e-mail the documents to Father Lemoncelli, OMI, in Rome. Sister Mariette suggested that the collated responses be summarized in prose. Sister Nancy will ask the Congregation if we can have between 1½ to 2 hours rather than the normal one hour allotment. Sister Mariette and Brother James will continue work on the itinerary.

Assembly 2017 – The Western Region will host the 2017 National Assembly. The Board suggested the theme: *Remembering the Journey – Open Doors*. The members noted that this would tie in nicely with the *Year of Consecrated Life* and the *Year of Mercy*. Possible presenters might be Sister Mary Johnson, SND and/or Sister Lyn Levo, SCJ; either could speak on the prophetic dimension of consecrated life. Father William Short, OFM was also recommended.

Other – The Board discussed the importance of having a plan for receiving religious from other countries. The Conference might develop a list of “To Do’s” that will assist vicars when international religious arrive in their dioceses. Another suggestion was to ask Sister Maryann Seton Lopiccolo, SC to make her plan available. Brother James offered to ask her to prepare her plan for internal publication.

The meeting adjourned at 3:00 p.m. on Saturday, November 21, 2016.

Respectfully Submitted by:

Sister Joyce Marie Candidi, OSHJ
NCVR Secretary
December 23, 2016

Addendum

Statistics Regarding Delegates/Vicars for Religious
Compiled by Sister Nancy Mathias, OSU

109 dioceses have a Delegate/Vicar for Consecrated/Religious Life

56 dioceses have the bishop listed
26 dioceses < 100 religious
23 dioceses 100-500
6 dioceses 500-1000
1 diocese 1000 plus

23 dioceses have other people listed such as chancellor, vicar general, etc.
12 dioceses < 100 religious
10 dioceses 100-500
1 diocese 500-1000