



# WDREF

Wisconsin Directors of Religious Education Federation

# WDREF

Winter 2008

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## WDREF Calendar

**February 25, 2008**

WDREF Scholarship Applications due

**April 6-10, 2008**

72nd Annual NCCL Conference & Exposition (Houston, TX)

**May 18-19, 2008**

Next WDREF Board meeting

**November 2009 - TBD**

St. Anthony Retreat (Marathon, WI)

**November 13-14, 2008**

WDREF Convention (Stevens Point, WI)



## From the Facilitator

by Becky Thompson

WDREF Facilitator

Kathleen H. Brown and David M. Orr had a wonderful article in the September 2006 issue of the *Ministry and Liturgy* magazine. It began,

“As ministers we open our hearts, befriend others, let the Holy Spirit work in and through us, carry the gospel message to our world. As ministers, we build and strengthen a world in which hearts are connected to one another and to the heart of God.” (p 17)

In the article mentioned above, the authors used the image of trees as a metaphor for how we minister as friends in the church and community settings. “They [trees] shield and shade one another...they even lean and support one another in order to remain standing in the desert sands... Trees share the burden of scarcity, offer one another a drink when there is little sustenance issuing from below...they protect one another from life’s harsh winds and desert heat.” (p 18) Just like trees, we need one another. In our local and state organizations, hopefully we are spiritual friends. We are community, and in community there is strength, help and joy. We need each other and we need to celebrate one another.

There are a number of people who I want to celebrate. First, Bob Boehm— the previous facilitator for the WDREF board, serving a two-year term. Bob thanks for all your hard work and dedication to WDREF during your term and always. Next is Larry Behlen, the outgoing WDREF treasurer. With his eye for detail, Larry was a wonderful guy to put in charge of the books. We will miss you! Finally, I want to thank those members who served on the board – thank you for taking time out of your busy schedules to continue the work of those who had the forethought to create this state board over 25 years ago.

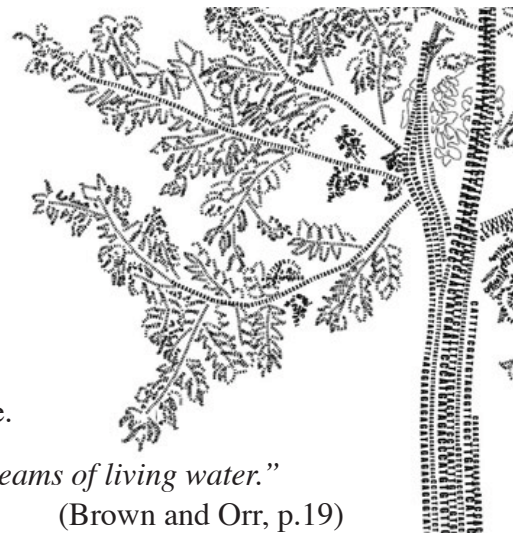
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At our first board meeting in August it was a pleasure to welcome some “old” faces and some “new” faces. I was very pleased with the level of sharing and commitment that was exhibited during our meeting. When we gathered in January, we had a lot to be excited about as a new year began. The PDC committee reported that the handbook for Employing Catechetical Leaders is ready for print. We spent some time dreaming dreams as we continue to look ahead. One thing we all agreed needs to be a priority for our board is communication and publicity. If we want people to think of our ministry as a vocation, we need to let people know what we do...who we are...and how we live.

*“To be well rooted as ministers, we must be planted, figuratively speaking, by streams of living water.”*

(Brown and Orr, p.19)



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## WDREF Mission Statement

As the statewide organization of professional catechetical leaders, the Wisconsin Directors of Religious Education Federation (WDREF) promotes ministerial and professional development and provides ongoing formation, advocacy, support and recognition to our members through the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

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## Scholarship application available online

The deadline for the 2008 WDREF Scholarship is February 25, 2008. Please visit [www.wdref.org](http://www.wdref.org) for a printable application with details. Applicants must be:

- a member of a local diocesan organization in the state of Wisconsin.
- actively engaged in the religious education ministry in Wisconsin.
- intending to remain in the religious education field for at least two more years.
- committed to their own professional development, i.e., working towards certification, continuing education units, or a bachelor's, master's or post graduate degree in a field related to religious education ministry.

WDREF Board members and diocesan personnel are not eligible. First consideration will be given to applicants who have not been awarded a WDREF Scholarship in the last two years.

In addition to the application, interested members must also secure a letter of recommendation from each of the following:

1. A diocesan staff person in the religious education department
2. Another DRE or coordinator
3. A parish staff member with whom you've worked within the last five years

Letters of recommendation should be mailed with the application to the address listed on the form.

# BOARD HIGHLIGHTS...

*Points of interest from recent board meetings*

- The Professional Development Committee, Joanie McKeown, Pam Fischer and Kathy Pichler have put in years of hard work on the updated WDREF Handbook and it will be published later this winter. Copies should be available by the May WDREF Board meeting. Board members may bring copies back to their local organization or diocese for purchase. They will also be available at the fall convention (\$12.95 for members, \$15.95 for non-members with multiple copy discounts).
- Thank you to Ann Sirianni who has graciously agreed to co-chair the Communications Committee with Lee Ann Lella. The committee is responsible for producing the newsletter as well as supervising the Web site and generating publicity for the WDREF organization. A co-chair would assist the committee in its multi-faceted tasks. The newsletter editor is Sarah Karlen and our Web master is Ron Jacobson.
- A good deal of time was spent with the Visioning Committee addressing the question: “What should or could WDREF do that the dioceses aren’t?” Please watch your e-mail for a survey monkey questionnaire asking for your input. We appreciate your feedback in advance.
- New this year at the WDREF Convention there will be a discount offered to first-time attendees.
- The Board has modified the timeframe used in the discernment of new executive team members. During our January meeting, those who are eligible for being discerned to a position on the executive team are put forward and the gifts they would bring to the position to be discerned are listed. The position of secretary will be discerned at the May meeting. The Board members eligible to be discerned are: David Kenny, Lee Ann Lella and Sister Casimira Benbenek. There may be other eligible members, depending on how vacancies in the GB-AREA and DARE organizations are filled.
- The 2010 Convention will be hosted by the Madison diocese. The theme being considered is “Courage to Lead: Soul of Leadership.”
- After discussion with Rosie Bartel (Green Bay Diocese), Gary Pokorny (Milwaukee Diocese) and Kris Newkirk (Superior Diocese), it was decided the May meeting would be the best time for Province Dialogues. This May, there will be

# NCCL nuggets

## Joining NCCL

Anyone who belongs to the local PCL organization can become a member of NCCL at the reduced rate of \$40 per year. All you need to do is print “WDREF member” on the application form.

Membership in NCCL will give you a reduced price on Catechetical Sunday materials and other titles. You will also receive NCCL’s excellent magazine for catechetical leaders entitled, “Catechetical Leader.”

## Houston...we have a convention!

This April 6-10, Houston, Texas will host the 72nd Annual NCCL Conference and Exposition. The theme is “Transforming Catechesis.”

Full registration includes keynote sessions, learning sessions, Tech Center activities, admission to exhibits and awards luncheon. Take advantage of early bird registration by March 7.

For conference details including speakers and presentation topics, a schedule of events, and registration form, please visit [www.nccl.org](http://www.nccl.org).

  
*National Conference for Catechetical Leadership*

a “Meet and Greet” session and May 2009 would be a good time to look at the new high school and Chaste Living curriculums recently passed by the USCCB.

- Upcoming WDREF Board meetings are scheduled for May 18-19, August 25-26 and January 12-13, 2009. The WDREF newsletter will be e-mailed to members two weeks after each of the board meetings.



# Retreat reflections

Our last WDREF two-day retreat was held at St. Anthony's Retreat Center in Marathon. We had a wonderful turn out and we were even blessed with the presence of a few non-WDREF members. Sr. Marla Lang from Marywood Retreat Center in LaCrosse led the retreat. Members took part in creating mandalas which helped us reflect upon ourselves and our ministry through prayer. The delicious meals were prepared by members of St. Anthony's staff. It was truly a wonderful time to strengthen our own spirituality through prayer, reflection and interaction with colleagues. We look forward to another mindful retreat experience in November 2009.

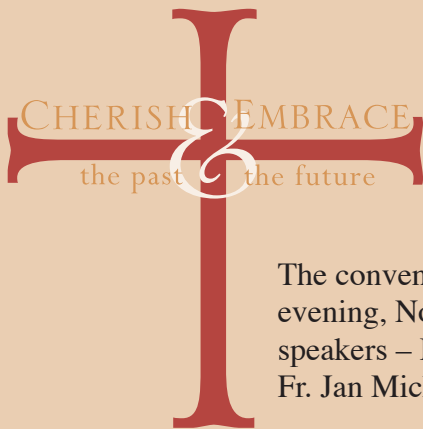


Sr. Marla Lang sharing insight during one of her presentations.



Lee Ann Lella and Anne Stemper reveal their creative side through the spiritual art of mandala making.

## Mark your calendars for the 2008 WDREF Convention



It's time to start planning for the WDREF Convention! Mark you calendars. In fact, clear the dates in next fall's Religious Education schedules and tell everyone you know to come to the Ramada Inn and Convention Center (formerly, Country Springs Hotel and Convention Center) in Stevens Point. The cost is \$62 for a single room suite, \$72 for a double, \$82 for a triple, etc. There are other types of rooms available as well.

The convention will be held Thursday and Friday, November 13-14, 2008. On Wednesday evening, November 12, there will be two pre-convention presentations from top-notch speakers – Mike Carotta, a nationally known speaker in the field of Youth Ministry and Fr. Jan Michael Joncas, internationally known in the areas of liturgy and liturgical music.

The theme for the convention is **Cherish the Past, Embrace the Future**. The speakers will focus on the importance of our religious past along with the issues that permeate our Catholic identity in the future. What do we need to be aware of as Catholics as we move forward in this period of time? How do we define ourselves and our ministry?

Fr. Jan Michael Joncas and Mike Carotta will help us answer these questions and others. And joining them will be Sr. Angela Ann Zukowski, MSHS, Director of the Institute for Pastoral Initiatives (University of Dayton) and the Virtual Learning Community of Faith Formation and Jackie Witter, former director of the Office of Catechesis for the La Crosse Diocese, currently the Director of Illuminare: The Ecclesial Ministry Project of St. Paul's Monastery, St. Paul, MN.

With these inspirational speakers at the helm, we are looking forward to another great convention this fall.



## **Diana Maki – SUMMIT**

We welcomed Bishop Peter Christensen in September and look forward to the annual meeting between Diocesan catechetical personnel, SUMMIT Executive Board and the new bishop in May.

SUMMIT sponsors two annual awards: The Gloria Lang Award and the Thomas Toohey Award. Two individuals were presented with the Gloria Lang Award during the October 2007 Institute. Their Mentoring Committee continues to be very active in doing all it can to assist those charged with catechetical leadership.

## **Upcoming SUMMIT Talks**

The theme for the 2007-08 SUMMIT talk series is “Nourishing Our Catholic Identity.” Our gatherings include a morning speaker, lunch and an afternoon business meeting.

Presentations qualify for Catechetical Certification and address multiple competencies from National Certification Standards for Lay Ecclesial Ministers.

### **St. Anthony, Park Falls**

February 28, 2008

Presenter: Bonnie Moquin

“Were Not Our Hearts Burning?  
...Beyond the Bread” Luke 24:32

### **St. Therese of Lisieux, Phillips**

May 13, 2008

Presenter: Reverend Gerald Hagen

“You Should Do As I Have Done  
For You” John 13:15

## **Julie Endl – MDREO**

MDREO recently hosted Dr. Kate Wiskus who is currently serving as faculty and associate dean of formation at University of St. Mary, Mundelein Seminary. The topic of her talk was, “Well Being for Ministry: Finding Peace and Embracing the Peace of Christ.

The presentation focused on how we serve in ministry without growing weary or bitter. It began by examining characteristics necessary for fruitful ministry and then contrasting that with characteristics of burnout in ministry. The talk concluded with specific ways for those in ministry to maintain their sense of purpose and faithful service without burnout.

## **Steve Pable – GB-AREA**

One of GB-AREA’s initiatives this winter has been to establish two annual awards for excellence in catechetical ministry. Members of GB-AREA participated in a Catechetical Leadership Day with the focus being on Byzantine Catholic Spirituality.

Name change procedures and revisions to the GB-AREA vision and mission statement continue this winter, with the hope that they can be announced and promoted at the spring R&R Day.

**For more information on the local organization sponsored events, please contact your local president or facilitator.**

## **Introducing our 2008 WDREF Executive Team!**



**From left to right:**

**Secretary**  
Kathie Fritz

**Facilitator**  
Becky Thompson

**Treasurer**  
Rick Geise

**WDREF Newsletter**  
*Editor: Sarah Karlen*

If you have story ideas or comments to share, please send an e-mail to [stkarlen@gmail.com](mailto:stkarlen@gmail.com).

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