

*Statement of Cardinal William Levada,
Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith
on the doctrinal Assessment of the LCWR*

The findings of the doctrinal Assessment of the Leadership Conference of Women Religious (LCWR) released today by the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith are aimed at fostering a patient and collaborative renewal of this conference of major superiors in order to provide a stronger doctrinal foundation for its many laudable initiatives and activities.

The first step in the implementation of the findings of the doctrinal Assessment consists, therefore, in a personal meeting between the Superiors of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith and the Officers of the LCWR. Such a personal encounter allows for the opportunity to review the document together in a spirit of mutual respect and collaboration, hopefully thereby avoiding possible misunderstandings of the document's intent and scope. In this sense, I also express my gratitude to the Officers of the LCWR for their openness and participation in the doctrinal Assessment since 2008 when I first communicated to them the Congregation's intention to undertake this project.

In his Apostolic Letter *Porta Fidei* announcing the Year of Faith which will begin in October, 2012, Pope Benedict XVI reminds us that it is the Church's faith that sustains and animates Christian life and witness: "*The renewal of the Church is also achieved through the witness offered by the lives of believers: by their very existence in the world, Christians are called to radiate the word of truth that the Lord Jesus has left us.*"¹ This is all the more true for those who offer the Church and the world the most eloquent witness of religious consecration.

As the issues evidenced in the doctrinal Assessment involve essential questions of faith, the Holy Father has given the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith a special mandate to collaborate with the LCWR in a renewal of their work through a concentrated reflection on the doctrinal foundations of that work. This process will necessarily involve communication and coordination with the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life, and the Congregation for Bishops.

The overarching aim of the doctrinal Assessment is, therefore, to assist the LCWR in the United States in implementing an ecclesiology of communion, confident that "*the joyous rediscovery of faith can also contribute to consolidate the unity and communion among the different bodies that make up the wider family of the Church.*"²

¹ POPE BENEDIXT XVI, Apostolic Letter *Porta Fidei*, no. 6.

² CONGREGATION FOR THE DOCTRINE OF THE FAITH, *Note with pastoral recommendations for the Year of Faith*.