



# WDREF

Wisconsin Directors of Religious Education Federation

# WDREF

Fall 2009

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## From the Facilitator

by Becky Thompson

WDREF Facilitator

*The old year runs away from me.  
I hang onto her sleeve  
but she shakes me loose.  
Where does she go  
when the new year comes?*

—Joyce Rupp

Fall....new beginnings...new programs...new school year...new opportunities... new WDREF board...new local boards and officers...new clothes...new school supplies...new DREs, CREs and Youth Ministers. Welcome to a new year!!

At our fall meeting the question was asked by many, “Where did this summer go?” Or “What summer?” After our gathering prayer, I asked everyone to share one highlight of their summer and at our local executive board meeting we were asked to share where we experienced God over the summer. Take a moment now and reflect on your summer....savor those good times...pray about the tough times.

After our sharing session we got down to business with executive committee reports. Dave, WDREF secretary, informed us that he had received only one written report. One of the benefits of the written reports from each local organization and diocese is that they allow for networking. It gives local organizations ideas for program days and speakers by looking at what other areas of the state are doing. Reporting also gives people, who live on the borders of the diocese, additional opportunities for professional development and faith sharing if they are made aware of what is happening next door.

We made an adjustment in our agenda to move diocesan reports because the diocesan directors weren't able to stay for the Tuesday meeting. It is with great sadness that we have to say good-bye to Chris Newkirk as she has accepted a new position in the Diocese of Superior. We will definitely miss her presence at our meetings and her support for those in catechetical ministry. We wish her well in her new position as the Director of the Department of Parish Consultation and Leadership Development. (Continued on page 2)

## WDREF Calendar

**November 5-6, 2009**

WDREF Retreat  
(St Anthony's Retreat Center  
Marathon, WI)

**February 25, 2010**

WDREF Scholarship  
Applications Due

(Continued from page 1)

Great work is being done on the 2010 convention, hosted by MDREO, which celebrates our 30th anniversary as a statewide convention. Plans are under way to celebrate by having a “dress up” formal dinner and gala. What does this mean? Do you have some mother-of-the-bride or groom dresses you have only worn once? A prom formal you can still fit into? A dress you bought for a formal affair or cruise? An ugly bridesmaid dress? Or for you men...how about a powder blue leisure suit? What do you have in your closet that spans the decades as we celebrate 30 years? More information will be coming your way!

I hope to see many of you at this year’s retreat, November 5-6, at St. Anthony’s in Marathon City. Pro-CLAYM reported that they have received 15 registrations already and they haven’t even been sent out yet. The Solanus Center can fit up to 120 people but there are only 80 rooms. As soon as you receive your retreat information, register! It will be a great two days together!

## B&R Blessings & Recognition

ProCLAYM is proud to announce our 2008-2009 Good and Faithful Servant Award winners. The recipients of these awards are nominated by the general membership and voted on by the ProCLAYM Board. Both awards represent outstanding commitment to the catechetical field and Spirit-filled attitude.

The recipient of the **Good and Faithful Servant: Ministry in Leadership Award** is Marge Frase. Marge has faithfully served for 44 years in the catechetical field in the Green Bay Diocese and was in the first Diocesan Commissioned Ministry class ever. She has been involved in ProCLAYM since its founding and has served on the ProCLAYM Board many times. She is very involved in her home parish, St. Mary, De Pere. To quote her nominating party, ‘Marge has always responded to the call with a Spirit-filled heart. I believe this award is an incredible way to acknowledge her life’s work.’ Thank you Marge—we have been blessed by your presence and ministry!

The recipient of the **Good and Faithful Servant: Support in Ministry Award** is Lucille Wildenberg from St. John Nepomucene Parish in Little Chute. Lucille has been faithfully serving as a volunteer in the parish for 17 years. She is involved in catechizing children who need First Communion and/or First Reconciliation instruction. She began her ministry when her grandchild had cancer and couldn’t attend Religious Education classes. She is also involved in Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, SCRIP and is very supportive of any parish needs. In the words of her nominator, ‘Lucille has helped countless children come to know the love of Jesus. Most of these children don’t want to join ‘regular’ RE classes after they finish with Lucille. They want to continue with Lucille.’ Thank you Lucille for all of your hard work!

SUMMIT’s Gloria Lang Award is given to someone who has shown outstanding service to the catechetical ministry within the Diocese of Superior (similar to WDREF’s Henriette M. Mackin Award, but on the local level). Gloria Lang was the first facilitator of SUMMIT and first recipient of WDREF’s Stephen C. Gilmour Award.

This year’s recipient of the **Gloria Lang Award** is Kris Deering, CRE in three Catholic parishes located in Dobie, Haugen and Birchwood, WI. When Kris and her husband, John, moved to that area in the 1970s, she felt called to expand the activities offered to the children in her parish. Her involvement extended from social activities to CCD, to training children as altar servers and teaching her own daughters to play the piano for Mass. Fourteen years ago, Kris became CRE for Holy Trinity in Haugen; then, two years ago, Kris and John became co-CREs and Youth Ministers for all three parishes.

In addition to providing a quality religious education program for children and teens, Kris leads Bible Study for adults, and plans mission trips and pilgrimages to such sites as the Shrine to our Lady of Guadalupe in southern Wisconsin. Under her leadership, the youth of the parishes now participate in such events as the Catholic Heart Work Camps, NET ministry, Diocesan Youth Rallies and Diocesan Ski Blast. Through the tragedies of life her faith has never faltered, but has led her to a deeper commitment to God and serving the Catholic Church in her corner of the world.



## **DARE (LaCrosse)**

DARE is working to rebuild membership and representation. Having discussed some ideas last year and speaking with the Superior Diocese, we've decided to open two of the four meetings this year to full membership and beyond. Our fall meeting will feature a presentation by Fr. Ed Shuttleworth on "Catholic Imagination." We have chosen Menomonie as the location in order to draw interest from the southern part of our diocese, which lacks representation at this time. There will be another presentation scheduled for the March meeting in Stevens Point. These presentations will replace our previous "Evenings of Reflection," which were difficult because of geography.

The open meetings will also provide an opportunity for youth ministers to meet with Chris Rogers, the diocesan director of youth ministry. Having a presentation in the morning (which we hope will provide certification credits from the diocese) and then allowing the YMs to meet, will provide a real incentive for them to get together without sacrificing too much time away from ministry.

DARE is seeking ways to provide assistance to the diocesan office, in the area of certification. St. Anthony Spirituality Center has become the official site for learning, taking the classes out of the parish setting in order to take advantage of presenters from around the diocese. We look to train facilitators to provide safe environment training within parishes so that DREs, especially those who volunteer or are employed part-time, will not have to do this.

DARE is using a newsletter and Web site to provide greater outreach to the diocese. The newsletter is included in the diocesan *LaCrosseRoads*, which is mailed six times a year. We have added a newsletter/Web site editor to our board to facilitate this effort.

Our focus for study this year will be collaboration and we have chosen to read and discuss *Collaboration: Uniting Our Gifts in Ministry by Sofield and Juliano.*

## **MAREDA (Milwaukee)**

MAREDA will host the Annual Welcome Back Day on Thursday, Sept. 24. Our guest will be Mike Patin. Mareda will kick off with a social event for members - a Margarita Cruise on the Milwaukee River on Friday, Sept. 25. The peaceful atmosphere and beautiful sights of Milwaukee's skyline provide the perfect backdrop for visiting, sharing ideas or simply making new acquaintances.

Bill Huebsch will present "Pastoral Planning for the Reign of God" at our general meeting on Tuesday, Oct. 20, 2009 from 10 a.m.—3:30 p.m. at Holy Family in Fond du Lac. Bill Huebsch is a theologian, former DRE, author, farmer and leader of [www.pastoral-planning.com](http://www.pastoral-planning.com). He will speak about the struggles of ministering in multiple parishes and creating a climate of collaboration, not competition! Likewise, small parishes often need to collaborate, but creating a climate for this between neighboring parishes is not often easy. After lunch, Huebsch will be addressing the Archdiocese of Milwaukee Lenten theme on Mercy.

The Friday, Dec. 11, 2009 general meeting will start at 8:30 a.m. Mike Hayes, will present: "Reaching Young Adults." Hayes is the author of *Googling God* and managing editor of *BustedHalo.com*. Mareda will join in collaboration with the John Paul II Center and the Saint Clare Center for this event.

## **ProCLAYM (Green Bay)**

The ProCLaym board began the year with a retreat held at Holy Spirit Parish in Kimberly. The theme for the day was, "Go Light Your World." The day consisted of prayer, reflection, painting a lighthouse keepsake, lunch and the first

board meeting of the year.

This year ProCLAYM is working with the diocesan education staff to combine ProCLAYM's kick-off day and the diocesan Administrator's Day. This will allow administrators one less day out of the office and save on expenses. School principals and parish administrators will be in attendance. Administrators Day will be held at the Riverside Ballroom in Green Bay beginning with a Mass celebrated by Bishop Ricken. Bishop Ricken will also address the administrators after Mass.

ProCLAYM assisted in booking the speaker (Joe Paprocki) as well as coordinating liturgical ministers, music, environment for both the liturgy and for the tables, the closing prayer and evaluation forms. We will also present our "Good and Faithful Servant" awards.

## **SUMMIT (Superior)**

In keeping with 'The Year of the Priest,' our 2009-2010 meeting series theme is: "Encountering Grace: Priest, Prophet, King and Sabbath." We'll explore how we're formed by focusing on one of these areas in each of our four diocesan meetings:

**Encountering Grace Through the Environment** (Sept. 22 in New Richmond)  
Doris Murphy

**Encountering Grace Through Baptism**  
(Oct. 29 in Hayward) Dr. Larry Huiras

**Encountering Grace Through Scripture**  
(Feb. 18 in Cameron) Dennis Kurtz

**Encountering Grace Through Sabbath**  
(Retreat Day - May 11 in Woodruff)  
Sr. Marla Lang, FSPA

In addition, we'll also meet in our deaneries in late fall and spring, with the topics to be announced. Guests are welcome. Please contact our SUMMIT Facilitator, Kay Berg at (715) 453-2878 ext. 117 for more information.

The National Conference for Catechetical Leadership (NCCL) is the only national organization dedicated solely to the ministry of catechesis. Its membership consists of diocesan catechetical leaders, parish catechetical leaders (PCLs), academics who work in the field of catechesis and publishers.

Your membership in NCCL gives you unique opportunities to enhance your personal mission and dedication to catechesis. Because NCCL is member driven, you can participate in committees and governance. PCLs Mike Westenberg of Green Bay and Joanie McKeown of Superior who now serve on NCCL's Board of Directors came up through the ranks of NCCL to hold these leadership positions.

If you belong to WDREF, you can join NCCL for just \$50 a year. Your membership entitles you to:

- Lee Nagel's Monday e-mail, filled with pertinent and practical information for parish catechetical leaders. (Some say that the information in this e-mail is worth the cost of membership.)

- Annual subscription to Catechetical Leader magazine, which is geared specifically towards parish and diocesan catechetical leaders.
- Annual Conference and Exposition for professional growth and development. (The 2010 Annual Conference is in Las Vegas where air fare is cheap and hotel rooms are \$99 a night double occupancy.)
- Free participation in webinars sponsored by NCCL and partner organizations.
- Representation on and participation in national collaborations with the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops and Certification Alliance with other national organizations.
- A voice on the NCCL Representative Council through WDREF's Rep., Pam Fischer of Green Bay.

For more information, please contact Pam Fischer at [faith1@lakefield.net](mailto:faith1@lakefield.net) or Joanie McKeown at [joanie50@consultant.com](mailto:joanie50@consultant.com) or visit [www.nccl.org](http://www.nccl.org).

## Who's Who Moment .....

*WDREF Member(s) in the Spotlight*



Chris Newkirk has served as Associate Director of the Office of Religious Education and Youth Ministry in the Diocese of Superior for the past nine years. One of her responsibilities was to be the diocesan liaison to the WDREF Board and she did this with gusto! During Board meetings, Chris has offered insights, asked pertinent questions that led to better discussions, and shown her support for the work and ministry of WDREF.

The quality of her ministry to the Diocese of Superior and to WDREF comes as no surprise to Sr. Jovita Winkel, CSA, one of her former mentors, who describes Chris as very knowledgeable about church and having an eagerness and enthusiasm for faith issues. Chris' positive outlook has made her a joy to be around. As she moves into a new position in the Diocese of Superior as director of the Office of Parish Consultation and Leadership Development, the WDREF Board gives her our sincere thank you, and God's blessings on her continued ministry.

## 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.

**Find us on the web!**

**[www.wdref.org](http://www.wdref.org)**

News • Updates • Events

**[www.wdref.org](http://www.wdref.org)**



### 2009-2010 Executive Board

(Becky Thompson (facilitator), Dave Kenny (secretary)  
and Peg Miller (treasurer).

## Contact the WDREF Facilitator...

If you would like to contact Becky Thompson regarding any WDREF matters, please e-mail her at [beckyt@stjosephbaraboo.org](mailto:beckyt@stjosephbaraboo.org)

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**WDREF Newsletter Editor:** Sarah Karlen  
Suggestions or Comments?  
E-mail: [stkarlen@gmail.com](mailto:stkarlen@gmail.com)

## WDREF Retreat – November 5-6, 2009

This year's WDREF retreat will be held November 5-6, 2009 at the St. Anthony Retreat Center in Marathon, WI. The theme of the Retreat is:

*Standing on Tiptoe: The Season of Hope.*

Our retreat master will be Lee Nagel, the Executive Director of NCCL.

### Retreat Itinerary

#### Wednesday, Nov. 4

6-7 p.m. Early Registration  
7 p.m. Social & Stories for Advent

#### Thursday, Nov. 5

8 a.m. Mass  
8:30 a.m. Breakfast  
9 a.m. Registration  
9:45 a.m. Welcome  
10 a.m. Presentation: "I can't see! Life me up."  
Personal Reflection, Group Sharing  
Noon Lunch / Book Store Open  
1:30 p.m. Presentation: "Peeking Over the Fence,"  
"Glimpses of Grace."  
Personal Reflection, Group Sharing  
3:30 p.m. Personal Choice: Relaxation, Reading or Resting  
Festival of Christmas Stories (bring your favorite book!)  
5 p.m. Evening Prayer  
5:30 p.m. Supper  
7 p.m. Presentation: "It's not so dark you can't see."  
Adjustments: Discovering light in the dark."  
8:30 p.m. Social

#### Friday Nov. 5

8 a.m. Mass  
8:30 a.m. Breakfast  
9:30 a.m. Presentation: "T.O.E. Stretching Exercises."  
Thanks Often Expressed is Hope's Relative."  
11 a.m. Closing prayer  
Noon Lunch

For more information, visit [www.wdref.org](http://www.wdref.org) or contact Pam Fischer, retreat chairperson, at [faith1@lakefield.net](mailto:faith1@lakefield.net).