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LCWR: Women leading the American church

Maureen Fiedler | Jun. 4, 2012 NCR Today

The statement is polite. Respectful. On point. And it didn't mince words. The feelings (holy anger?) of the LCWR board came through in every syllable.

That is my reading of the statement issued Friday [1] by the LCWR board in response to the doctrinal assessment issued against them by the Vatican's Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith.

In that statement, LCWR said quite bluntly that "... the assessment was based on unsubstantiated accusations and the result of a flawed process that lacked transparency." That's the understatement of the year.

Further, they said, "the sanctions imposed were disproportionate to the concerns raised and could compromise their ability to fulfill their mission." Indeed, they threaten the very integrity of LCWR.

Finally, they noted that "the report has furthermore caused scandal and pain throughout the church community, and created greater polarization." Absolutely accurate and quite interesting since it is usually the Vatican that is accusing others of "scandal."

I myself was on "CBS This Morning" on Thursday discussing the Vatican mandate, and I am overwhelmed by positive responses to my own pro-LCWR analysis and by the interest of the secular media in this story.

We do not know, of course, what options for action LCWR is suggesting to its regional meetings, or ultimately to its conference in August. But it sounds like the range of possibilities is wide, including perhaps the suggestion of Sr. Joan Chittister that they become an independent nonprofit. (I am not privy to the internal workings of LCWR, so this is mere speculation on my part.)

But so far, it is women who are proving to be the real leaders of our church in the persons of LWCR.

Here's the video:

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[1] http://ncronline.org/node/30610