

Vatican seeks 'reciprocal understanding,' Bishop Blair goes on YouTube

Joshua J. McElwee | Jun. 11, 2012 NCR Today

As the head of the largest organization representing U.S. women religious is preparing to meet with officials at the Vatican Tuesday, a spokesman has said the Vatican is seeking a "reciprocal understanding" with the sisters.

Franciscan Sr. Pat Farrell, the head of the Leadership Conference of Women Religious (LCWR), is due to meet Tuesday with Cardinal William Levada, the head of the Vatican's Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (CDF).

The expected meeting comes nearly two months after news that the CDF has ordered LCWR, which represents some 80 percent of U.S. women religious to revise and place itself under the authority of an archbishop.

[In an NCR interview June 1](#) [1], Farrell said she partly wanted to use the Tuesday meeting to "clarify what we think are misrepresentations of LCWR and of women religious in the United States."

[During an interview with NCR Monday](#) [2], Jesuit Fr. Federico Lombardi, the Vatican spokesman, said Monday he hoped the meeting Tuesday would forge a "reciprocal understanding of the reasons" between the Vatican and the sisters.

Meanwhile, one of the three bishops appointed by the Vatican to oversee LCWR has taken to YouTube to argue that the bishops "have a legitimate cause for doctrinal concern" about the group.

News of the video of Bishop Leonard Blair of the Toledo diocese comes shortly following the bishop's printing of a column, titled "Reality check: The LCWR, CDF and the doctrinal assessment," in the Toledo diocesan newspaper.

In the video, Blair, who was appointed in April along with Seattle Archbishop Peter Sartain and Springfield, Ill., Bishop Thomas Paprocki to oversee LCWR, reads from [the column in the Toledo Catholic Chronicle](#) [3], in which he wrote:

"Those who do not hold the teachings of the Catholic Church, or Catholics who dissent from those teachings, are quick to attack the CDF and bishops for taking the LCWR to task.

"However, a person who holds the reasonable view that a Catholic is someone who subscribes to the teachings of the Catholic Church will recognize that the Catholic Bishops have a legitimate cause for doctrinal concern about the activities of the LCWR, as evidenced by a number of its speakers and some of its resource documents.

"A key question posed by the doctrinal assessment had to do with moving forward in a positive way. Would the LCWR at least acknowledge the CDF's doctrinal concerns and be willing to take steps to remedy the situation? "

Full video of Blair's remarks:

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Links:

[1] <http://ncronline.org/node/30645>

[2] <http://ncronline.org/node/30774>

[3] <http://ncronline.org/node/30760>