

Vice President Biden visits home base of LCWR president

Joshua J. McElwee | Jul. 2, 2012 NCR Today

Vice President Joe Biden quietly visited the motherhouse of the Sisters of St. Francis in Dubuque, Iowa, where the head of the Leadership Conference of Women Religious (LCWR) is based, during a campaign trip last week, reports David Gibson of Religion News Service.

The visit, which was unusually kept under-the-radar, apparently involved the delivery of ice cream and an audience of about 150.

[Reports Gibson](#) [1]:

Why the secrecy, Joe? These days everybody loves the nuns. Yet while the media covered Biden's various events as he appealed to the usual constituencies in the battleground state, there was nary a word about his stopover last Tuesday (June 26) to bring dessert to the sisters.

?The Vice-President got to know the sisters through an old friend in Dubuque, during a previous trip to the city,? said a campaign official, speaking on background. "This was nothing more than a private, casual reunion of friends of faith over ice cream and cookies." There were about 150 people at the gathering.

The news just surfaced along with [a] campaign photo of Biden greeting some of the sisters.

No news, says Gibson, on whether Sr. Pat Farrell, president of LCWR, was present for the visit. LCWR, of course, has been in the news since the Vatican ordered it in April [to revise and place itself under the authority of three bishops](#). [2]

Farrell is also one of four vice presidents for the Dubuque Franciscans. Writes Gibson:

Bonus factoid for those who enjoy their inside baseball, be it politics or Catholicism: Sr. Pat Farrell, the nun who as head of the Leadership Conference of Women Religious is tasked with talking to the Vatican about the attempted takeover of the LCWR, is based in the Dubuque motherhouse.

It is not known if Farrell was there to meet the vice-president. Leaders of the Franciscan community declined requests for comment or details about Biden's visit, but I'm sure plenty of others will be happy to fill in the blanks.

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Links:

[1] <http://www.religionnews.com/blogs/david-gibson/joe-biden-loves-the-nuns-too>

[2] <http://ncronline.org/node/30903>