

NCR receives Hilton Foundation grant for coverage of sisters

NCR Staff | Aug. 22, 2013

The Conrad N. Hilton Foundation has awarded a grant of \$2.3 million over three years that will allow the National Catholic Reporter Publishing Co. to embark on a groundbreaking project to give greater voice to countless Catholic sisters around the globe. With the use of the Hilton Foundation grant, *NCR* plans to build a network of editors and reporters not only to write about women religious, but to help them develop their own communication skills by working with them as columnists who report their own missions and challenges.

"We've been standing with sisters from the beginning, and I consider the grant encouragement to go on telling their stories," said *NCR* Board Chair Annette E. Lomont.

"The work of these women religious is one of the least-told stories in the church," *NCR* Publisher Tom Fox said Thursday. "It's really an exciting challenge to bring these stories and voices to greater awareness. It also recognizes the changing nature of our global church."

Through this project, Lomont said, *NCR* hopes to fulfill the wishes of Conrad N. Hilton, who in his will directed his foundation to "give aid to the Sisters, who devote their love and life's work for the good of mankind."

NCR plans to create a website dedicated to the sisters' stories and voices and will include some of its content on *NCR*'s other media platforms. Moreover, the new website will serve as a tool that sisters can use to build and enhance their own communication networks.

Founded in 1964, *NCR* is a lay-led independent news organization that covers the Catholic church as well as a wide range of issues facing Catholics around the world.

"In preparing to celebrate our 50th anniversary next year, I found in the second issue a special feature called 'Sisters Forum.' It was a column in which sisters -- women religious -- could speak to each other about issues of importance to them," said *NCR* Editor Dennis Coday.

"This says two things: First, the sisters have been a special part of *NCR* from the very beginning, and the Hilton Foundation grant will enable us to continue that tradition. Second, today, as it did 50 years ago, *NCR* recognizes that telling stories about sisters is only half the task. The sisters must speak for themselves as well. Today, we are taking the 'Sister Forum' to the digital age."

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