

Leadership Conference of Women Religious

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November 19, 1982

Most Reverend Michael McAuliffe
Bishop's Residence
P.O. Box 417
Jefferson City, MO 65102

Dear Bishop McAuliffe:

It gives me real pleasure to write this letter on behalf of the executive committee of the Leadership Conference of Women Religious.

We wish, first, to acknowledge and affirm the devoted – and often discouraging – work of the Ad Hoc Committee on Women in Society and the Church over these ten years and especially during the years in which you have served as its chair.

It has been a long road and we suspect the road stretches out a considerable distance ahead. But the large number of positive statements at the recent general meeting of the NCCB following your report and proposal makes evident that the persistence of your committee has finally borne if not fruit at least the blossoms!

We want to express our full support for the proposal that the NCCB authorize an “expanded dialogue with women and women’s organizations in order to develop a substantive program of pastoral action to deal with issues that are a concern to women.” We also support any studies that would contribute to the fuller inclusion of women in the life and governance of the church and to a diminishment of the alienation and anger that many justly feel; we support vigorous attention to the plight of women in the civic societies of which we are a part and to the discrimination that has produced suffering. We believe, with you, that the church in the United States has a significant role to play in the journey of the universal church towards justice for women so we are glad that you have recommended sharing the results of your work with Rome.

Given the content of your report to the body of bishops, we know that you will provide for the voices of women to be heard in the process of your study and reflection. We want to assure you that LCWR will cooperate fully and enthusiastically in your efforts; we urge you to feel free to call on us for any assistance and /or involvement in this undertaking.

We want to speak a word of personal appreciation and sisterly support to you, Bishop McAuliffe. We are aware that you have had some difficult experiences in the course of these years, that your work has sometimes not only gone unrecognized but has been dismissed and that it often took sheer courage simply to persist. Your experience is the experience of those who work for justice – especially in the earlier stages of the search. Thank you for lasting.

Sincerely yours,
Lora Ann Quinonez, CDP
Executive Director (on behalf of the executive committee)