

Annual Members Meeting

September 16, 2026



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Agenda

- Opening Prayer – Most Rev. James T. Schuerman, Episcopal Advisor
- Welcome and Call to Order – Antoinette Mensah, Ph.D., Board Chair
- Mission in the Era of Pope Leo XIV – Reflection & Dialogue
- National and Global Initiatives Update
- 2027 National Conference
- Resources Update
- Closing Prayer – Rev. Paul Lininger, OFM Conv., Board Member



In the chat...

Write the name of
the congregation,
organization, office
or ministry you are
representing today.



Mission in the Era of Pope Leo XIV



“I would like to express my special gratitude to today’s *ad gentes* missionaries. Like Saint Francis Xavier, they have left their homeland, their families and all sense of security in order to proclaim the Gospel and bring Christ and his love to places that are often challenging, poor, conflict-ridden or culturally distant. Despite adversity and human limitations, they continue to give themselves joyfully, because they know that Christ himself, and his Gospel, are the greatest treasures we can offer. Through their perseverance, they demonstrate that God’s love transcends all barriers. The world still needs these courageous witnesses of Christ, and ecclesial communities still need new missionary vocations.”

Message for the 100th World Mission Day





Three Themes for Reflection

1. **Encounter and solidarity** with the poor, suffering and vulnerable is a primary path to spiritual renewal
2. **Communion and cooperation** amid diversity is a necessary counter-witness to division and violence
3. **Compassion and responsiveness** to “everything concerning the lives of contemporary men and women” is essential to living out the Church’s mission vocation.



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Questions for Reflection...

- What resonates from the words and themes identified from Pope Leo's papacy thus far?
- What hurdles do we encounter in our society, world and Church to embodying this mission vision?
- What role should we as USCMA, a community of faith leaders committed to God's mission, play in moving this vision of mission forward?



Encounter and Solidarity

“To all of you, brothers and sisters in Rome, in Italy, throughout the world: we want to be a synodal Church, a Church that moves forward, a Church that always seeks peace, that always seeks charity, that always seeks to be close above all to those who are suffering.”

First Blessing *Urbi et Orbi*

“Love for the Lord, then, is one with love for the poor. The same Jesus who tells us, ‘The poor you will always have with you’ (Mt 26:11), also promises the disciples: ‘I am with you always’ (Mt 28:20). We likewise think of his saying: ‘Just as you did it to one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did it to me’ (Mt 25:40). This is not a matter of mere human kindness but a revelation: contact with those who are lowly and powerless is a fundamental way of encountering the Lord of history. In the poor, he continues to speak to us.”

Dilexi Te, no. 5



Encounter and Solidarity

“Mission is not so much about ‘departing’, but instead ‘remaining’ in order to proclaim Christ through hospitality and welcome, compassion and solidarity. We are to remain without fleeing to the comforts of our individualism; to remain so as to look upon those who arrive from lands that are distant and violent; to remain and open our arms and hearts to them, welcoming them as brothers and sisters, and being for them a presence of consolation and hope.”

*Homily for the Jubilee of the
Missionary World and Migrants*



Communion and Cooperation

“First of all, I ask you to promote a renewed *missionary cooperation* among the Churches. In the communities of ancient Christian tradition, such as those of the West, the presence of many brothers and sisters from the world’s South should be welcomed as an opportunity, through an exchange that renews the face of the Church and sustains a Christianity that is more open, more alive and more dynamic. At the same time, all missionaries that depart for other lands are called to live with respect within the culture they encounter, directing to the good all that is found true and worthy, and bringing there the prophetic message of the Gospel.”

Homily for the Jubilee of the Missionary World and Migrants



Communion and Cooperation

“Being a Christian is not primarily about practices or ideas; it is a life in union with Christ, in which we share in his filial relationship with the Father in the Holy Spirit... In this context, the Church’s primary missionary responsibility is to renew and sustain spiritual and fraternal unity among its members. In many situations, we encounter conflicts, polarization, misunderstandings and a lack of mutual trust. When this occurs even within our communities, it undermines our witness. The evangelizing mission that Christ entrusted to his disciples requires, above all, hearts that are reconciled and eager for communion... Needless to say, missionary unity should not be understood as uniformity, but rather as the convergence of different charisms for the same purpose, namely to make Christ’s love visible and to invite everyone to encounter him.”

Message for the 100th Word Mission Day



Compassion and Responsiveness



“Christian love breaks down every barrier, brings close those who were distant, unites strangers, and reconciles enemies. It spans chasms that are humanly impossible to bridge, and it penetrates to the most hidden crevices of society. By its very nature, Christian love is prophetic: it works miracles and knows no limits. It makes what was apparently impossible happen. Love is above all a way of looking at life and a way of living it. A Church that sets no limits to love, that knows no enemies to fight but only men and women to love, is the Church that the world needs today.”

Dilexi Te, no. 120



Compassion and Responsiveness

“The Church is present in the world as a sign of unity for the entire human family. She recognizes today’s questions and challenges as the current setting in which to carry out her particular vocation of listening, dialogue and service, and of being responsive to everything concerning the lives of contemporary men and women. This involvement in people’s lives helps the Church understand ever more clearly that her mission has a historical scope and entails a responsibility for the way in which social relations are built.”

Magnifica Humanitas, no. 19



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Discussion...

- What resonates from the words and themes identified from Pope Leo's papacy thus far?
- What hurdles do we encounter in our society, world and Church to embodying this mission vision?
- What role should we as USCMA, a community of faith leaders committed to God's mission, play in moving this vision of mission forward?



Programs & Initiatives Update

- Synodal Mission Discernment Lab
- Fall Virtual Formation Series
- Church of the Sheaves: Equipping the Saints for Mission





Synodal Mission Discernment Lab (SMDL)



- In May 2026, USCMA submitted an application to the Lilly Endowment's *Exploring Christian Practices Initiative*. We will hear a responses from Lilly by December 2026.
- The project for which we submitted, the Synodal Mission Discernment Lab (SMDL), is a five-year initiative to engage contemporary audiences in the mission of Jesus, reaching underserved individuals—especially young seekers and those on the margins of traditional Church structures—through dialogue, discernment, and spiritual formation alongside religious congregations, lay organizations, academic institutions, and social outreach ministries.





USCCB National Pastoral on the Laity Consultation Process

USCMA Final Report



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SMDL: Context

2025 USCMA listening sessions highlighted the the role of religious congregations and other mission-centric Catholic institutions in inspiring, forming and commissioning everyday people to recognize and respond to the presence of Christ in their neighbor and world.

The SMDL is a unique opportunity to engage our members and other mission-minded institutions in meaningful, mutual and formative processes of encounter, dialogue and discernment with everyday people, particularly young people and others who are disconnected from the formal structures of access, acknowledgment and influence in the US Church and seeking deeper engagement and responsiveness in an era of social, political, economic and environmental crisis.



SMDL: Endorsements & Partnerships





SMDL: Overall Impact

- **Reach:** Project will directly engage diverse seekers, disengaged/disaffiliated, and faith leaders through lab gatherings, immersion, training and digital resources.
- **Research:** Project will conduct comprehensive research regarding the experiences, priorities and effective practices in forming, engaging and spiritually transforming a diverse cross-section of everyday people.
- **Resources:** Project will produce high-quality, tested training and implementation resources for religious institutions to deliver effective formation and synodal discernment.
- **Reverberation:** Project will institute a sustainable infrastructure for partners and other religious institutions to form and engage diverse audiences within their networks and local contexts on an ongoing basis.



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Next Steps

- Fall 2026: Virtual Formation Sessions – Intergenerational engagement, interculturality & synodality
- December 2026: Lilly grants announced
- March 2027: Member/Leader discernment at National Conference
- 2027: Process co-design with institutional stakeholders



Mission to Love—Proclaiming, Living and Sharing the Gospel Today

FALL SPEAKER SERIES





Session One:

Called to Commission: Intergenerational Engagement

timone davis, Ph.D.

Loyola University Chicago

Thursday, October 29

2pm EDT / 1pm CDT / 11am PDT





Session Two:

Called to Cooperation: Intercultural Communication

Dcn. John Chikature, Ph.D.

University of the Incarnate Word /
Mexican American Catholic College

Thursday, November 5

2pm EDT / 1pm CDT / 11am PDT





Session Three:

**Called to Communion:
What Synodality Means for Mission
Today**

Diana Marin

St. Ignatius Parish, San Francisco, CA

(formerly of the Catholic Climate
Covenant)

Tuesday, November 10

2pm EDT / 1pm CDT / 11am PDT



Church of the Sheaves: Global Mission Formation Project

The Church of the Sheaves: Equipping the Saints for Mission as Gift Exchange in the Catholic Church is a global initiative of the **Dicastery for Evangelization**, together with selected Catholic universities, ecclesial institutions, and mission partners across the five continents.

Rooted in the synodal vision articulated in the *Final Document of the Synod on Synodality*, this initiative seeks to form pastoral leaders—bishops, priests, religious, catechists, lay ecclesial ministers, and faith educators—in a renewed missionary paradigm centered on **gift exchange, interculturality, and mutual reciprocity among the local Churches**. Its horizon is nothing less than the transformation of Catholic parishes and dioceses into genuine spiritual homes where all experience themselves as fully welcomed—as *firstborn children of God* (cf. Rev 1:5).



Church of the Sheaves (cont'd)

At the heart of this initiative is the creation of a **Global Massive Open Online Course (MOOC)** titled ***Gift Exchange: The Church of the Sheaves***. This visionary project embodies Pope Francis's synodal call for a Church that listens, learns, and journeys together as the pilgrim People of God. In harmony with Pope Leo's insistence on bridge-building in a fractured world, the MOOC aims to form a generation of missionary disciples capable of discerning the cries of the poor and the earth, and prepared to transform structures that diminish human dignity and wound ecclesial communion.



Church of the Sheaves: Work to Date & Next Steps

- Fundraising: \$25K raised to date with the generous support of USCMA members
- MOOC Input and Development: Listening sessions and direct outreach for content contributions for Missionary Sending and Reception module (theory, theology, formation best practice and resources, reception and integration)
- **October 22-24, 2026: Vatican conference and audience with the Holy Father**
- 2027: Continued program development



Church of the Sheaves : Needs

- We are in immediate need of additional case studies/resources related to:
 - Accompanying missionaries during their time on mission
 - Preparing communities to receive missionaries in a spirit of spiritual and cultural exchange
- Continued fundraising needs
 - Sending delegates from Africa/Latin America to Rome
 - Development of the course material and website



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 - Questions & Comments
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USCMA National Conference 2027

ONE IN CHRIST, UNITED IN MISSION: CO-BUILDING THE CHURCH OUR WORLD NEEDS



MARCH 2-4, 2027



DARIEN, IL

Register today: www.uscatholicmission.org



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CHURCH OUR
WORLD NEEDS**



DARIEN, IL



MARCH 2-4, 2027



www.uscatholicmission.org

ABOUT THE VENUE

The Spiritual Center is located on a 40-acre Carmelite Campus featuring a meditation garden with Stations of the Cross, the National Shrine and Museum of St. Thérèse of Lisieux, and a Carmelite Gift Shop. Conveniently located, the Spiritual Center is accessible by car/ride share from both O'Hare and Midway airports. Fifteen minutes from the Westmont Metro Station (green line to/from Chicago Union Station). The Spiritual Center offers 58 rooms – each with double occupancy capacity. Please register early so you and your companions receive priority accommodations before the Spiritual Center becomes unavailable due to sellout.



Details & Highlights

- Conference begins at 3pm on Tuesday, March 2 and ends at 1pm on Thursday, March 4
- Keynote and contemplative dialogue on the themes of the 2026 World Mission Message: *One in Christ, United in Mission*
- Keynote and contemplative dialogue on the encyclical letter *Magnifica Humanitas* from a mission perspective
- Synodal dialogue, collaborative sessions and mutual discernment
- Intentional networking opportunities & affinity conversations
- Guided Tour of the National Shrine and Museum of St. Thérèse of Lisieux
- Daily Mass





Tracey Lamont, Ph.D.
Speaker

Dr. Lamont serves as Director of the Loyola Institute for Ministry and Associate Professor of Religious Education and Young Adult Ministry at Loyola University New Orleans, where she holds the Marjorie R. Morvant Distinguished Professorship in Theology & Ministry. In addition to her teaching and scholarship, Tracey facilitates and engages in synodal listening processes with a variety of national and local communities.



**Rev. Paul Lininger,
OFM Conv.**
Speaker

A member of the USCMA Board of Directors, Fr. Paul serves as Director of Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation for the Our Lady of Angels Province of the Conventual Franciscan Friars. A clinical psychologist, Fr. Paul served previously on the faculties of several universities and colleges and served for six years as the Executive Director of the Conference of Major Superiors of Men (CMSM).



Registration (includes meals)

General Admission

\$400 double occupancy

\$450 single occupancy

\$225 commuter

USCMA Members

~~\$400~~ \$325 double occupancy

~~\$450~~ \$375 single occupancy

~~\$225~~ \$150 commuter

Learn more & register at USCatholicMission.org



Sponsorship

SPONSORSHIP BENEFITS	MISSION SUPPORTER \$400	MISSION PATRON \$900	MISSION PARTNER \$2,400
VISIBILITY TO INTERNATIONAL MISSION LEADERSHIP COMMUNITY			
Listing as Sponsor in Bi-Weekly Conference Promotional Emails (Sent to All USCMA Members + Potential Attendees; Circulation 1,000+)	NAME MENTION	NAME MENTION W/ CLICKABLE LINK TO SPONSOR WEBSITE	NAME MENTION W/ CLICKABLE LINK TO SPONSOR WEBSITE
Listing as Sponsor on Conference Information & Registration Website	STANDARD LOGO W/ LINK TO WEBSITE	LARGER LOGO W/ LINK TO WEBSITE	SPECIAL LISTING AS MISSION PARTNER W/ LOGO W/ LINK TO WEBSITE
Monthly <i>ENCOUNTER</i> Newsletter Visibility (5 Issues: Nov-Mar)	STANDARD LOGO W/ LINK TO WEBSITE	LARGER LOGO W/ LINK TO WEBSITE	LARGER LOGO W/ LINK TO WEBSITE
Perpetual Presence as Sponsor on Past Programs Page of USCMA Website	—	✓	✓
Dedicated 200-Word Spotlight Article in <i>ENCOUNTER</i> Newsletter (1 Issue)	—	—	✓
CONFERENCE PROGRAM ADVERTISING & RECOGNITION THROUGHOUT CONFERENCE			
Program Book Print Advertisement Size	HALF-PAGE	FULL-PAGE - GENERAL PLACEMENT	FULL-PAGE - PRIME PLACEMENT
Conference Venue & Meeting Space Signage	LOGO ON SHARED SIGNAGE	LOGO ON SHARED SIGNAGE AND KEYNOTE & DINING HALL TABLE TENTS	LOGO ON DEDICATED MISSION PARTNER SIGNS, TABLE TENTS AND DIGITAL SCREENS PRIOR TO KEYNOTE PRESENTATIONS
CONFERENCE PASSES & DIRECT ATTENDEE ACCESS			
Full Conference Passes (or Gifted 'Missionary Scholarships')	—	1 PASS	2 PASSES
Exclusive Named Sponsorship of Key Conference Meal or Break	—	—	✓
Placement of Sponsor Materials on Dedicated Mission Partner Table	—	—	✓
Choice of Printed Sponsor Materials Placed in Attendee Rooms or on Keynote Dinner Tables	—	—	✓





Resource Updates



COMING SOON!

Online Member Portal

- Discreet logins for members of your organization/community
- Access exclusive formation resources & program discounts
- Update your membership status, organizational profile & contact info
- Renew online
- Submit upcoming events & opportunities to the shared calendar
- Locate other members based on categories such as mission regions and ministerial focus (member directory)
- Access internal USCMA documents such as reports & meeting summaries





USCMA Membership Directory Information Form - Organizations

Please complete this form to provide or update your information for the USCMA's membership directory. Your responses will help us connect, support and promote our members and maintain accurate and up-to-date records.

Networking Tool: Member Directory

- [USCMA Membership Directory Information Form - Organizations – Fill out form](#)
- [US Catholic Mission Association Membership Directory Form - Individuals – Fill out form](#)



Questions & Final Comments



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Closing Prayer