



# CATHOLIC LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

*The international community of choice for today's librarians*

March 26, 2014

Greetings Catholic Library Association Members,

On behalf of the Executive Board, I am inviting you to be part of a discussion about the future of CLA. I have communicated with you over the past year, both in President's Letters in *Catholic Library World* and my introduction to the Membership Survey, that we are actively discussing the Association's future. For 93 years, CLA has provided professional development and networking opportunities, publications, scholarships, and services. Today we remain the only Catholic voice for libraries and archives at all levels- children's, high school, academic, parish and community libraries. In the mid-60s, when the Association was responsible for providing training for federally-sponsored library grants, CLA had over 4,000 members. Today, we have fewer than 400 personal members. Membership dues, both personal and institutional, have been our primary source of income.

Several steps have been taken in recent years to ensure economic vitality (see appendix). The *Catholic Periodical and Literature Index* was sold in 2011. That same year, two office spaces were merged and we realized we could not sustain a full-time salaried Executive Director. Revenue from membership, conventions, and training, such as the archives workshop, helps, but we are not breaking even. Since moving the headquarters to Chicago, the average operating loss has been \$40,000 a year.

Given the current situation, the Board is carefully reviewing multiple data sources, such as our financial reports, membership trends, and the recent membership survey. In addition, we are considering several strategies for the future of the association including reducing the number of services offered, modifying the format of services, for example, moving *CLW* to an online journal, changing the structure of the association, and even closing the national office and transitioning the four CLA Sections to like-minded associations. It is important that our members are aware of these considerations and have opportunities to comment and offer suggestions. **We will set aside the majority of the Business Meeting on April 23<sup>rd</sup> at 4:30 in Pittsburgh for discussion, in addition to offering a separate conference call and Google+ Hangout session.**

One of the most important benefits of CLA is the opportunity for networking and fellowship with other members. I personally reviewed every one of the hundreds of comments on the surveys and many members mentioned the friendships and camaraderie they have resulting from CLA. We invite all of our members and friends to join the discussion. We want your active participation and prayers over the next six months as we discuss the future of CLA.

In Service,

Sara Baron, EdD  
President, CLA

<b>BE PART OF THE DISCUSSION!</b>		
Google+ Hangouts 4/16/14 @ 11am ET	Conference Call 4/17/14 @ 3pm ET	Annual Convention 4/23/14 @ 4:30-5:45pm ET
<p><i>To sign-up for a meeting or for more information, please see <a href="http://www.cathla.org">www.cathla.org</a> or contact <a href="mailto:sbaron@regent.edu">sbaron@regent.edu</a>. Additional virtual meetings will be scheduled if needed.</i></p>		

**CLA Executive Board & Finance Committee Actions to  
Save Expenses and Enhance Revenue  
2010 to the Present**

**Cost Savings:**

1. Stopped printing abridged CPLI (Jan 2010)
2. Froze employee raises for FY10-11
3. Consolidated office spaces by relocating Headquarters to Chicago, closing Pittsfield office (July 2011)
4. Eliminated the full-time Executive Director position (July 2011)
5. Increased membership rates, categories of membership (2011)
6. Sold CPLI (September 2011)
7. Eliminated Executive Board travel, moving to a conference call meeting format. (2011)
8. Suspended awards (Bouwhuis in 2012)
9. Renegotiated CLW printing costs and later changed printers for CLW (2010, 2012)
10. Moved to a half-time administrative assistant position (Fall 2013)

**Revenue Generation:**

1. Archives workshops
2. Heritage Fund
3. Annual grant recipient from the H.E. Wilson Foundation for continuing education.
4. Several new publications
5. Sponsorships for convention receptions
6. Enhanced collaboration with NCEA to increase participation in conference meal events
7. Hired advertising consultant for CLW, spike in revenue as a result