

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

My letter to you this month is a little shorter than usual because **our region is humming with activity!**

- We are **finishing up visitations for EVERY fraternity in our region**. Between November 2014 and September 2017, every fraternity will have been visited at least once. Some have already been visited twice.
- Almost every fraternity is **up-to-date with their elections**--just a few more need to be completed.
- **EVERY** fraternity minister has submitted their **Annual Reports and statistics**. Almost every fraternity has paid its **Fair Share**.
- We have recently submitted our **report to the National Fraternity**. (This is a compilation of all the reports sent in by your local ministers including statistics. It is a big job that can only be accomplished with the help of the local ministers.)
- We have invited **every inquirer, candidate and Formation Team** in the region to attend a **Cluster formation class** on the *Prayer Life of the Secular Franciscan*. The first class held in May at 96th Street in Manhattan was a big success with more than 50 people in attendance. The **next session (same topic)** will be held in **Paterson, NJ, on JUNE 24th**. Please remember to **RSVP** to our Regional formation Director, Ed Wojciechowski, if you plan to attend.
- We have started an **outreach program for our retired friars**. So far, the committee has met twice and is busy sending cards and some hand-made items to the friars. If you are interested in being part of this group, please let me know.
- We now have a regional **JPIC animator**. If you are interested in serving on this committee, please let us know.
- We are still looking for someone (with creative ideas!) to head up our **Vocations Committee**.
- St. Conrad Fraternity in Hoboken recently invited me to join them as they celebrated the **Rite of Admission**. **Five** new candidates were admitted with **5 more** to come in July! This is our **first all-Spanish-speaking fraternity in NJ**.
- The counts of **candidates and inquirers** submitted by local ministers for 2016 **are way up**. Good work with attracting vocations! We are **all** walking, talking **vocations brochures**. Wear your TAU and be ready to tell others what it means and what the Order means to you.
- Also, we would love to have some folks volunteer to brainstorm ideas for outreach to **youth/young adults**. In July a member of our region will be attending an information gathering session on youth in St. Louis sponsored by the National Fraternity.
- Our **regional retreat at Mt. Alvernia** is coming up on **August 4-6**. Fr. Nick Mormando, OFM Cap., Provincial Minister of Stigmata Province and Bro. Rudolph Pieretti, OFM Cap., Provincial Secretary, will be our speakers. Right now plans are being made to make this our best retreat ever. (The registration form is available in this issue and on our regional website.)
- The **National Formation Commission** will be having a workshop in St. Louis in August. I will be attending as one of the presenters and Ed will attend as our Regional Formation Director.

- Our **regional elections** will be held on November 11th. All nominations should have been submitted by May 31st. If you were nominated, please ask the Holy Spirit to guide you in your discernment of whether or not you will accept nomination.

Please take note that all of the above is only possible through **collaboration and cooperation**. This is the hallmark of Franciscans. **Face to face gathering in fraternity** (whether it is a fraternity council, a regional council, the national council, a formation group, or a local fraternity) keeps us working and praying together. As Franciscans, we put our individual agendas aside and move together toward the same goal--**relationship with God, with one another and with all of creation**.

Thank you for your continued prayers. We are praying for you!

Peace and blessings,
Diane