

# Sharing The Vision

## News from the National Executive Council (NEC)

*by Jan Parker, National Secretary*

### Annual Report Improvements

When it comes to filling out reports, we're always open to making things easier. Earlier this year we worked to improve the demographics section of the Annual Report. One area that's always a little confusing is the list of categories describing the status of our members – whether active, excused, lapsed, etc. After much discussion, and some help from our National Database expert Bob Herbelin, we agreed to the list printed below.

Are these choices of categories now simpler and clearer? Well, here's a test. Let's say you were asked to put each of your local fraternity members into one of these categories. Could you do that fairly easily? Don't miss the three hints given below. (For more information, and some interesting reading, please refer to Article 18.7 in our National Statutes, and Articles 53-60 of our OFS General Constitutions.)

**For your fraternity, as of December 31<sup>st</sup> of the previous year, please list the number each category**

- Active / Excused Professed
- Candidates
- Inquirers
- Aspirants (Those in Orientation)
- Affiliates

**For your fraternity, please list the number occurring during previous year**

- Deaths
- Lapsed (No longer participating in fraternity)
- Temporary Withdrawal (Voluntary from fraternity)
- Definitive Withdrawal (Voluntary from fraternity and the Order)
- Suspended (Removed from fraternity)
- Dismissed (Removed from fraternity and the Order)

#### *Hints:*

- (1) Professed members of your fraternity who are excused from attendance (homebound, etc.) are still counted in the category of Active Members. Please don't categorize them as lapsed.
- (2) Professed members of your fraternity who are unable to contribute financially are still Active Members. Please don't categorize them as suspended or lapsed.
- (3) Members who have transferred out of your fraternity during the calendar year are not included in your fraternity's count; they are counted by the fraternity to which they belong as of December 31<sup>st</sup> of the previous year.

To help determine more clearly the types of Spiritual Assistants who serve our local fraternities, these category choices were also revised as follows:

#### **Spiritual Assistants**

- Franciscan Friars
- Franciscan Sisters
- Secular Franciscans (OFS, including OFS Priests and Deacons)
- Others (Non-Franciscan)

Our hope is that these improvements will result in more accurate reporting and a better understanding of trends in membership and spiritual assistance from year to year.

## National Guidelines on NAFRA Webpage – Coming Soon

In just the past month we received several requests for copies of the recently approved NAFRA Prison Ministry Guidelines. Did you know that “Prison Ministry” is just one of the topics addressed in our National Guidelines? Over the years the National Fraternity has approved guidelines on a variety of topics such as “Guidelines for Chapters”, “Fraternity Internal Controls and Treasury Guidelines”, “Use of National Fraternity Mailing List” and “Criteria for OFS Scholarships”. These guidelines and others are available by request from the National Secretary, but our goal is to make them more readily available for viewing or printout via the NAFRA website. We’ll be sure to announce when this happens.

## Spanish Translations Update

It is now possible for individual OFS members to receive a Spanish translation of each issue of the TAU-USA *in the mail*. For information please see the inside front cover of this issue, just under the Table of Contents. A Spanish translation of *Franciscan Journey* is now being reviewed, and the NEC is exploring cost and publication options.

## Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation (JPIC) Commission “How-to-Be” Guide

JPIC Commission Chair, Carolyn Townes has developed a handbook for Animators of Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation. In Carolyn’s words, “This handbook is a “how-to-BE” guide more than a “how-to-DO” guide. I believe most people know what to do, but need more guidance with how to BE as they are doing the work of peace and justice. Organized according to the Four Pillars of the Franciscan Way of Life: Spirituality, Formation, Fraternity and Apostolate, the Handbook will complement the JPIC Chapter in the FUN Manual and become a valuable resource for initial and ongoing formation.”

## Honoring our Friars

The NEC agreed to a proposal that we honor deceased friars who have given significant service to the OFS by sending a note of appreciation, a Mass card and a \$100 donation to their province or designated charity. News of each friar’s passing and some history of their service will be shared with the National Fraternity.

## Upcoming National Events

- **July 10-13, 2014 Summer Seminar** at St. Francis University in Loretto, Pennsylvania. This year’s topic is “Spiritual Assistance”
- **August 21-24, 2014 National Retreat** at Our Lady of the Snows in Belleville, Illinois. Retreat will be directed by Br. Bill Short OFM, with a tentative theme of “Spirituality of Servant Leadership” (*Kenosis of Service*). This retreat is open to the following members and their spouses: National Fraternity Council (Regional Ministers, or delegates, and NEC), NAFRA Commission and Committee members, NAFRA Appointees, members of Regional Councils and NAFRA Alum. This retreat was planned by request of the National Fraternity Council, and has no NAFRA funding.
- **October 21-26 National Fraternity (NAFRA) Chapter** at Montserrat Jesuit Retreat House in Lake Dallas, Texas.

## CIOFS Events

- August 17-21, 2014 - International Assembly of Franciscan Youth in Croatia
- November 1-7, 2014 - International Fraternity Elective Chapter