

Sharing **T**he Vision

April 2016

News from the National Executive Council (NEC)

By Jan Parker, OFS

Thank you for your prayers for the National Executive Council (NEC) and for your wonderful support! The newly elected NEC gathered for our first meeting in Albany, New York, Dec. 3-6, 2015, blessed with wonderful hospitality from the Sisters of St. Joseph. We prayed, shared and worked hard together. We continued our work via conference calls on January 6 & 28, and February 11, 2016. Here are some highlights from those meetings.

2016 Quinquennial Q Scholarships

The NEC voted to allocate up to \$10,000 to assist those who wish to attend the Q. The assistance will be strictly need-based. OFS members can apply individually (and confidentially) directly to the National Treasurer. Forms are on the website. The NEC encourages Regional Executive Councils to work with their Fraternities to provide funding prior to applying to NAFRA for assistance.

Room at the Q

The Renaissance St. Louis Airport Hotel, the home of the 2016 Q, has enough room for 600 attendees – *but only if everyone books EARLY*. The best way to insure that there are rooms for all who wish to attend is *early registration and early booking of your hotel room*. We cannot guarantee room at the Q for those registering after June 9.

Q Invitations

Letters of invitation to the 2016 Quinquennial will be sent to the 1st Order and TOR Provincials and Provincial Spiritual Assistants. **The NEC encourages all Regions to invite their Regional Spiritual Assistant(s) to the Q and to cover their expenses.**

2015-2018 Appointments of Commission and Committee Chairs

At our December 2015 meeting the NEC made several decisions regarding our National Commissions and Committees. JPIC Chair Carolyn Townes and Formation Chair Mary Anne Lenzi were each re-appointed to a three-year term ending at our Elective Chapter in the fall of 2018.

National Committee Chairs and those individually appointed for specific tasks were re-appointed to a one-year term, ending on December 31, 2016.

Youth and Young Adult Commission

After extensive dialogue and prayerful discernment, the NEC decided to spend at least a year of continuing discernment to determine, together with the National Fraternity, the direction our youth efforts are to follow in the future. The appointment of a Youth Commission Chair will be deferred until this discernment has been completed and the National Fraternity has voted on the recommendations.

Guidelines for the National Commissions and Committees

Guidelines for the National Commissions and Committees are under review. These guidelines cover the selection and appointment process, meeting and reporting requirements, and budgetary concerns for our Commissions and Committees. We have requested input from past and current Commission and Committee Chairs and from the members of the National Fraternity Council.

Conference of National Spiritual Assistants (CNSA) New Members

Br. Bob Brady, OFM, remains on the CNSA as President-in-Turn. Joining him as National Spiritual Assistants are Fr. Christopher Panagoplos, TOR, and Br. Alexander Escalera, OFM Cap. Welcome, good brothers!

Regions Encouraged to Build Relationships with Friars (Provincial Outreach Project)

The NEC strongly encourages Regional Fraternities to build relationships and increase communication with Provincial Ministers and Provincial Spiritual Assistants (PSA). The NEC is happy to assist you should you have any questions about how to do this. Opportunities for outreach: send hard copies of your Region's newsletter to each Provincial, each PSA and each friary in your Region; invite and inform them of Regional events (Chapters, Retreats, etc.); submit a copy of your Annual Report. Individual local fraternities may wish to send a copy of their own Annual Report to the PSA to which their fraternity is bonded.

Vocations Committee / Social Media

Vocations Committee Chair Jane DeRose-Bamman has been facilitating monthly conference calls to discuss vocations and use of social media. Send your ideas her way!

Spanish and Korean Translations of Formation Books

The Spanish and Korean versions of *The Franciscan Journey* by Fr. Lester Bach are scheduled to be printed during the first quarter of this year.

NAFRA Traveler Guidelines

The NEC has approved an updated version of the *NAFRA Traveler Guidelines – Policy on Reimbursement of Travel-related Expenses*. This document is posted on the NAFRA website.

H2O Project

JPIC Chair Carolyn Townes is leading our annual Lenten outreach — the H2O Project. Carolyn sent information on this project to all Regional Ministers and JPIC Animators on February 7, 2016. Donations to the H2O project are collected throughout the year.

NEC Calendar

The NEC will meet in Atlanta, Georgia, March 4-6, 2016. A meeting is also planned for July 4-5, 2016, in St. Louis after the Quinquennial.

MercyHour – A Year of Mercy Opportunity

Our beloved former National Minister Tom Bello, OFS, has teamed up with John Clem, OFS, to produce a wonderful website called "MercyHour." One feature is a daily "MercyHour" email meditation that will be sent to you upon request. See how to sign up by going to the "About" page on the website: <http://mercyhour.org/>

