



RELIGIOUS FORMATION CONFERENCE

February 23, 2010

Dear Members of the RFC and LCWR,

Given the concern that both our organizations share about the topic of vocations, we believe that it is timely for us to come together and collaboratively encourage you to review again *The Study on Recent Vocations to Religious Life in the United States* that was conducted in 2009 by the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate (CARA) for the National Religious Vocation Conference (NRVC).

The study designed to identify and understand the characteristics, attitudes, and experiences of the women and men who are entering Religious Life today also identified characteristics and best practices of religious institutes that are successfully attracting new candidates and retaining new members (November 17, 2009 Summary of Major Findings). The complete study can be reviewed at www.NRVC.net. The NRVC is conducting follow-up work on the study and has posted reflection questions on its website that may prove useful as you reflect on this critical issue. We encourage you to use your reflection to move you to action.

As formators, canonically elected leaders, leadership teams and formators, we strongly encourage you to continue, within and across congregations, further study, dialog and prayer regarding this significant NRVC/CARA study and its implications for the future of religious life in the United States.

As organizations serving women and men living consecrated life, we invite you, our members, to share with us the fruits of your prayer and conversations: questions that arise, ideas and projects you may have implemented that can be shared with others who are also taking action. Such information will be helpful to us as we continue to discern in the power of God's prophetic Spirit how we might best serve you as you continue to embrace religious life and mission for the sake of our Church and world. Please feel free to contact either one or both

of us as you take up this challenging effort with this new information that has surfaced as a result of the study.

Be assured of our support and prayer as we celebrate the gift that Consecrated Life is to our Church and world.

Sincerely,



Jane Burke, SSND
LCWR, Executive Director



Violet Grennan, mfc
RFC, Executive Director