



December 1, 2018

Dear Sisters and Brothers of the Religious Formation Conference,

The rapidly baring trees, recent cold snap and snow, and shortening of sunlight at both ends of the day are sure signs that winter will soon be upon us. Ironically, as light reaches its lowest ebb at solstice, it gradually begins to lengthen. This paradoxical solar journey is reflected in our Advent readings of light in darkness and peace in discord.

Our world, our country, and our Church, too, seem to be in times of increasing darkness and despair. How desperately we long for the Light of the World, the Prince of Peace to be born in our lives once again!

A sure sign of hope in my life is participating in the RFC Life Commitment Program each year. This past year twenty-two women and men gathered for eight days of input, process, prayer, and fun as they continued to discern their response to God's call to perpetual commitment. The group assembled a video of their time together that is available on our website.

These women and men, and their sisters and brothers in other congregations are not only signs of hope; they are the next generation of religious life of which we are all a part. While they have joined individual orders, they are part of all of us and they are *our* future. We share the responsibility for their formation. In this way we, today's religious, participate in the common good: by *together* inviting, forming, and sustaining the newest generations of religious.

The mission of the RFC is focused on the initial formation of new religious, the ongoing formation of all religious, and the preparation of formators for the newest discerners. We serve all of religious life in this important mission.

**In this light we invite you to renew your membership in the RFC. Your participation in the mission of the Conference not only serves your members, but also prepares the generation of religious who will follow.**

Earlier today religious communities' primary representative received a *membership renewal notice* by email with a link and instructions on how to renew online. If your community did not receive this and/or needs assistance with the renewal process please let us know and we'd be happy to assist (contact information below).

**Membership in the Conference is by religious congregation or government unit. Thus, upon your renewal, every member of your congregation/unit is a member of the RFC and enjoys the many benefits of membership.**

The two persons designated on the online renewal form will receive all RFC materials directly. Others in your congregation/unit can also receive these materials directly for an additional fee. Each member congregation/unit is assigned a unique username and password; we ask representatives to circulate these to vowed members so that all can take direct advantage of the scores of resources on the RFC website.

If you have questions and/or need assistance, please contact Kathy Kandefer, BVM by email at [kkandefer@relforcon.org](mailto:kkandefer@relforcon.org) or via phone at 773.675.8362. It will be helpful for us to receive renewals by *January 31, 2019*.

We wish you blessings in abundance in this Advent season and look forward to serving you in 2019. May the Light of the World bring life, peace and truth to our world.

Sincerely,



*Sister Ellen Dauwer, SC*

Ellen Dauwer, SC  
Executive Director