

FRATERNAL LEADER



A Message from Sr. Vice President John Borgen

Dear Chapter Leader,

Pope Francis has proclaimed an Extraordinary Jubilee Year of Mercy from the Feast of the Immaculate Conception, December 8, 2015, until November 20, 2016, the Feast of Christ the King. During this yearlong celebration, we are encouraged to practice the corporal and spiritual works of mercy to benefit our neighbors in need. These works include, among other things, to feed the hungry, shelter the homeless, visit the sick, and pray for the living and the dead.

During this Holy Year, we are also invited to strengthen our relationship with the Lord through frequent reception of the sacraments, particularly the sacraments of Reconciliation and Holy Eucharist. And churches with a special "Holy Door" have been designated as

places of pilgrimage during the Year of Mercy. Our next *Member Magazine* will feature more information on these Holy Doors and the Year of Mercy.


Catholic Financial Life is fortunate to have many chapters that currently sponsor activities which support our common cause, to serve the needs of the poor, particularly through our national partnership with The Society of St. Vincent de Paul. But our goal for this Jubilee Year of Mercy is to achieve 100% participation from all chapters. Included in this brief edition of *Fraternal Leader* are some ideas for activities your chapter can organize to serve the poor and to also help nourish the spiritual life of members in your area. We hope that you will include both types of activities in your plans for 2016.

Next year, the Fraternal Department will be sponsoring activities to support the Year of Mercy, including another Habitat for Humanity project in Milwaukee, a mission trip to the Dominican Republic, for 18-39 year-olds, and the annual Friends of the Poor Walk for the Society of St. Vincent de Paul. We're also finalizing our calendar of regional member activities for 2016. Plans are underway for another round of

chapter leader workshops, to provide training, networking opportunities, and the chance to exchange ideas for enhancing our chapter system. More information will be sent to chapters as dates and locations are confirmed. We have a busy and exciting year ahead!

The New Testament tells us, "As each one has received a gift, use it to serve one another as good stewards of God's varied grace" (1 Peter 4:10). Thank you for sharing your gifts of time, talent, and treasure in service to our members as a chapter leader. May God bless you and your family with health and happiness in 2016!

Fraternally,


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President Bill O'Toole with members of the Board of Directors at a recent Habitat for Humanity project in Milwaukee.

Chapter Activity Ideas to Support the Year of Mercy

Corporal Works of Mercy

- Feed the hungry
- Give drink to the thirsty
- Clothe the naked
- Shelter the homeless
- Visit the sick
- Visit the imprisoned
- Bury the dead

Participating in the corporal works of mercy is an excellent way of living the Gospel during this Extraordinary Jubilee Year of Mercy. The very nature of our chapter outreach efforts fits nicely into this call to action proclaimed by Pope Francis. Here are just a few suggested events that bring to life the works of mercy:

"Clothe the naked, feed the hungry, and give drink to the thirsty" by holding a clothing drive or collecting nonperishable food items for the local Society of St. Vincent de Paul or another group in your area, should the nearest St. Vincent de Paul be too far from your hometown. Volunteering at a soup kitchen and knitting warm hats and scarves are other worthwhile activities. Holding a Match Fund event fulfills these particular works of mercy as

well. (Remember the additional \$500 in Match Funds available for the Society of St. Vincent de Paul and similar groups.)

"Pray for the Living and the Dead" is a simple one. Sponsor a Mass for living and deceased members in your chapter. Dedicating a Mass of this kind can easily precede a member celebration and that way the entire event can be categorized a "religious" activity according to the funding formula.

"Visit the Sick" can be easily attained by holding a party, bingo, or singalong in a nursing home. Some chapters bake cookies for shut-ins as well. Check with a local skilled nursing facility in your area to see what their needs might be.

"Bury the Dead" by attending a wake or funeral as a chapter for a Catholic Financial Life member. Nothing gives comfort to a family as much as knowing others care, especially when they are unified by a common bond.

"Shelter the Homeless" by participating as a chapter in a local walk-a-thon that raises funds for the homeless. For example, Catholic Financial Life is a national sponsor for the annual Society of St. Vincent de Paul walk held over the last weekend in September.

Spiritual Works of Mercy

- Instruct the ignorant
- Counsel the doubtful
- Admonish sinners
- Bear wrongs patiently
- Forgive offenses willingly
- Comfort the afflicted
- Pray for the living and the dead



If you have any questions regarding topics in this newsletter, please contact:

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