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February 11, 2023
World Day of the Sick

Your Excellency,

In Pope Francis' message for this 31st World Day of the Sick, he shares that the sick "are at the center of God's people, and the Church advances together with them as a sign of a humanity in which everyone is precious and no one should be discarded or left behind." Members of the National Association of Catholic Chaplains (NACC) have had the privilege and blessing to collaborate in the Church's mission to serve the sick, the imprisoned and most vulnerable since 1965. In moments when there are no answers, no cures, we can provide our brothers and sisters with compassion, care and share the love of Christ.

Our NACC members are grateful for the leadership of our new Episcopal Liaison, Bishop Jeffrey R. Haines, Auxiliary Bishop of Milwaukee, Wisconsin. They also value the guidance provided by our Episcopal Advisory Council, representing the USCCB, to best live out the Church's ministry of healing and accompaniment.

This has been a year of transition for the NACC as we welcomed a new Episcopal Liaison, said goodbye to tenured staff and re-envisioned the future of our organization to meet the challenges and needs of our times. We continue to work toward a chaplaincy that welcomes a new generation of spiritual care providers and chaplains, grows service in other fields of pastoral ministry, and fully integrates the value of diversity and inclusion into our infrastructure.

We highlight four key initiatives NACC is developing to support those in your (arch)diocese designated to oversee and/or provide direct pastoral care ministry in your parishes. They include:

- **Initiative 1: *NACC Certified Associate Chaplain (CAC) Certification.*** We are expending a great deal of effort to incorporate into NACC many of the Pastoral Care Workers who are not or may never be on the career path to becoming a Board Certified Chaplain. They can be ministers in Health Care, Prison, Parish, Diocesan, Corporate, Police, Fire, and would be great assets to the NACC but in a different capacity.
- **Initiative 2: *NACC Catholic Partners in Pastoral Care Program and Curriculum.*** We have established a 12-month timeline for the completion of this project. In 2022 we obtained the necessary resources to provide the program in English and Spanish for all dioceses engaged in the formation of volunteers, clergy and staff in their Pastoral Care and Outreach ministries. Our new Director of Pastoral Care and Certification, Anita Houghton, joined us in January 2023. We ask that you keep Anita in your prayers as she incorporates her talent and skillset within the NACC team, and specifically to the Catholic Partners in Pastoral Care Program and Curriculum. Please don't hesitate to contact Anita at ahoughton@nacc.org with any ideas, feedback, or recommended resources. We truly believe that, in partnership and collaboration with you, NACC will create a comprehensive program that will meet the needs of our dioceses throughout the country.

- **Initiative 3: *Development*.** We have started our initial efforts to establish financial resources for NACC's growth and development through grants and other fundraising endeavors. It has always been a desire of NACC to develop a system and process by which we can identify and apply for grants that will enable NACC to become a greater force in promoting Catholic Pastoral Care through our profession and our Church.
- **Initiative 4: *Catholic Prison Ministry Coalition*.** We are pleased to announce that the Catholic Prison Ministry Coalition (CPMC), with whom we have been in partnership, will be moving into 2023 as its own non-profit organization.

We are providing you with the list of NACC members who serve in and/or are employed by institutions in your (arch)diocese. Please remember:

1. This list does not include those who are retired or those who only reside in your diocese.
2. Please be sure that all members on your list have been fully vetted through your safe-environment program and background check process.
3. Please let me know if you have any questions or concerns about your member list.

If you do not have a list enclosed with this letter it means that currently there are no NACC members serving in your (arch)diocese.

On behalf of the leaders and members of the NACC, we remain deeply grateful for your continued spiritual and financial support. Please remember that our members can be resources for you and your (arch)diocese. While they serve the Church where they are employed as spiritual care providers and chaplains, parishes and diocesan programs also utilize them to help equip parish ministers to visit the sick and the imprisoned, and provide sessions on advanced directives, bereavement, and other pastoral care topics.

If there are other ways the NACC can support you or respond to a concern, please contact me at ericacohenmoore@nacc.org, (425) 949-9956 or please contact Bishop Jeffrey R. Haines at bishophaines@archmil.org, (414) 769-3594.

In the words of Pope Francis, "We are all fragile and vulnerable, and need that compassion which knows how to pause, approach, heal, and raise up." NACC members are committed to living out the call of their own baptism, to accompany the vulnerable and walk with those who have been discarded or living on the margins.

In Christ's ministry,



Erica Cohen Moore
Executive Director

cc: Bishop Jeffrey R. Haines

Enclosure NACC Member list (if applicable)