



Secular Franciscan Order Our Lady of the Angels Regional Fraternity

February 2, 2012

Dear Fraternity Minister,

May the Lord give you Peace!

I write to you on a matter of serious urgency. As you are probably aware, the USCCB has recently issued a strong condemnation of the action of the Federal government which would force religious institutions to provide contraceptives, abortifacients and sterilization procedures by means of their health insurance coverage for employees in our Catholic schools, hospitals and other Catholic institutions. This government ruling represents a violation of Catholics' consciences and a serious erosion of the freedom of religion guaranteed by the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution. We join the US Bishops in their strong condemnation of this ruling and urge you and your fraternity members to contact your representatives in Congress to act to overturn this unjust violation of religious liberty. You may find more information on the issue and Congressional representatives contact information by visiting the USCCB website at: www.usccb.org/conscience. Attached for your information, please find a copy of a letter sent recently by Archbishop John J. Myers, Archbishop of Newark on this subject as well as a copy of the letter written by Cardinal-elect Timothy Dolan, Archbishop of New York which appeared in the Wall Street Journal. Please do what you can to act quickly on this matter and join us in prayer that this injustice may be overturned and that religious liberty, a founding principle of our country, may be respected.

Fraternally and gratefully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ronald L. Pihokker". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Ronald L. Pihokker, OFS
Regional Minister