



September 17, 2013
Sacred Stigmata of St. Francis of Assisi

Dear Brothers and Sisters:

Peace and all good!

The Provincial Council and I are pleased to announce that the Province has again been accredited by Praesidium, Inc. for our policies, practices and procedures to prevent and effectively respond to the abuse of minors. We first achieved this distinction in September 2007 and were accredited for another three years in 2010. It is important to note that this accreditation is for five years and will run thru September 9, 2018. Notices will be sent to the bishops of the various dioceses in which we serve, as well as to our General Minister.

With the Provincial Council, I thank Amy Peterson, our OPCC Director, for shepherding us through this latest accreditation process and achieving fulfillment of the 25 standards for prevention, response, and supervision. We must also thank those who serve on our Provincial Review Board and the many other professionals in counseling, therapy, law, and risk assessment who in aid this important work.

Finally, the Council and I thank you for your help. From supporting our brothers on supervision and safety plans to cooperating with local community and ministry visitations and the interviews and site visits by Praesidium staff, to providing suggestions for the further development of our efforts in this area, you have contributed in many ways.

Even while we acknowledge this accomplishment, I ask you not to grow complacent or too weary of the journey. The Church's and indeed our wider societal understanding, willingness, and capacity to address these problems continue to evolve. Our ministry of prevention, compassion, healing, justice, and reconciliation must also continue to change and grow. Please pray that God may continue to aid us in that effort.

Yours in Christ,

John Celichowski, OFM Cap.
Provincial Minister