**2016 Retirement Fund for Religious (RFR)** [**www.retiredreligious.org**](http://www.retiredreligious.org)

Sample letter—(Arch)bishop to pastors

Once again, it is time for the annual Retirement Fund for Religious (RFR) collection. Please join me in heartfelt support of the 2016 appeal.

In remarks following the Mass that closed the Year of Consecrated Life on February 2, 2016, Pope Francis noted, “I so enjoy when I come across those elderly women and men religious with eyes that shine, because they have the flame of spiritual life alight.”1 Many of us have been blessed by this flame, whether it was the religious order priest whose example sparked our own vocation or the sister whose service to the poor lit in us a hunger for justice. Today, these same religious are aging and may need care, but they continue to share the flame through volunteer ministry or through prayer and contemplation.

Despite ongoing generosity to the annual RFR collection, numerous religious communities struggle to provide for senior members. Proceeds from the RFR offer supplemental support for bolstering retirement savings and meeting such day-to-day needs as prescription medications and nursing care. So I ask for your continued assistance in making this year’s collection a success. Consider inviting an RFR speaker to address parishioners during Mass, or make the appeal yourself. A few minutes at Mass can make a tremendous difference in donations and in the lives of thousands of senior religious.

Above all, please join me in praying for God’s continued blessing on our nation’s elderly sisters, brothers, and religious order priests.

1Pope Francis, St. Peter’s Square, February 2, 2016: https://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/homilies/2016/documents/papa-francesco\_20160202\_omelia-vita-consacrata.html