

# Retirement Fund for Religious

Sponsored by the National Religious Retirement Office

August 2018

## Dear RFR Coordinator,

The 2018 Retirement Fund for Religious (RFR) collection is approaching, and I ask your assistance in encouraging a generous response. Pages 2 and 3 of this guide offer an overview of the resources our office provides and suggestions for easy ways to use these materials to promote the appeal. **The most important step is to urge pastors to announce the RFR collection from the pulpit.**

The national collection is scheduled for **December 8–9**, although your (arch)diocese may choose to hold it on an alternate weekend. Enclosed are samples of our printed campaign materials, which are free for parishes and which you may have requested. These items are shipped approximately four to eight weeks prior to the collection date entered for your (arch)diocese in the National Collections database.

(Arch)bishops will receive a one-page resource letter that is sent electronically. The letter will include links to various promotional materials and will encourage them to distribute a letter to parishioners in support of the collection. (*See back page.*)



Please give to those who have given a lifetime.  
[retiredreligious.org](http://retiredreligious.org)



I remain extraordinarily thankful for your efforts on behalf of elderly religious and their communities, especially given the many demands on your time. Please contact our office if you have questions or need assistance. We are eager to support you in inspiring parishioners to give to those who have given a lifetime.

With gratitude,

*Sister Stephanie Still, PBVM*

Sister Stephanie Still, PBVM  
Executive Director

Enclosures (4)

## Help elderly religious

Undertaking even one or two of the following suggestions can make a big difference in Retirement Fund for Religious (RFR) collection totals and in the lives of elderly religious. A wide variety of resources are available to support your efforts. To download, visit [retiredreligious.org/materials](http://retiredreligious.org/materials) after September 1.

**Most campaign materials are available in English and Spanish.**

### 1.

#### Publicize

Raise awareness of the needs of senior religious and the importance of the upcoming collection.

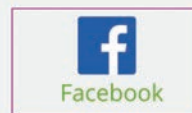
#### Resources

- Bulletin, print, and web advertisements
- Posters
- Press releases
- RFR facts page
- Social media tool kit

#### Tips

Post the (arch)bishop to parishioner letter in parish bulletins and/or (arch)diocesan media. (*See sample text, back page.*)

Promote the collection on social media. Visit [retiredreligious.org/social-media-toolkit](http://retiredreligious.org/social-media-toolkit) to download text and images.



Facebook



Instagram



Twitter

Like many Americans, religious communities face rising retirement and health-care costs and often struggle to provide for elderly members. Please support the Retirement Fund for Religious collection at Mass. Learn more at [retiredreligious.org](http://retiredreligious.org).

English / Spanish



JPEG, 723KB



## 2. Announce

Encourage pastors to announce the collection from the pulpit. Where possible, organize RFR speakers to make the appeal in parishes.

### Resources

- Bulletin advertisement
- Bulletin/pulpit announcements
- Bulletin inserts
- Coordinator communications
- Speaker guide

### Tips

Share collection information with pastors and staff. Sample coordinator communications offer prepared text for emails, newsletters, and other communications.

Try our new, quarter-page bulletin advertisement (*below*), which includes the 2018 campaign image.



## 3. Thank

Extend heartfelt thanks to all who support the collection, including RFR speakers.

### Resource

- Bulletin announcement for the week following the collection.

### Tip

In addition to parish bulletins, the thank-you bulletin announcement can be used on the (arch)diocesan website. Downloadable campaign photos are available to accompany the text. (*See sample below.*)



## Retirement Fund for Religious

**Religious give thanks.** “This money is pure gift,” writes a religious sister of the support made possible by the Retirement Fund for Religious. “It enables us to continue providing care for our elderly sisters.” Your gift to last week’s collection helps hundreds of religious communities meet pressing retirement needs while continuing to serve the People of God. Thank you for your generosity!

## Sample Letter: (Arch)bishops to Parishioners (English and Spanish)

Dear Friends in Christ,

Soon our parishes will be conducting the Retirement Fund for Religious collection. This annual appeal benefits 31,000 elderly Catholic sisters, brothers, and religious order priests—women and men who have consecrated their lives to serving God and the Church.

During the 2018 World Day for Consecrated Life, Pope Francis remarked, “There is no growth without roots and no flowering without new buds.”<sup>1</sup> This analogy has certainly born out within the life of the Church in the United States. Senior religious were the roots that established Catholic schools, hospitals, and social service agencies—allowing generations of Catholics to flourish. Today, the example of older religious inspires younger members to persevere in mission and ministry.

Yet many religious communities struggle to provide for aging members. Most elder religious served for small stipends, leaving a large gap in retirement savings. Rising health-care costs and decreased income compound the struggle to provide adequate care. Your gift to the Retirement Fund for Religious provides vital funding for medications, nursing care, and more. It also helps religious congregations implement long-range retirement strategies, even as they continue to serve the People of God.

I recognize this is but one of numerous worthy causes in need of assistance; I ask simply that you give what you can. In thanksgiving for their faithful service, please join me in supporting the Retirement Fund for Religious and in praying for God’s blessing on our nation’s elderly religious.

<sup>1</sup>Pope Francis, *Homily*, Feast of the Presentation of the Lord, February 2, 2018, [https://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/homilies/2018/documents/papa-francesco\\_20180202\\_omelia-vita-consacrata.html](https://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/homilies/2018/documents/papa-francesco_20180202_omelia-vita-consacrata.html).

Estimados amigos en Cristo;

Pronto nuestras parroquias llevarán a cabo la colecta anual del Fondo para la Jubilación de Religiosos. Esta campaña anual beneficia a más de 31,000 hermanas, hermanos y sacerdotes católicos de órdenes religiosas – mujeres y hombres que han dedicado su vida en servicio a los demás.

El Papa Francisco, durante la Jornada Mundial de la Vida Consagrada en 2018, destacó que “no hay crecimiento sin raíces y no hay florecimiento sin brotes nuevos.”<sup>1</sup> Esta analogía ha sido comprobada en la vida de la Iglesia en los Estados Unidos. Los miembros mayores de órdenes religiosas fueron la base de las escuelas católicas, hospitales y agencias de servicio social, y permitieron el progreso de generaciones de católicos. Hoy día el ejemplo de los religiosos mayores inspira a los miembros más jóvenes a perseverar en su misión y ministerio.

Sin embargo, muchas comunidades religiosas luchan para poder cuidar a sus miembros ancianos. La mayoría de los religiosos mayores recibieron estipendios muy bajos que dejaron una gran carencia en los fondos para su jubilación. Los crecientes costos de la atención médica y los ingresos reducidos agravan la lucha por ofrecer una atención adecuada. Su donativo al Fondo para la Jubilación de Religiosos proporciona fondos vitales para recetas médicas, enfermeros y más. También ayuda a los institutos religiosos a establecer estrategias de jubilación a largo plazo que permitan continuar sirviendo al Pueblo de Dios.

Reconozco que esto es una de muchas causas nobles en necesidad de ayuda; solo les pido que donen lo que puedan. En agradecimiento por el servicio fiel de los religiosos mayores, les pido que se unan a mí para brindar apoyo al Fondo para la Jubilación de Religiosos y rogar a Dios que derrame sus bendiciones en los religiosos de avanzada edad en nuestra nación.

<sup>1</sup>Papa Francisco, *Homilía*, Fiesta de la Presentación del Señor, 2 de febrero de 2018, [http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/es/homilies/2018/documents/papa-francesco\\_20180202\\_omelia-vita-consacrata.html](http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/es/homilies/2018/documents/papa-francesco_20180202_omelia-vita-consacrata.html).



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For campaign materials, visit:  
[retiredreligious.org/materials](http://retiredreligious.org/materials)