**2017 Retirement Fund for Religious (RFR)** [**retiredreligious.org**](http://www.retiredreligious.org)

Sample Letter—(Arch)bishops to Parishioners

Dear Friends in Christ,

Soon, our parishes will be conducting the appeal for the Retirement Fund for Religious, an annual collection that benefits more than 32,000 elderly Catholic sisters, brothers, and religious order priests.

Our senior religious are a treasure. Their dedication and hard work laid the foundation for Catholic schools, hospitals, and numerous social service organizations. Many continue in volunteer ministry today. Their ongoing prayer and witness enrich our faith in countless ways. I am grateful for the service of religious, past and present. I hope you, too, recall a sister or brother who made a positive difference in your life.

Most elder religious worked for years for small stipends, leaving a substantial gap in retirement savings. Rising health-care costs and decreased income compound the challenge to meet such day-to-day needs as medications and nursing assistance. The Retirement Fund for Religious offers financial support that helps religious communities provide loving care for older members while ensuring younger ones can continue the good works of their elders.

I understand you are asked to support many worthy causes. I invite you only to give what you can. Most importantly, please pray for God’s continued blessing on all our women and men religious. Rest assured they are praying for you!