**2018 Retirement Fund for Religious (RFR)** [**retiredreligious.org**](http://www.retiredreligious.org)

Sample letter—(Arch)bishop to pastors

It is time for the annual Retirement Fund for Religious collection, and I urge you to give it your prayerful and vocal support. Your efforts are vital to its success.

As you may know, Catholic bishops of the United States launched the collection in 1988 to address the profound lack of retirement funding among religious communities. Despite sustained generosity to the annual appeal, numerous communities still struggle to provide adequate care for aging members. In fact, just 23 of the 547 religious communities providing data to the National Religious Retirement Office are adequately funded for retirement. Collection proceeds offer these congregations financial assistance for immediate needs and underwrite resources that support long-term retirement planning and enhanced eldercare.

Perhaps you have ministered alongside a dedicated woman or man religious. A sister, brother, or religious order priest may have even influenced your own vocation. I invite you to share these experiences with parishioners, emphasizing the contributions religious have made and continue to make to our parishes, diocese, and Church. Whether you host a speaker or make the appeal yourself, please take a few minutes during Mass to highlight the collection and the needs of elderly religious and their communities.

Most importantly, please join with me in praying for God’s continued blessing on all women and men religious. As St. Paul reminds us, “*Let us do good to all, but especially to those who belong to the family of the faith”* (Galatians 6:10).