

Retirement Fund for Religious

Sponsored by the National Religious Retirement Office

August 2024

Dear RFR Coordinator,

The National Religious Retirement Office (NRRO) is preparing to launch the 2024 Retirement Fund for Religious annual collection. For more than 35 years, this collection has been a lifeline for thousands of senior sisters, brothers, and religious order priests across the nation. This year alone, the collection will aid more than 24,000 elderly religious.



Senior religious have given their lifetimes to serving others. Despite their years of service, most received little to no pay, leading to a shortfall in retirement savings that is further compounded by rising health-care costs and increased daily living expenses.

This year's appeal is scheduled for December 7–8, although your (arch)diocese may hold it on an alternate weekend. Printed parish materials (samples enclosed) are shipped approximately four weeks before the collection date your (arch)diocese specified in the National Collections database.

Your efforts to publicize the collection are an important way in which we can make a meaningful difference in the lives of elderly religious and their communities. Pages 2 and 3 of this guide detail campaign resources our office provides to assist you. **Most importantly, please urge pastors to announce the collection from the pulpit.**

I recognize that you have many responsibilities and numerous demands on your time. I am profoundly grateful for your efforts on behalf of our aging religious and their communities.

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.

In Christ,



John Knutsen
Director

Enclosures: (4)

Help Elderly Religious

Please help us promote the collection for the Retirement Fund for Religious.

You can boost support by implementing a few suggestions from this guide.

You can also find print and online materials at retiredreligious.org/materials starting September 1. Most resources are available in English and Spanish.

Your dedication to using these materials will make a significant impact.

Announce in Parishes

Ask pastors to announce the collection during Mass and in their parish bulletins. If possible, you can further engage the congregation by hosting a Retirement Fund for Religious speaker. Parishes with audiovisual capabilities can use the campaign video to convey the need for donations effectively.

Tips

1. Send parishes to retiredreligious.org/materials to download promotional resources listed in this guide.
2. Visit retiredreligious.org/materials/#tv-radio to request copies of TV and radio spots available for broadcast on (arch)diocesan and local media outlets.

Resources

- Bulletin advertisement
- Bulletin/pulpit announcements
- Facts page
- Speaker guide
- 30- and 60-second videos in English and Spanish

Bulletin advertisement

Share Online and in Print

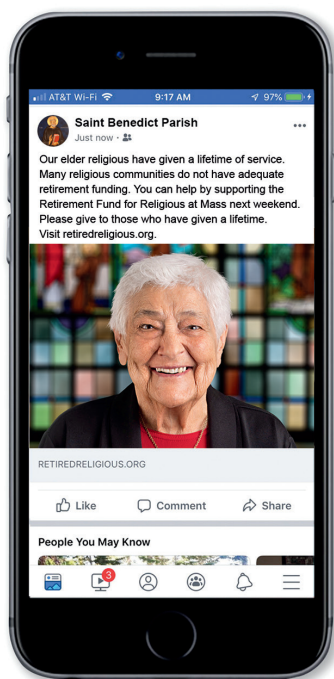
Raise awareness about the needs of our senior religious and emphasize the upcoming collection's importance. Share collection reminders on social media platforms, websites, and other print or electronic communications.

Tips

1. Include the (Arch)bishop to Parishioners letter in parish bulletins and (arch)diocesan media.
2. Promote the collection on your social media. Find more resources at retiredreligious.org/social-media-toolkit.
3. Use the suggested coordinator communications to remind parish and (arch)diocesan staff about the collection.

Resources

(Arch)bishop to Parishioners letter
Coordinator communications
Poster
Print and web advertisements
Social Media Tool Kit



Social media post

Highlight Ways to Give

Offer multiple donation options for the collection and cater to diverse giving preferences where possible. Some parishioners prefer the traditional in-pew collection; others prefer the ease of electronic giving.

Tips

1. Ask parishes to include the Retirement Fund for Religious as a designated gift option on their online giving platforms. Please encourage them to make this option available for multiple weeks to allow parishioners ample time to contribute.
2. Make the online giving option available on (arch)diocesan platforms.
3. Remind parishes to make printed campaign promotional materials available to parishioners.

Resources

For additional resources, please visit retiredreligious.org/materials.

Donations can also be mailed to:

National Religious Retirement Office
3211 Fourth Street NE
Washington DC 20017-1194

(Make checks payable to Retirement Fund for Religious.)

After the Collection

We encourage you to thank our generous donors for making the 2024 collection successful. You can download and use the bulletin announcement written specifically for publication during the week following the collection.

Visit retiredreligious.org/materials to download.

Sample Letter: (Arch)bishop to Parishioners (English and Spanish)

Dear Friends in Christ,

In the coming weeks, our parishes will conduct the Retirement Fund for Religious collection, an annual appeal that benefits more than 24,000 sisters, brothers, and religious order priests who have devoted their lives to our Church and faith community.

Reflecting upon the impact of these selfless servants of God, I am grateful. Their contributions have profoundly influenced my faith journey and the spiritual life of our (arch)diocese. Perhaps you, too, have been touched by the kindness and guidance of a vowed religious who made a positive difference in your life.

Despite their lifetimes of service, many of our aging religious face financial challenges in retirement. They usually received little to no pay in return for their labors. The modest stipends they did receive throughout their ministry years have led to insufficient retirement funds. Coupled with escalating health-care costs and diminishing incomes, religious communities find it increasingly difficult to provide for their daily needs, including medical expenses, nursing assistance, and other necessities.

Contributions to the Retirement Fund for Religious offer financial support to these aging members and empower their communities by providing critical funds to help them plan for their future retirement-planning needs effectively.

While I know that you must juggle many competing interests, I ask you to consider lending your support to this important (arch)diocesan collection. More than anything, I urge you to join in prayer for all our aging women and men religious—just as they fervently pray for us.

Yours in Christ,

Estimados amigos en Cristo:

En las próximas semanas nuestras parroquias llevarán a cabo la colecta del Fondo para la Jubilación de Religiosos, un llamado anual que beneficia a más de 24,000 hermanas, hermanos y sacerdotes de órdenes religiosas católicas que han dedicado su vida a la Iglesia y a la comunidad de fe.

Al reflexionar sobre el impacto de estos abnegados siervos de Dios, estoy agradecido. Sus contribuciones han influido profundamente en mi camino de fe y en la vida espiritual de nuestra (arqui)diócesis. Tal vez ustedes también se hayan sentido conmovidos por la amabilidad y guía de una religiosa o religioso consagrado que cambió su vida de manera positiva.

A pesar de su vida de servicio, muchos de nuestros religiosos ancianos enfrentan desafíos financieros en su jubilación. Por lo general, recibían poca o ninguna paga a cambio de su trabajo. Los modestos estipendios que recibieron a lo largo de sus años de ministerio han resultado en escasez de fondos para su jubilación. Junto con el aumento de los costos de atención médica y la disminución de los ingresos, a las comunidades religiosas les resulta cada vez más difícil satisfacer los requisitos diarios para gastos médicos, asistencia de enfermería y otras necesidades.

Las contribuciones al Fondo para la Jubilación de Religiosos ofrecen apoyo financiero a estos miembros mayores y empoderan a sus comunidades al proporcionar fondos críticos que los ayuda a planificar las necesidades futuras de su jubilación de manera efectiva.

Si bien sé que reciben muchas solicitudes, les pido que consideren prestar su apoyo a esta importante colecta (arqui)diocesana. Más que nada, los insto a unirse en oración por todas nuestras religiosas y religiosos ancianos, así como ellos rezan fervientemente por nosotros.

De ustedes en Cristo,



National Religious Retirement Office
Sponsor of the Retirement Fund for Religious

3211 Fourth Street NE
Washington DC 20017-1194
Phone (202) 541-3215
Fax (202) 541-3053

For campaign materials, visit:
retiredreligious.org