

Retirement Fund for Religious

Sponsored by the National Religious Retirement Office

Fall 2024

Dear Pastor/Pastoral Administrator,

With heartfelt gratitude, I write to you today, reflecting on your continued support for the Retirement Fund for Religious. Your generosity has impacted the over 24,000 women and men religious who have benefited from financial assistance in their retirement.

Since the 1988 founding of the collection by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, we have made a meaningful difference to the lives of countless senior religious nationwide.



As we acknowledge these accomplishments, we must remain mindful that, with continued rising eldercare and daily living costs, many of our religious communities are still facing significant ongoing challenges in providing for the retirement needs of their aging women and men religious.

Quite simply, our aging religious need your help. This is why I now turn to you with a renewed need for your assistance to ensure our senior religious are provided with critical support for their essential care, medicine, and daily needs.

You can help us by sharing this message throughout your parish family—in your parish bulletin, e-newsletter, and social media—and highlighting

the need for donations. I also urge you to please announce the collection during Mass and encourage your parishioners to donate what they can.

We remain grateful for your continued and ongoing prayers, generosity, and advocacy for all our aging sisters, brothers, and religious order priests. Only with your help can we give back to those who have given a lifetime.

In Christ,



John Knutsen
Director

Enclosure: Posters

Above: See back page to learn more about the pictured religious.

Four Easy Ways to Help Elderly Religious

Choose the option or options that work best for your parish.

1 Announce the collection using this parish appeal/pulpit announcement

Download at retiredreligious.org/materials.

Today's special collection supports the Retirement Fund for Religious. Donate to help the more than 24,000 senior religious who have dedicated their lives to service retire with dignity. Donations will provide for the essential care, medicine, and daily needs of senior sisters, brothers, and religious order priests who have served for decades—usually for little to no pay. Show your appreciation by supporting those who have given a lifetime.

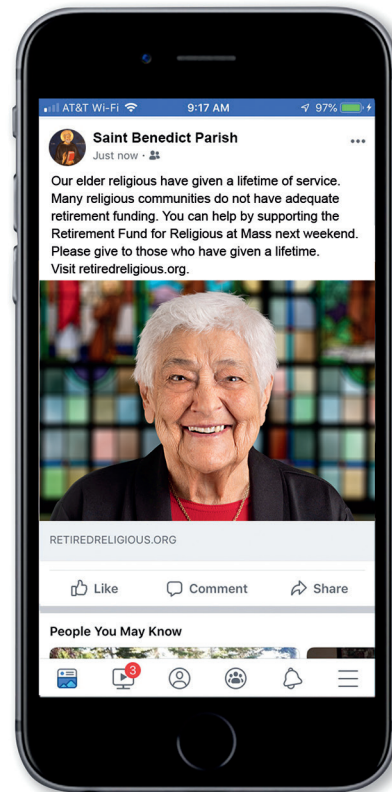
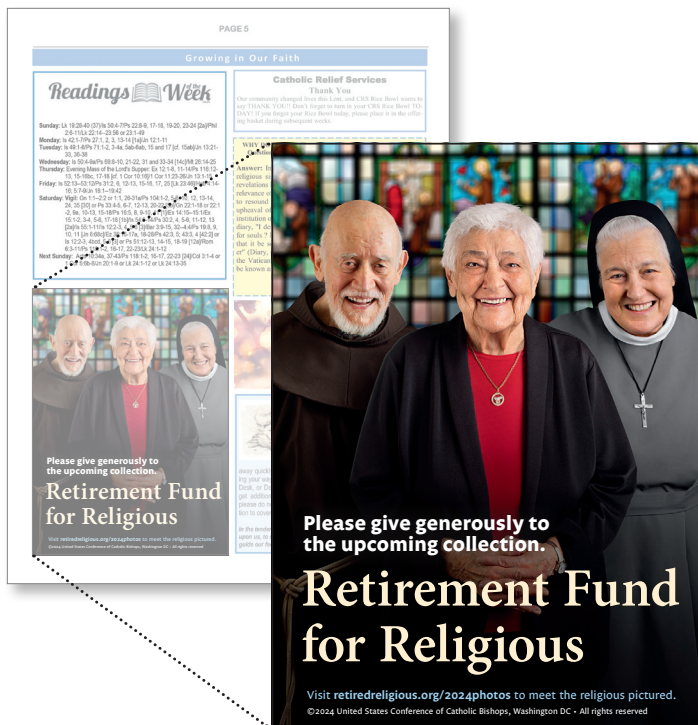
La colecta especial de hoy apoya el Fondo para la Jubilación de Religiosos. Done para que los más de 24,000 religiosos mayores que han dedicado su vida a servirnos puedan jubilarse dignamente. Estos donativos proveerán cuidados esenciales, medicinas y otras necesidades diarias de las hermanas, hermanos y sacerdotes de órdenes religiosas ancianos que sirvieron por décadas, y por poco o ningún pago. Sea agradecido apoyando a aquellos que han dado toda una vida.

2 Publicize the collection in the parish bulletin

Download our quarter-page bulletin advertisement at retiredreligious.org/materials.

3 Share the collection on social media

Download text and images and access videos at retiredreligious.org/materials/#social-media.



Four Easy Ways to Help Elderly Religious, continued

4 Remind and thank parishioners using these bulletin announcements

Download our bilingual announcements at retiredreligious.org/materials.

*Week before the collection***Aging religious need your help.**

“Your support acknowledges that we continue the mission of Christ even in our retirement,” says Mission Helpers of the Sacred Heart Sister Celeste Burgos, 80. Donations provide for the care, medicine, and daily needs of over 24,000 senior sisters, brothers, and religious order priests who have dedicated their lives to service. Please give to the Retirement Fund for Religious.

*Week of the collection***Support those who have given**

a lifetime. Women and men religious have dedicated their lives to service—praying, teaching, and caring for those in need—usually for little to no pay. Today, their religious communities do not have enough retirement savings. Your donation provides for the essential care, medicine, and daily needs of thousands of senior women and men religious. Please give generously.

*Week after the collection***Women and men religious offer**

gratitude. “Sincere thanks to the donors of the Retirement Fund for Religious. I hope we meet, if not in this world, then in the next,” says Sister Teresa Korycka, 81, of the Sisters Servants of Mary Immaculate. Your gift impacts over 24,000 senior women and men religious, providing them a dignified retirement. To learn how your donation helps, visit retiredreligious.org.

*Semana antes de la colecta***Religiosas y religiosos ancianos**

necesitan de ustedes. “Su apoyo reconoce que hacemos la misión de Cristo durante nuestra jubilación”, dice sor Celeste Burgos, 80, de las Misioneras Auxiliares del Sagrado Corazón. Los donativos cubren el cuidado, las medicinas y necesidades diarias de más de 24,000 hermanas, hermanos y sacerdotes de órdenes religiosas que han dedicado su vida a servirnos. Les rogamos que donen al Fondo para la Jubilación de Religiosos.

*Semana de la colecta***Apoye a los que dieron toda**

una vida. Religiosas y religiosos han dedicado su vida a servirnos, orando, enseñando y cuidando a los necesitados, por poco o ningún pago. Hoy, sus comunidades carecen de ahorros suficientes para la jubilación. Los donativos cubren cuidados esenciales, medicinas y necesidades diarias de miles de religiosas y religiosos mayores. Les rogamos que sean generosos.

*Semana después de la colecta***Religiosas y religiosos son**

agradecidos. “Nuestras más sinceras gracias a los donantes del Fondo para la Jubilación de Religiosos. Espero encontrarlos, si no en esta vida, en la otra”, dice sor Teresa Korycka, 81, de las Siervas de María Inmaculada. Los donativos afectan a más de 24,000 religiosas y religiosos ancianos, brindándoles una jubilación digna. Para saber cómo su donativo los ayuda, visite retiredreligious.org.

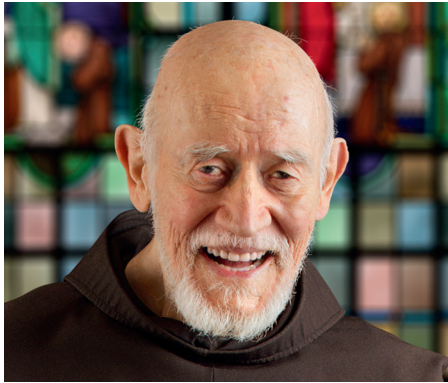
Looking for more resources?

Visit our website to download bilingual bulletin inserts, campaign images, web banners, and more.

retiredreligious.org

Meet the senior religious from our 2024 campaign

Many elderly religious served with little to no pay, and unfortunately, today, many US religious orders lack adequate retirement savings. The women and men religious featured on our 2024 Retirement Fund for Religious (RFR) campaign materials are among those who benefit from the RFR, which receives donations to help hundreds of communities provide for their aging members.



Father Maury Smith, OFM
66 years of religious life

“In my youth, Father Remy Stiglitz saw a spark in me, calling me ‘Father Maury’ long before I became a priest. It was a foreshadowing of my own path,” shares Father Maury Smith, 87, a Franciscan Friar of the Province of Our Lady of Guadalupe located in St. Louis, Missouri.

Born in Memphis, Tennessee, to a Jewish mother and Catholic father, Father Maury’s journey is one marked by devotion inspired by his experience of the Eucharist—not only to his Franciscan vows but also to the countless individuals he has guided through his ministry over the decades.

In his retirement, he continues to be active in service. He writes articles for the archdiocesan newspaper, *Today’s Catholic*, offers spiritual direction, and serves his brothers by hearing their confessions on Saturday mornings.



Sister Olivia Bellegante, OSF
62 years of religious life

“The laughter and warmth of the sisters from my childhood showed me the beauty of a life of joy and faith. Their example was a gift from God that led me to the Franciscans,” shares Sister Olivia Bellegante, 92, a Franciscan Sister of Our Lady of Perpetual Help located in St. Louis, Missouri.

Growing up in Sopris, Colorado, in a family of eight siblings, Sister Olivia discovered her vocation by observing her mother’s devotion, as well as the faith of the Franciscan Sisters and the Sisters of Charity. For 40 years, she taught in Catholic schools, sharing her faith and knowledge with countless students.

Currently residing at the Mother of Perpetual Help Residence, she fills her days with her prayer ministry, exercise, puzzles, and card games. Her lifelong commitment to education continues to inspire others.



Sister M. Stephanie Belgeri, FSGM
51 years of religious life

“My vocation was nurtured by the very sisters who taught me in Catholic school,” shares Sister M. Stephanie Belgeri, 72, a member of the Sisters of St. Francis of the Martyr St. George in Alton, Illinois.

Growing up in St. Louis, Missouri, in a family of three sisters and two brothers who all attended Catholic schools, Sister M. Stephanie wanted to be a sister from her first recollections. Since then, she has spent her entire ministry in nursing. She also spent time as a missionary in Brazil, setting up a foundation for her order, and as an administrator at the Mother of Good Counsel Home in St. Louis, Missouri.

Today, in her retirement, Sister M. Stephanie’s ministry continues as she both manages the community’s library and translates English documents into Portuguese for the Sisters in the Brazilian mission.

Note: Printed promotional materials are provided to parishes at no charge. This year’s requests have been processed, but please contact your (arch)diocesan coordinator if you need to adjust future shipments.



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Sponsor of the Retirement Fund for Religious

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For campaign materials, visit:
retiredreligious.org