

Retirement Fund for Religious

Sponsored by the National Religious Retirement Office

August 2019

Dear RFR Coordinator,

Please accept my deepest thanks for your service as a Retirement Fund for Religious (RFR) coordinator. Without your help and that of coordinators across the country, there is simply no way that our small office could administer the nationwide appeal.

As we approach the 2019 collection, I ask your continued assistance. Pages 2 and 3 of this guide offer suggestions for using RFR campaign materials to promote the collection. **Most importantly, please urge pastors to announce the RFR collection from the pulpit.**

The national collection 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 to eight weeks prior to the collection date recorded for your (arch)diocese in the National Collections database.

(Arch)bishops will receive a one-page resource letter that is sent electronically. The letter offers links to various promotional materials, including text for an (Arch)bishop to Parishioners letter in support of the collection. (*See back page.*)



I understand it can be challenging to promote the collection, especially when many worthwhile causes compete for your time and for the limited resources of parishioners. Yet, your efforts make a meaningful difference in donations raised and in the lives of elderly religious and their communities. Please contact our office if we can assist you in any way.

With gratitude,

Sister Stephanie Still, PBVM

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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. A wide variety of resources are available to support your efforts. To download, visit retiredreligious.org/materials after September 1.

Most campaign materials are available in English and Spanish.

Announce

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

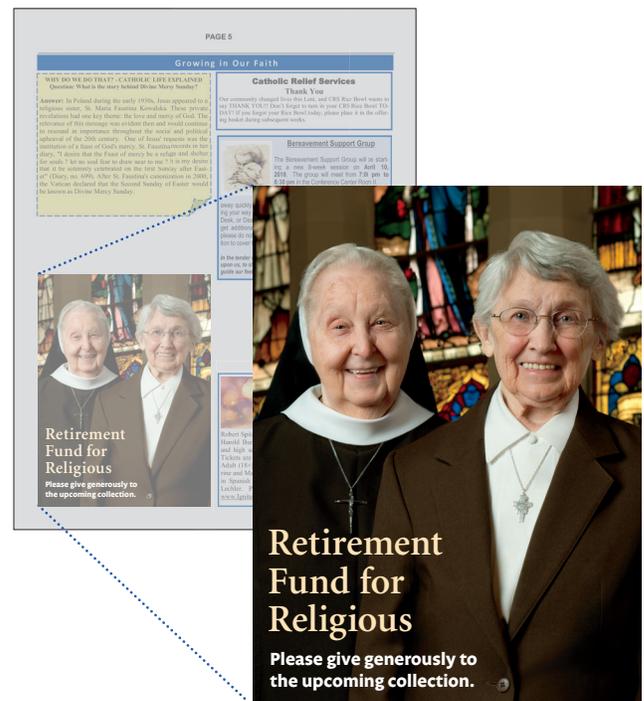
Resources

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

Tips

Send parishes to retiredreligious.org/materials, our Campaign Materials page, so they can download promotional materials—like the bulletin advertisement below.

Sample coordinator communications offer prepared text for emails, newsletters, and other parish and (arch)diocesan communications.



Publicize

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

Resources

Bulletin, print, and web advertisements

Poster

Press releases

RFR facts page

Social media tool kit

Tips

Include the (Arch)bishop to Parishioners 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 to download text and images.



Thank

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

Resource

Bulletin announcement for the week following the collection

Tip

Post the thank-you bulletin announcement (*see sample text below*) in parish bulletins and on the (arch)diocesan website. Visit retiredreligious.org/materials to download campaign photos to accompany the text.



Retirement Fund for Religious

Religious give thanks. “‘Thank you’ hardly seems adequate to convey what it means to us,” says a Catholic sister of the financial assistance her community received from the Retirement Fund for Religious. Prayer-filled thanks for your donation to last week’s second collection.

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

Dear Friends in Christ,

Soon our parishes will hold the Retirement Fund for Religious collection, an annual appeal that benefits some 30,000 senior sisters, brothers, and religious order priests.

As Christians, we are called to “serve the Lord with gladness” (Ps 100:2). Our elderly religious offer a shining example of what it means to answer this call. During their days of active ministry, they worked tirelessly to build Catholic schools and hospitals, promote social justice, and embrace the neediest among us. In retirement, many continue in volunteer ministry, and all pray for the needs of our Church and world. Inspired by love, their service—past and present—is marked by joy and a deep desire to do the will of God.

As you may know, many religious communities find it increasingly difficult to provide for aging members. Most older religious worked for little or no pay. Today, their communities do not have enough retirement savings. At the same time, health-care costs continue to rise, and fewer members are able to serve in compensated ministry.

Your gift to the Retirement Fund for Religious provides vital funding for medications, nursing care, and more. It also helps religious congregations plan for future retirement needs, even as they continue to serve the People of God.

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.

Estimados amigos en Cristo,

Muy pronto, nuestras parroquias llevarán a cabo la colecta del Fondo para la Jubilación de Religiosos que hacemos anualmente en beneficio de unos 30,000 miembros ancianos de las órdenes católicas de religiosas, hermanos y sacerdotes.

Los cristianos estamos llamados a “servir al Señor con alegría” (Sal 100,2). Nuestros religiosos ancianos ofrecen un ejemplo brillante de lo que significa responder a este llamado. Durante sus días de ministerio activo, trabajaron incansablemente para construir iglesias y hospitales católicos, promover la justicia social y abrazar a los más necesitados entre nosotros. Ya jubilados, muchos continúan realizando un ministerio voluntario, y todos rezan por las necesidades de nuestra Iglesia y del mundo. Inspirados por el amor, su servicio, pasado y presente, se caracteriza por el gozo y un profundo deseo de hacer la voluntad de Dios.

Tal vez ustedes ya sepan que a numerosas comunidades religiosas cada vez les resulta más difícil proporcionar cuidados a sus miembros ancianos. La mayoría de los religiosos ancianos trabajaron recibiendo una escasa o ninguna paga. En la actualidad, sus comunidades carecen de ahorros suficientes para cubrir las necesidades de su jubilación. Al mismo tiempo, los costos de atención sanitaria continúan subiendo, y cada vez menos miembros pueden servir en un ministerio pago.

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 planear para las necesidades de jubilación futuras, incluso mientras siguen sirviendo al Pueblo de Dios.

Entiendo que a ustedes les piden que apoyen muchas causas valiosas. Los invito a donar lo que puedan. Muy en particular, les pedimos que rueguen a Dios para que bendiga a todos los religiosos. Pueden estar seguros de que ellos rezan por ustedes.



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Sponsor of the Retirement Fund for Religious

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For campaign materials, visit
retiredreligious.org/materials