

Retirement Fund for Religious

Sponsored by the National Religious Retirement Office

Fall 2019

Dear Pastor/Pastoral Administrator,

Heartfelt thanks to you and your parishioners for your ongoing support of the Retirement Fund for Religious collection. Each year, the prayers and generosity of Catholics across the nation offer vital assistance to some 30,000 senior religious and their communities.



Among these are Bernardine Franciscan Sisters de Lourdes Okoniewski (*left*), 87, and Florence Kruczek (*right*), 91, who have each spent some 70 years in religious life. Their community has a rich tradition of ministering in education, among other areas. Funding from the annual appeal helps this congregation meet retirement needs, even as younger members continue the good works of their elders.

Catholic bishops of the United States launched the Retirement Fund for Religious in 1988 to address the profound shortage in retirement funding among communities of women and men religious. Most senior religious ministered for years for small stipends, leaving their congregations with insufficient retirement savings. Additionally, rising health-care costs and decreased income compound the struggle to provide adequate care.

So I ask you to share the story of senior religious with your parish family. This guide provides an overview of resources, including bulletin announcements and social media posts, to assist your efforts. Most importantly, whether you make the appeal yourself or invite a speaker, **please announce the collection during Mass.**

With your help, we can advance the mission to ensure a safe, modest retirement for the senior sisters, brothers, and religious order priests who have faithfully served our Church and world.

Gratefully,

Sister Stephanie Still, PBVM
Executive Director

Enclosure: Posters

Four Easy Ways to Help Elderly Religious

Choose the option(s) that work best for your parish.

1. Announce

Use our parish appeal to announce the collection during Mass.

Download at retiredreligious.org/materials.

Parish Appeal

Today's second collection is for the Retirement Fund for Religious. Thousands of senior Catholic sisters, brothers, and religious order priests spent years working in Catholic schools, hospitals, and agencies—often for little or no pay. Now, their religious communities do not have enough savings for retirement and eldercare. Your gift to the Retirement Fund for Religious helps provide medications, nursing care, and more. Almost 94 percent of donations aid senior religious. Please be generous.

Llamado a la parroquia

La segunda colecta de hoy es a favor del Fondo para la Jubilación de Religiosos. Miles de religiosas, religiosos y sacerdotes mayores en órdenes católicos sirvieron en escuelas, hospitales y agencias de servicio social católicos durante años con poco o ningún pago. Ahora, las comunidades religiosas carecen de ahorros suficientes para cubrir las necesidades de su jubilación y cuidado geriátrico. Su donativo al Fondo para la Jubilación de Religiosos ayuda con las recetas médicas, cuidados de enfermería y más. Casi el 94 por ciento de los donativos ayuda a los religiosos ancianos. Sean generosos.

2. Publicize

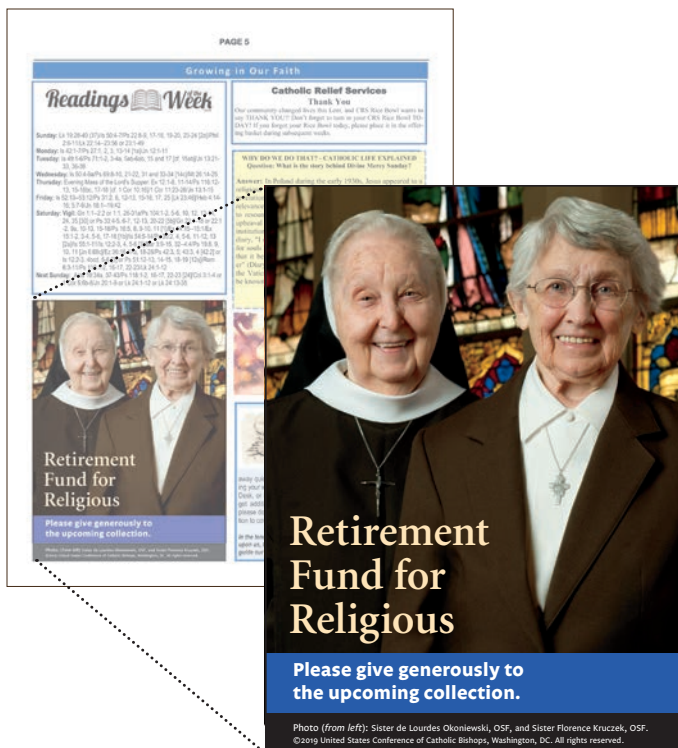
Insert our quarter-page advertisement into your parish bulletin.

Download at retiredreligious.org/materials.

3. Share

Share a collection notice on your parish app or social media site(s).

Download text and images at retiredreligious.org/social-media-toolkit.



Four Easy Ways to Help Elderly Religious, continued**4. Remind**

Use our bilingual bulletin announcements to remind parishioners of the collection.

Download at retiredreligious.org/materials.

Bulletin Announcements**Week before the collection**

Give in thanksgiving. “The nuns left lasting impressions on me,” writes a donor. “I shall always be grateful for my Catholic education.” Please join in thanking the thousands of senior Catholic sisters, brothers, and religious order priests who worked tirelessly to educate the young and serve those in need. Next week’s second collection is for the Retirement Fund for Religious, which helps hundreds of religious communities care for aging members. Please give generously.

Week of the collection

Support aging religious. Our second collection is for the Retirement Fund for Religious. Many senior Catholic sisters, brothers, and religious order priests served for little or no pay. Today, religious communities often do not have enough savings to meet retirement needs. Your gift helps provide medications, nursing care, and more for tens of thousands of elderly religious. It also helps ensure younger members can continue the good works of their elders. Please be generous.

Week after the collection

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.

Anuncios para el boletín**Semana antes de la colecta**

Done en acción de gracias. “Las monjas me dejaron huellas para siempre”, escribe una donante. “Siempre daré las gracias por mi educación católica”. Agradecemos a los miles de miembros mayores en comunidades de religiosas, religiosos y sacerdotes de órdenes católicas que laboraron incansablemente para educar a los jóvenes y servir a los necesitados. La segunda colecta de la semana próxima se destinará al Fondo para la Jubilación de Religiosos, que ayuda a cientos de comunidades religiosas a cuidar a sus miembros ancianos. Les rogamos que sean generosos.

Semana de la colecta

Apoye a los religiosos y religiosas ancianos. Nuestra segunda colecta está asignada al Fondo para la Jubilación de Religiosos. Muchos miembros mayores en comunidades de religiosas, religiosos y sacerdotes de órdenes católicas sirvieron con poco o ningún pago. Hoy día, esas comunidades a menudo carecen de ahorros suficientes para cubrir las necesidades de su jubilación. Su donativo ayuda a proporcionar fondos vitales para medicamentos, enfermeros y más, para cientos de miles de religiosos ancianos. También ayuda a asegurar que los miembros más jóvenes puedan continuar el buen trabajo que iniciaron sus mayores. Sean generosos.

Semana después de la colecta

Los religiosos expresan su gratitud. “‘Gracias’ casi no parece suficiente para expresar lo que significa para nosotros”, dice una hermana católica acerca del apoyo financiero que su comunidad recibió del Fondo para la Jubilación de Religiosos. En oración, le doy las gracias por su donativo a la segunda colecta de la semana pasada.

Help for Those Who Have Given a Lifetime

“My batteries are still running,” says Sister Florence Kruczek (*below, right*), 91. “I get up each morning and say, ‘O Lord, thank you for the gift of another day.’” Sister Florence and Sister de Lourdes Okoniewski, 87, are members of the Bernardine Franciscans of Reading, Pennsylvania. Each entered religious life in the 1940s, fresh out of high school. In addition to serving in Catholic schools, Sister Florence obtained a doctorate in French and taught for 25 years at Alvernia University, an institution founded by her congregation. Sister de Lourdes spent 43 years in Catholic education and then

pursued various other ministries, finally “retiring” at age 85. Today, both sisters focus their energies on praying for the needs of the Church and world.

Gifts to the Retirement Fund for Religious help the Bernardine Franciscans—and hundreds of communities of women and men religious—provide for the ongoing needs of aging members. A portion of the proceeds also underwrites resources on retirement planning and eldercare delivery. Almost 94 percent of donations directly aid senior religious and their communities.



Looking for more resources?
Visit our website to download bilingual bulletin inserts, campaign images, web banners, Retirement Fund for Religious facts, and more.
retiredreligious.org

Note: Printed posters, bulletin inserts, and supplemental envelopes are provided to parishes at no charge to promote the annual Retirement Fund for Religious collection. Shipments for this year’s collection have already been processed, but if you would like to increase or decrease future shipments, please contact your (arch)diocesan coordinator.

All materials are available in English and Spanish.



National Religious Retirement Office
Sponsor of the Retirement Fund for Religious

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

For campaign materials, visit:
retiredreligious.org