



ARCHDIOCESE OF BALTIMORE

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OFFICE OF THE ARCHBISHOP

November 23, 2020

Dear Pastors,

Soon, our parishes in the Archdiocese of Baltimore will conduct the Retirement Fund for Religious collection. As you may have seen in local and national news, religious houses of retired sisters, brothers, and priests have not been immune from the coronavirus pandemic. Indeed, despite the heroic efforts by so many medical personnel caring for our aged and infirm religious, several communities have suffered greatly through exposure to the Covid-19 virus. This has resulted in extraordinary health care costs for many communities, and so frequently these are expenses too heavy to bear without the assistance of others.

For more than 230 years, religious women and men have dedicated their lives to helping others in this local Church. Several religious institutes were founded in the Archdiocese, and today nearly 60 communities continue to minister among us. This service – in parishes, schools, hospitals, and through the works of social justice and social action – has helped build up the Archdiocese since the historical beginnings of Catholicism in America. I think you will agree with me that each of us has been, and continues to be, a beneficiary.

Despite ongoing generosity to the annual collection, hundreds of communities throughout the country face a profound deficit between the needs of aging members and the funds available to support them. This is true even for several communities in the Archdiocese. Please join me in encouraging a generous response to the annual appeal from the people of your parish, and for God's protection of the many retired religious sisters, brothers, and priests who have served so faithfully over the years.

Please share these concerns with your parishioners, along with a reminder of the contributions that religious have made, and continue to make, to our Archdiocese, Church, and world. I would be most appreciative if you would announce the collection from the pulpit and publish information in your bulletin. Resources for announcements and bulletin ads are available online at: www.retiredreligious.org/materials/

With kindest personal regards, I remain

Faithfully in Christ,

Most Reverend William E. Lori
Archbishop of Baltimore