

Retirement Fund for Religious

Sponsored by the National Religious Retirement Office

September 2020

Dear RFR Coordinator,

The 2020 Retirement Fund for Religious (RFR) national appeal—scheduled for December 12–13 in most (arch)dioceses—will be unlike any other in our history. In numerous areas of the country, ongoing concerns related to the coronavirus pandemic may mean that Masses are livestreamed or parishioner attendance is limited. Many parishes may not permit paper in the pews, including our printed campaign materials. Our traditional in-parish promotional activities, then, may not be possible.



More than ever before, we are relying on your collaboration to help raise awareness of the ongoing needs of senior religious and their communities. Pages 2 and 3 of this guide offer suggestions for promoting the collection, including several ideas for sharing information electronically. As in previous years, **please urge pastors to announce the RFR collection from the pulpit.** Please also help ensure parishioners have alternative ways to donate if they are not able to give during Mass.

Printed parish materials are shipped approximately four to eight weeks before the collection date recorded for your (arch)diocese in the National Collections database. Samples of these items are enclosed. If you know your parishes will not be able to use these items, please contact RFR Campaign Director Beth Kennedy at bethkennedy@retiredreligious.org or (919) 414-4007 by **September 30.**

Amid the uncertainty of the pandemic, there is one thing I know: Hundreds of religious communities will continue to rely on the critical assistance the annual collection makes possible. Joined with elderly men and women religious across the country, I offer my deepest thanks for your efforts, and I pray that God will protect you and your loved ones.

With gratitude,

Sister Stephanie Still, PBVM

Sister Stephanie Still, PBVM
Executive Director

Enclosures (4)

Help Elderly Religious

Numerous print and online resources are available to promote the Retirement Fund for Religious collection. Given the ongoing pandemic, these resources may need to be shared in new and creative ways. Undertaking even one or two of the following suggestions can help to raise awareness of both the need and options for donating. To download, visit retiredreligious.org/materials after September 1.

Most campaign materials are available in English and Spanish.

Announce at Mass

Ask pastors to announce the collection during Mass, whether that Mass is in person or virtual. In some areas, it may be possible for a parish to host an RFR speaker to make the appeal. The RFR video is also a quick and effective way to share the need.

Tips

Send parishes to retiredreligious.org/materials to download the promotional resources listed in this guide.

TV and radio versions of the video are also available to share on (arch)diocesan and local stations. Visit retiredreligious.org/materials/#tv-radio to request the preferred version.

Coordinator communications make it quick and easy to remind parish and (arch)diocesan personnel about the collection. Sample text can be used in emails, newsletters, and other communications.

Resources

Bulletin/pulpit announcements

Coordinator communications

Facts page

Speaker guide

30- and 60-second videos in English and Spanish



RFR video

Share Online

Online communications have become a primary way that many (arch)dioceses and parishes communicate with parishioners. Post a collection reminder in electronic newsletters, social media, or online parish bulletins and (arch)diocesan publications.

Tips

Include the (arch)bishop to parishioners letter in parish bulletins and/or (arch)diocesan media. (*See back page.*)

Promote the collection on social media.

Visit retiredreligious.org/social-media-toolkit to download text and images.

Resources

(Arch)bishop to parishioners letter
Bulletin and web advertisements
Bulletin announcements
Bulletin inserts
Social media tool kit



Social media post

Highlight Ways to Give

Where in-person Mass is available, collection and offertory envelopes will continue to be a primary means for contributing to the appeal. If this is not possible in your area, please work with your parishes to provide alternative means to donate.

Tips

Ask parishes to designate the Retirement Fund for Religious as a gift option for their online giving platforms. Make this available for multiple weeks.

Add the Retirement Fund for Religious as a gift option for (arch)diocesan online giving platforms.

Remind parishioners who cannot give at Mass to mail their offertory envelopes to their parishes.



Sample offertory envelope

Please let parishioners know they can also send donations directly to:

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

Please make your check payable to Retirement Fund for Religious.

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

In his letter to the Galatians, St. Paul urges us to remain steadfast in helping others: “Let us not grow tired of doing good, for in due time we shall reap our harvest, if we do not give up” (Gal 6:9). During these unprecedented times, many are hurting and need our assistance, including elderly religious. As we approach the annual Retirement Fund for Religious collection, I encourage your continued support.

As you may know, senior religious were instrumental in establishing Catholic schools, hospitals, and charitable agencies. Often this progress came at great sacrifice, and many older sisters, brothers, and religious order priests served for little to no pay.

Today, hundreds of religious communities do not have enough retirement savings and struggle to provide for a growing number of elder members. Covid-19 has only increased the challenge to provide adequate care.

Your gift to the Retirement Fund for Religious provides vital funding for medications, nursing care, and more. If you are unable to give during Mass, please mail your offertory envelope to your parish or donate through your parish’s online giving platform, if available. **You can also send your contributions to:**

National Religious Retirement Office
3211 Fourth Street NE
Washington DC 20017-1194
Please make your check payable to
Retirement Fund for Religious.

In these difficult days, you may feel as though your generosity has been exhausted. I ask just two things. First, please join me in praying for God’s protection for all our elderly religious. Second, please support the Retirement Fund for Religious collection as you are able—and know that women and men religious across the country hold you and your loved ones in grateful prayer.

En su carta a los gálatas, san Pablo nos insta a no dejar de ayudar a los demás: “Así, pues, hagamos el bien sin desanimarnos, que a su debido tiempo cosecharemos si somos constantes” (Gál 6,9). Durante estos tiempos sin precedentes, muchos están sufriendo y necesitan nuestra ayuda, también los religiosos ancianos. Al acercarnos a la colecta anual del Fondo para la Jubilación de Religiosos, los animo a seguir siendo generosos.

Como tal vez sepan, los religiosos ancianos fueron fundamentales para la fundación de escuelas, hospitales y agencias de beneficencia católicos. A menudo este progreso es el resultado de un gran sacrificio, y muchas hermanas, hermanos y sacerdotes de órdenes religiosas sirvieron con poco o ningún pago.

En la actualidad, cientos de comunidades religiosas carecen de ahorros suficientes para cubrir las necesidades de su jubilación y luchan para cuidar al número creciente de miembros ancianos. El covid-19 hizo que se acentuara el desafío de brindar los cuidados necesarios.

Su donativo al Fondo para la Jubilación de Religiosos proporciona fondos vitales para recetas médicas, enfermeros y más. Si no pueden donar durante la misa, les pedimos que envíen el sobre con su ofrenda a la parroquia o donen por medio de la plataforma para donativos en línea de la parroquia, si está disponible. **También pueden enviar su contribución a:**

National Religious Retirement Office
3211 Fourth Street NE
Washington DC 20017-1194
Los cheques deben ser emitidos a nombre de
Retirement Fund for Religious.

En estos días difíciles, podrían sentir que su generosidad se ha agotado. Por eso les pido dos cosas. En primer lugar, les ruego que se unan conmigo para pedir a Dios que proteja a todos los religiosos ancianos. En segundo lugar, les pedimos que sean generosos en la colecta del Fondo para la Jubilación de Religiosos en la medida de sus posibilidades, y sepan que las religiosas y los religiosos de todo el país rezan agradecidos por ustedes y sus seres queridos.



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/materials