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October 12, 2016

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

In the United States today, numerous Catholic sisters, brothers, and religious order priests past age 70 benefit from the Retirement Fund for Religious collection. Donations to this special collection provide funding that helps religious communities care for senior members and plan for long-term retirement needs.

On the weekend of November 6, all parishes in the Archdiocese of St. Louis will take up the annual collection for the Retirement Fund for Religious, an opportunity for you to acknowledge the thousands of senior Catholic sisters, brothers, and religious order priests for their faithful service.

Whether or not we realize it, we are all beneficiaries of the tremendous contributions these women and men have made to the Church in the United States. Through hard work, prayer, and sacrifice, they built Catholic schools and hospitals, initiated programs to promote social justice, and ministered to the neediest among us.

Today, many religious communities struggle to care for their elderly members. Elder sisters, brothers, and religious order priests dedicated their lives to service and prayer, and some lack adequate retirement savings. Increasing health-care costs and decreased income make it difficult to provide necessary medical care, costly medications and basic services.

Please consider making a financial gift to assist with the care of our senior Catholic sisters, brothers, and religious order priests. Many thanks for considering this request.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Most Reverend Robert J. Carlson
Archbishop of St. Louis