



November 9, 2020

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Another year has passed, and we are again approaching the annual collection for our Retired Religious to be held in parishes on December 12th and 13th. This event has significant benefits for the retired Sisters in our diocese, as well as the over 30,000 throughout the country.

The **Retirement Fund for Religious** offers financial support for those Catholic sisters, brothers and religious order priests who worked for years for small or no stipends. Last year, the people in this diocese contributed \$171,106.90 to help defray the costs of medication, nursing care, medical equipment, transportation, physical and occupational therapy and other necessary needs. Your generous gifts provide vital support for their ongoing health care helping them to age with dignity, safety and comfort. This year of the pandemic has been especially hard on communities of our elderly religious since many have COVID-19 protocols and visiting restrictions so that, along with these additional costs, there is also the emotional toll of loneliness and isolation for our senior religious.

Due to their years of faithful witness to the Gospel, senior religious are our treasure in the Church. Their dedication and hard work laid the foundation for Catholic schools, religious education programs, hospitals, social service agencies and countless other ministries throughout our diocese; many still serve those in need, today. Some of you may not presently know consecrated men and women, but they have affected your lives through their ministry to your parents and grandparents and through the many organizations now in place due to their foresightedness and generosity. Ministries started by Sisters have had a tremendous influence in this diocese and they stand as a legacy to those generous women who dedicated their lives in service to the reign of God and continue to find ways to minister to others. I join you in praising God for their faithful and generous service to the Church in the past and in the days and years to come.

I understand you are asked to support many worthy causes. I invite you only to give what you can. Most importantly, please pray for an increase of vocations to the consecrated life and for God's continued blessing on all our women and men religious. Know you remain in their prayers. Please join me in supporting the **Retirement Fund for Religious**.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

+Lawrence T. Persico

The Most Reverend Lawrence T. Persico, JCL
Bishop of Erie



DIocese of Erie ♦ P.O. Box 10397 ♦ Erie, Pennsylvania 16514-0397

814.824.1120 ♦ FAX 814.824.1124