



October 29, 2018

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Another year has passed, and we are again approaching the annual collection for our retired religious on December 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup>. This event has significant benefits for our retired sisters here in the Diocese of Erie, and the 31,000-retired religious throughout our country.

The **Retirement Fund for Religious** offers financial support for those Catholic sisters, brothers and religious order priests who worked for years for small stipends, asking little of the Church in return. Your generous gift provides vital support for their health care. Last year, the collection in this diocese netted nearly \$200,000, and when it was returned to the religious of this area, it helped to defray costs of medication, nursing care, physical and occupational therapy, transportation, medical equipment, and other necessary needs of our elderly Sisters.

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, and many still serve our Church today. All we must do is look around to see the good work religious have done and continue to do throughout Northwestern Pennsylvania. Such examples are: St. Mary's Homes, Benetwood Apartments, the Mercy Center on Aging, the Inner-City Neighborhood Art House, or the Sisters of St. Joseph Neighborhood Network, Mercy Terrace, Emmaus Ministries, the House of Mercy, Erie Dawn, Young People Who Care, and the Bethany Adult Retreat Center, all stand as a legacy to those generous women who gave their lives in service to this diocese. Rural ministry centers in Oil City, Port Allegany, and DuBois still involve Sisters in the lives of many people in those vicinities. Prince of Peace Center in Farrell grew under the direction of religious women and continues to serve people in the Sharon area. I join you in praising God for their faithful and generous service to the Church, in the past, present and into the future.

I understand that 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