



December 2021

Dear Friends,

Pope Francis often highlights the role older adults play in conveying faith from one generation to the next. In his message for the First World Day for Grandparents and the Elderly, which was held in July, he noted, “there is no retirement age from the work of proclaiming the Gospel.”

As we approach the annual Retirement Fund for Religious collection on the weekend of Dec. 11-12 — an appeal that benefits some 26,000 elderly Catholic sisters, brothers, and religious order priests — I am reminded that senior religious never retire from their vows.

Instead, the prayer and ministry of older religious are an ongoing witness to the Gospel. In their younger years, they laid the foundation for Catholic schools, hospitals, and works of mercy. Today, many serve in volunteer ministry. Others are frail and need assistance. Yet all remain wholly committed to their vocations, accepting the limitations of aging and embracing the opportunity to spend more time praying for our Church and world.

Please support the retirement needs of our senior religious. And please join me in praying for God’s continued blessing on our nation’s elderly sisters, brothers, and religious order priests.

Paz y bien,

Most Reverend Ronald A. Hicks

Bishop of Joliet