

Retirement Fund for Religious

Sponsored by the
National Religious Retirement Office



Winter 2015
Volume 28
No. 1

News

Message from the Executive Director

In this Issue

Director's Message	1
NRRO Calendar	2
Help from the Hilton Foundation	2
Five New Consultants Trained	4
Sister Anna Marie Tag, RSM	5
Announcements and Reminders	5
New Date for Fall Workshop	5

In his letter to consecrated religious just prior to the opening of the Year of Consecrated Life, Pope Francis outlines several aims and expectations for this special celebration. Among these, he expresses his hope for “growth in communion between the members of different Institutes”¹ and highlights various areas for collaboration.

Did Pope Francis have retirement planning in mind when he suggested these types of cooperative efforts? Maybe or maybe not. At the National Religious Retirement Office (NRRO), we certainly encourage and support such collaboration. Time and again, we have seen that the retirement and eldercare concerns of specific communities are echoed by religious institutes large and small, women and men, apostolic and contemplative. From motherhouses and monasteries built for twenty-somethings rather than seventy-somethings to the sky-rocketing costs of health care, there are a host of challenges religious hold in common. By sharing what has worked in addressing these challenges—and what hasn't—we can offer concrete support and insights to one another.

And so with our first issue of 2015, we are revealing a new focus for this newsletter. In the past, we have tried to direct this newsletter to Retirement Fund for Religious (RFR) donors as well as to religious. We have featured retirement-planning success stories, sharing the good news made possible by donations to the annual RFR collection.

While we will continue to highlight these stories, our goal will be to communicate the insights and lessons learned from these experiences and to share replicable best practices. (We will send a shorter newsletter to donors concentrating more directly on their interests.)

In this issue, we want to update you on current NRRO initiatives and introduce religious who are helping our team provide ever-greater support

The Year of Consecrated Life is a wonderful opportunity to give thanks for those who have given a lifetime.



WAKE UP THE WORLD!
— 2015 Year of Consecrated Life —

Message from the Executive Director

for retirement planning and eldercare delivery. If there are particular topics you would like to see addressed in future issues, please let us know by sending an e-mail to retirement@uscgb.org.

In his Year of Consecrated Life letter, Pope Francis asserts that we can and should feel hopeful about the future because, after all, God is the source of our hope.² And so at the NRRO, we rededicate ourselves to careful stewardship of RFR gifts and to creating retirement education, programming, and resources to provide you with the confidence to—as Pope Francis suggests—“embrace the future with hope.”³

United on the journey,

Sister Janice Bader, CPPS

¹Pope Francis, November 21, 2014, “Apostolic Letter of His Holiness Pope Francis to All Consecrated People on the Occasion of the Year of Consecrated Life.”

http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost_letters/documents/papa-francesco_lettera-ap_20141121_lettera-consacra.html

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

NRRO Calendar

February

17 NRRO Webinar—*Interacting with Religious Members with Memory Impairment*

March

15–17 Annual Assembly, Vicars for Religious Chicago, IL

18–22 LCWR New Leaders’ Workshop, Mundelein, IL

31 Direct Care Assistance applications due (postmark by 3/31)

April

13 NRRO Assistance Review Committee meeting

21–23 Planning and Implementation Workshop Dayton, OH

27 NRRO Management Committee meeting

May

19 NRRO webinar—Topic: Hearing loss

Help from the Hilton Foundation

In late 2013, the National Religious Retirement Office received a \$2.5 million grant from the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation, payable over three years. The grant supports ongoing efforts to help religious communities address serious deficits in retirement funding. It is underwriting an assessment of the Planning and Implementation Assistance process and the development of programming and resources that promote effective property management and utilization.

Evaluation of Planning and Implementation Assistance

Planning and Implementation (P and I) Assistance is a comprehensive program of financial and consultative support to help significantly underfunded religious institutes reduce retirement shortfalls. Over a period of twelve to eighteen months, two NRRO-trained consultants work with participating communities to identify an institute’s most pressing challenges and then develop strategies to address them. Since 2009, 105 religious communities have participated in the process. More than \$19 million of funding has been awarded, and consultants have shared countless hours of hands-on guidance.

The goal of the P and I assessment is to identify best practices and improve future services. Overseeing the evaluation is Sister Regina Fox, a School Sister of Notre Dame from the Central Pacific Province. A former educator and secondary-school administrator and a current development professional, Sister Regina has also served for the last thirty years as a facilitator for various nonprofit groups, providing guidance and support in the areas of board development, long-term planning, and fund development.



Regina Fox, SSND

Sister Regina initiated the evaluation with an eye toward gathering various perspectives

Help from the Hilton Foundation

on the process. P and I assessment participants were surveyed, along with consultants who have served in the program. Sister Regina will be following up with individual religious communities and convening a focus group of consultants who will offer recommendations for future program enhancements. Concurrent with Sister Regina's work, a financial analysis is being conducted to evaluate the impact the funding has had on participants' long-term financial stability. At the end of the evaluation, Sister Regina will draft a final report summarizing her findings and complemented with the results of the fiscal review.

Property Planning

The Hilton Foundation grant is also underwriting the development of educational opportunities and resources to promote effective property management and utilization among religious institutes. Marianist Brother Stephen Glodek is leading this effort, which is scheduled to take place over a period of three years.

A long-time volunteer consultant for the NRRO, Brother Stephen served in various capacities of community leadership for twenty-five years, including as treasurer and provincial.

Brother Stephen has reviewed existing resources on property planning, some of which were developed in the 1980s and '90s, to extract information that is relevant to today's challenges. He will be compiling this data, along with updated materials, to provide a list of property resources for religious institutes and the professionals who support their planning efforts. Further, Brother Stephen will be developing various educational materials and opportunities. Regional workshops will incorporate guidance from experts in fields such as facilities assessment, theology of space, and eldercare delivery and will be based on the best practices of religious communities that have successfully addressed their property-planning challenges. Look for updates in future editions of this newsletter.



Stephen Glodek, SM



TENDING THE VINEYARD

Stewardship of Religious Property

Tending the Vineyard is a three-year effort, funded by the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation, to promote effective property management among religious institutes.

Insights Gathered

Although the P and I evaluation is far from complete, Sister Regina notes three trends common among P and I communities that have had successful outcomes. These trends offer insights for any religious institute engaged in long-range planning:

1) Build accountability into the schedule. Monthly status calls between participating communities and their NRRO consultants and staff members are a central component of Planning and Implementation Assistance. Calls keep the planning on task and help to head off potential problems before they can take root.

2) Create effective vehicles for communication. Religious communities had the most success when they communicated with all stakeholders, updating members and everyone involved in the issue being addressed, whether that was the facilities manager or eldercare personnel. Effective communication meant not only disseminating information but also gathering input from those impacted by the project.

3) Use TRENDS! Communities that relied on the data provided by the Tracking Revenue, Expense, Net Assets, Demographics, Savings (TRENDS) program had more informed outcomes. Visit the Resource Center for Religious Institutes (<http://trcri.org/>) to learn more.

Five New Consultants Trained

Recently, five new volunteers received training to be consultants for the NRRO's Planning and Implementation (P and I) Assistance program. Prior to the program's tri-annual planning workshop, which was held in San Antonio, Texas, from January 26–29, NRRO staff members met with the volunteers to explain the P and I process. Staff members also detailed the consultants' particular roles and responsibilities as outlined in the consultant handbook, a reference tool developed by the NRRO. Following the training, the new consultants observed the three-day planning workshop, allowing them an opportunity to see the process in action and to interact and learn from veteran consultants.

The NRRO coordinates a network of roughly eighty volunteer consultants who are experts in eldercare, financial planning, and community leadership. In conjunction with the NRRO staff, they provide hands-on support for religious communities in assessing and addressing specific retirement issues.

Sister Fran Moore, CDP, was among the newly trained consultants. As a former provincial of the Congregation of Divine Providence in Melbourne, Kentucky, she has firsthand experience with the P and I process. Her community successfully completed the program in 2012, enabling them to address their property-related challenges, enhance eldercare delivery, and reduce their unfunded retirement liability by 30 percent in two years.

Sister Fran explained that she wanted to become a volunteer consultant because she believes in the process and wants to help other communities plan for the future. "This (P and I) was such a blessing for us that, in a sense, I wanted to 'pay it forward.' I know the pain and emotional struggle of making decisions around property and buildings and hope to be able to offer support and encouragement to others who must go through that same struggle."

Sister Margaret Wick, OSF
Sister Marie Verrilli, SND

Mr. Alan Stache

Sister Joyce Lehman, CPPS
Sister Fran Moore, CDP

The NRRO's newest
volunteer consultants.



Sister Anna Marie Tag, RSM

The NRRO has engaged the services of Sister Anna Marie Tag, RSM, to work with staff members on a part-time, yearlong basis to furnish additional assistance to religious institutes with retirement planning and eldercare delivery.

A member of the Sisters of Mercy Mid-Atlantic Community, Sister Anna Marie is providing outreach and support to religious communities with the greatest retirement-funding needs. Specifically, she is working with communities of twenty-five or fewer members, a median age of 75 or older, and/or communities whose retirement-funding liability has not diminished, despite financial assistance from the NRRO. Sister Anna Marie is also overseeing the NRRO's Elder Care Consultation Service.



Anna Marie Tag, RSM

She holds an MBA with a focus on health-care administration, a BS in Accounting, and is a licensed long-term care administrator. Most recently, she served as her community's retirement director. Sister Anna Marie has extensive experience in hospital management, budgeting, accounting, and construction oversight and has served as a volunteer consultant for the NRRO since 2010.

Announcements and Reminders

Stay Connected

Please send changes in address, phone, e-mail, or congregational leadership to the NRRO, c/o Tiffany Lezama (tlezama@usccb.org), so that we may keep our records and mailing lists updated.

Bequests

If you would like to make a bequest or restricted gift to the National Religious Retirement Office, please use the following language:

To the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops Incorporated for the exclusive purpose of assisting Roman Catholic religious orders in the United States to provide for the retirement needs of their elderly members.

New Date for Fall NRRO Planning and Implementation Workshop

October 6–8, 2015

Due to the recently announced papal visit to the United States, the NRRO has rescheduled the fall Planning and Implementation Workshop from September 22–24, 2015, to October 6–8, 2015. The workshop will be held at the Bethany Center in Tampa, Florida. Space is still available.

Religious institutes with twenty-five or more members and an unfunded past service liability of 40 percent or higher are eligible to participate in Planning and Implementation Assistance. Institutes with a higher level of retirement funding may still receive educational and consultative support but are not eligible for financial assistance. More than \$19 million has been distributed through this program over the past six years.

Eligible institutes are urged to avail themselves of the consultative and financial assistance offered through Planning and Implementation Assistance. Please contact the NRRO as soon as possible if you are interested in participating in the program and/or the October workshop. An application form is available at <http://www.usccb.org/about/national-religious-retirement-office/financial-assistance/index.cfm>.



NRRO volunteer consultant Sister Barbara Winnals, SSJ, at an NRRO Planning and Implementation Workshop.



National Religious Retirement Office

Sponsor of the Retirement Fund for Religious

**3211 4th Street, NE
Washington DC 20017-1194**

Phone: (202) 541-3215

Fax: (202) 541-3053

Email: retirement@usccb.org

Websites:

www.usccb.org/nrro

www.retiredreligious.org

The National Religious Retirement Office coordinates the national collection for the Retirement Fund for Religious and distributes these funds to eligible religious institutes for their retirement needs. Our mission is to support, educate, and assist religious institutes in the U.S. to embrace their current retirement realities and to plan for the future.

Staff

Executive Director

Sister Janice Bader, CPPS
jbader@usccb.org

Associate Director for Fund Distribution

Brother Henry Sammon, FMS, JCL
hsammon@usccb.org

Associate Director for Planning and Education

Brother Robert Metzger, SM
rmetzger@usccb.org

Program Specialist

Monica Glover
mglover@usccb.org

Administrative Assistant

Tiffany Lezama
tlezama@usccb.org

U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops
National Religious Retirement Office
3211 4th Street NE
Washington DC 20017-1194
RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

NON-PROFIT ORG.
US POSTAGE
PAID
USCCB