

Retirement Fund for Religious

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News

Message from the Executive Director

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Over the past year, we have witnessed the tremendous toll the coronavirus pandemic has taken on religious institutes. We also have marveled at the heroic efforts undertaken to ensure members' health and safety—especially for elders—and the resiliency of those committed to sustaining mission and ministry in the midst of overwhelming crisis.

With the outlook for recovery improving, many communities are now discerning how best to move forward or “onward,” which my staff would say is among my favorite mantras. For me, *onward* is about collaboratively building on past experiences—good and bad—in pursuit of a common goal. “Onward” acknowledges where we have been and where we want to go.



As we transition to more relaxed guidelines, it is a good time to reflect on what we have learned about ourselves and our institutes during the months of isolation. Despite lockdowns, masks, and social distancing, we found creative ways to be community for one another.

We adapted our ministries to changing circumstances, and we rediscovered joy in the little things—a letter, a phone call, a good joke. Although the format was different, we celebrated milestones like birthdays, jubilees, and feast days. And in our pain, we relied on what unites and sustains us: our prayer, worship, and charism.

The pandemic gave us new insights into community and how we want to live with our fellow members. Let us not lose these lessons but, rather, hold the struggles, the grief, and the joy in sacred memory as we move *onward*.

God bless,

Sister Stephanie Still, PBVM

Onward

Since March 2020, most religious communities have been absorbed with responding to Covid-19 and the demands of maintaining comprehensive care and safety protocols. Today, as pandemic-related restrictions ease and the focus transitions to recovery, communities are assessing the impact Covid-19 will continue to have on retirement planning and eldercare delivery.

The National Religious Retirement Office (NRRO) provides support to help address a wide range of retirement-related concerns. Explore these resources and discover how the NRRO can help your community onward!



NRRO resources help religious communities promote ongoing wellness for senior members. From left: Trinitarian Fathers Bill Axe and Victor Scocco.

Educational Resources

Available virtually and on demand, NRRO educational resources provide support for retirement planning, eldercare delivery, pastoral care for seniors, and more.

Quarterly Webinars

In conjunction with the Avila Institute of Gerontology, the NRRO delivers free quarterly webinars that feature information on a host of age-related topics and run just 60 minutes. Recent programming has addressed the physical, emotional, and spiritual effects of Covid-19 on elder religious. To access these and other presentations, visit our webinar archive: retiredreligious.org/webinars. Join us for our next live webinar on August 10 at 1 p.m. ET.



Property Planning Videos

The Tending the Vineyard Video Series includes five free, online videos and accompanying materials to promote effective property planning. Funded by the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation, the videos feature guidance from property experts and insights from religious who have completed congregational property initiatives.

Newsletter Archive

The NRRO produces two publications: *Engaging Aging* explores issues related to aging and wellness, and the *Retirement Fund for Religious News* focuses on retirement-planning topics. Current and past issues are available at usccb.org/offices/national-religious-retirement-office/publications.



Onward, continued

Conference Sessions

Make plans to attend the NRRO's sessions at the Resource Center for Religious Institutes (RCRI) annual conference.

Through Grief to New Life: A Spirituality for Meeting God in Transition Times

A condensed and updated version of our popular workshop, this presentation will explore the radical and often unsettling changes happening in religious life, including those brought about by Covid-19. Learn how healthy grieving can facilitate acceptance and pave the way to a renewed sense of hope.

Healthy, Happy, Holy: A Positive Look at Aging

"Gerotranscendence" is a theory of positive aging that focuses on the importance of continued growth and development throughout life. The workshop will overview the key concepts of this theory and explore its practical implications for religious communities.

A New Day, A New Way: Creating or Revising Your Retirement Plan Since the Pandemic

This interactive session will explore the lessons learned from Covid-19 and the impact of this knowledge on retirement planning. Participants will gain an understanding of the basic elements necessary to develop a comprehensive retirement plan.

Note: Funding for RCRI membership or conference fees may be available through Management and Continuing Education Assistance.



NRRO sessions at the RCRI conference will address new retirement and eldercare concerns arising from Covid-19. *Above:* Salesian Sister Margaret Wilhelm. *Right:* NRRO consultant Ms. Dayna Larson-Hurst.

Financial Resources

Proceeds from the annual Retirement Fund for Religious (RFR) collection underwrite funding to help religious communities meet immediate eldercare needs and prepare for the ones to come.

Direct Care Assistance

Representing the bulk of funding made possible by the RFR collection, Direct Care Assistance is an annual distribution to religious institutes based on specified criteria, including level of need. Applications for this year's allocations were due March 31, and checks will be mailed to eligible religious communities in late June.

Management and Continuing Education Assistance

This program provides distributions of up to \$5,000 per calendar year for financial and retirement-related education or the acquisition of basic management tools. Awards can be applied toward a variety of expenses, including demographic and financial projections, workshop fees, and accounting software. Applications are accepted between January 1 and November 30 each year.

NRRO Calendar

May

20 Retirement Needs Analyses (RNAs) mailed
(Return corrections by May 31.)

June

16-18 USCCB Spring General Assembly, virtual

24-28 Direct Care Assistance checks mailed

August

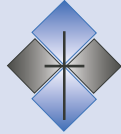
3-4 CMSM Assembly, virtual

10 NRRO Webinar

11-13 LCWR Assembly, virtual

October

26-29 RCRI National Conference, Orlando, Florida



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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 United States to embrace their current retirement realities and to plan for the future.

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Stay Connected

Please send changes in address, phone, email, or congregational leadership to the NRRO, c/o Karen Cañas (kcanas@usccb.org), so that we may keep our records and mailing lists updated.

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