



Archdiocese of Philadelphia
Office of the Cardinal
222 North 17th Street
Philadelphia, PA 19103-1299

February 1, 2009

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

During the public ministry of Jesus, much of His time was spent reaching out to those in need of His healing love and compassion. In the Gospel of Mark next Sunday, Jesus cures Simon's mother-in-law who lay sick with a fever and after sunset, "He cured many who were sick with various diseases..." They needed His help. Jesus did for them what they could not do for themselves. As a result, the next day His disciples told Him, "Everyone is looking for you."

Much of the priestly ministry is devoted to continuing this healing love and compassion of Jesus to the sick and those in need. Priests administer the sacraments to the homebound and those in hospitals and nursing homes. They bring hope and comfort to all who are looking for and in need of Jesus.

Many of these priests who have faithfully ministered to God's people throughout their lives are now in need of care themselves. The Church of Philadelphia provides homes for these faithful ministers at Villa Saint Joseph, Darby; Regina Coeli, Warminster; and Saint Francis Country House, Darby where their physical, emotional and spiritual needs are provided for on a daily basis. They are now ministered to with the same love and compassion of Christ they brought to so many others over the years.

This continuing care of our priests is aided by our **ANNUAL COLLECTION FOR THE CARE OF AGING AND INFIRM PRIESTS** of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia which will be taken in all parishes next weekend **February 7-8, 2009**. You can show your love and support for our retired and infirm priests by your prayerful and generous financial support of this important collection. May God bless you for your generous response to this annual appeal.

Sincerely in Christ,

+Justin Card. Rigali

Cardinal Justin Rigali
Archbishop of Philadelphia

(Please communicate the contents of this letter to your parishioners in the most appropriate manner on the weekend of **January 31- February 1**; the collection is taken up the following weekend of **February 7 and 8**. Collection remittal should be made payable to ARCHDIOCESE OF PHILADELPHIA and sent to: Office for Accounting Services, 222 North 17th Street, Philadelphia, PA 19103)