



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

November, 2010

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

One of the hallmarks of our Catholic Church in America has been the generous evangelical spirit of our consecrated men and women in religious communities. From the earliest days, dedicated religious in our country have spread the Good News of Jesus and cared for the spiritual and physical needs of so many. From the Chesapeake to the Mississippi, from the Gulf of Mexico to the Pacific, all through the land, their sacrifices and struggles give striking testimony to God's love for His people. Our parish schools, hospitals, orphanages, retreat centers and universities testify to their creativity, persistence and unswerving commitment. Their accomplishments constitute a truly remarkable witness. These labors have borne fruit also in the graces of many vocations to religious congregations which have continued this dynamic ministry.

In addition, we cannot overlook the fact that this historic and heroic apostolic witness includes our contemplative religious. By their prayers, self sacrifice and total dedication, they have empowered the evangelical mission of the Church. Standing in our midst, these monasteries and cloisters are indeed power houses of prayer and grace.

Each year the **Annual Retirement Fund for Religious Collection** grants us a dual opportunity. It enables us to express our thanks for the labors of our religious, as well as providing much needed assistance to meet the economic and financial burdens that many congregations encounter as never before.

Once again, I ask you to support generously our religious brothers and sisters in this **Retirement Fund for Religious Collection** scheduled for **December 11 and 12, 2010**. Let us also continue to remember them in our daily prayers with sentiments of fond affection and gratitude.

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 December 4 and 5, 2010; the collection is taken up the following weekend of December 11 and 12, 2010. Collection remittal should be made payable to ARCHDIOCESE OF PHILADELPHIA and sent to: Office for Accounting Services, 222 North 17th Street, Philadelphia, PA 19103-1299)