



THE DIOCESE OF YAKIMA • PASTORAL OFFICE
LA DIÓCESIS DE YAKIMA • CENTRO PASTORAL

***SUPPORT THE COLLECTION FOR BEIT MERY HERMITAGE
AND THE RETIREMENT FUND FOR RELIGIOUS***

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

Soon our parishes will be conducting the Retirement Fund for Religious collection. This annual appeal benefits 31,000 elderly Catholic sisters, brothers, and religious order priests – women and men who have consecrated their lives to serving God and the Church, including our diocesan hermit, Sr. Janet Strong.

During the 2018 World Day for Consecrated Life, Pope Francis remarked, “There is no growth without roots and no flowering without new buds.” This analogy has certainly born out within the life of the Church in the United States. Senior religious were the roots that established Catholic schools, hospitals, and social service agencies – allowing generations of Catholics to flourish. Today, the example of older religious inspires younger members to persevere in mission and ministry.

Yet many religious communities struggle to provide for aging members. Most elder religious served for small stipends, leaving a large gap in retirement savings. Rising health-care costs and decreased income compound the struggle to provide adequate care. Your gift to the Retirement Fund for Religious provides vital funding for medications, nursing care, and more. It also helps religious congregations implement long-range retirement strategies, even as they continue to serve the People of God.

In our Diocese, we are fortunate to have the ministry of prayer of Sister Janet, a professed diocesan hermit for more than 30 years who established the Beit Mery hermitage here in 1997. The hermitage is now located in a small house in west Yakima, and the Diocese maintains it, and also assists with Sr. Janet’s healthcare expenses.

For this reason, our annual collection for the Retirement Fund for Religious has been expanded to include Beit Mery Hermitage. Proceeds are being split, with half being retained by the Diocese to support the hermitage and Sr. Janet’s healthcare needs, and the other half sent to the national fund. I understand you are asked to support many worthy causes. I invite you only to give what you can. Most importantly, please pray for God’s continued blessing on all our women and men religious. Rest assured they are praying for you!

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Most Reverend Joseph J. Tyson
Bishop of Yakima

[Signature electronically applied]