

Retired Religious Weekend  
12/18/16

Normally during December, we would hear from a retired religious sister or brother, asking us to consider donating to the Retirement Fund for Religious. And I mentioned in my column last weekend that Sr. Paul Therese Saiko would be making the appeal request this weekend. But she is a School Sister of Notre Dame and lives at their local Mother House in Mankato. As a result, she called me Thursday and said she was not comfortable making the trip, based on the prediction of snow. So, I have a deal for you: I'm going to give a very brief homily and in return, I ask that you be generous to this most worthy cause.

Today, along with the whole Church in the United States, we remember a special group of people who have walked with us on our journey of faith: senior Catholic sisters, brothers and religious order priests. What a glorious heritage these women and men religious have given us through the Catholic hospitals, schools, universities, and social-justice organizations they founded! Religious built these institutions with their prayer and wholehearted dedication, often serving for little or no financial compensation. Though fewer in number, religious still serve in these traditional ministries and in many other works that care for the least and the forgotten among us. But their years of selfless service have left many of their communities without adequate savings for the retirement and elder-care needs of their senior members.

And so, as we recall those who have helped us on our spiritual journeys, I ask you to remember the sisters, brothers, and religious order priests who have given so much to us and to our Church. They now need our assistance. There will be a second collection today, to help finance the retirement fund for religious. Believe me when I say I know how much I have asked of you in the last few months. However, I also ask you to consider the importance of this annual collection and give accordingly. If you are not prepared to contribute today, there are envelopes in the back of church and in the gathering space. Please consider taking one and bringing it back next weekend. Oh, and remember my deal?