



DIOCESE OF GRAND RAPIDS

Office of the Bishop

November 26, 2007

Dear Friends:

The Diocese of Grand Rapids has benefited greatly because of the countless women and men religious who have served and continue to serve in our parishes, hospitals, schools and the broader civic community. Were it not for their dedication and commitment to our local church, it would not be the vibrant and strong church that it is today.

Each year we acknowledge their faithfulness and present needs by participating in the Retirement Fund for Religious (RFR) national collection established by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB). The rising numbers of elderly religious and the rising costs of health care are well documented and result in a growing and quantifiable need for help. Over the years the religious were compensated at a very low level which has made it difficult for religious communities to provide adequately for its retired members.

Parishioners throughout our diocese have been most generous in their response to this appeal. This year the collection for the Retirement Fund for Religious is scheduled for the weekend of December 8-9, 2007.

I thank you for your past support and encourage your participation in this year's campaign.

Sincerely yours in the Lord,

Most Reverend Walter A. Hurley
Bishop of Grand Rapids