

ARCHDIOCESE OF CHICAGO

Office of the Archbishop



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June 2010

Dear Friends in Christ,

On the weekend of June 12-13, 2010, we will take up a special collection for the **Retired Priests of the Archdiocese.**

For many years now, we have relied on our retired priests to celebrate Mass and the sacraments in hundreds of parishes throughout the Archdiocese of Chicago. Without their dedicated service, many parishes would need to reduce the number of Masses celebrated each weekend. Some retired priests are called upon to be temporary administrators of parishes and others fill in to allow pastors some needed time off. Our senior priests do this willingly as a continuation of the many years that they have faithfully served our Church. Please join me in offering our retired priests words of appreciation and gratitude for their many years of priestly ministry.

The Priests' Retirement and Mutual Aid Association (PRMAA) cares for our retired priests. This year, we have seen the cost of healthcare, prescription drugs, and nursing home care increase. In addition, the priests' pension fund remains seriously impacted by the economic downturn. This special collection will help us to continue to support our retired priests. You may be aware that the December collection for retired men and women Religious is designated to provide only for those in Religious Orders. Archdiocesan priests do not receive any funds from this collection.

As the "Year for Priests" draws to a close, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of our retired priests for their exemplary ministry. We are blessed to have more than one hundred retired priests over eighty years of age, which means that each one has served for more than fifty-five years. May their spirit continue to enliven our Church!

I am thankful to all of you for your remarkable generosity in this collection last year. I ask you to repeat your kindness this year. Your donations and your prayers are a great affirmation of our retired priests. Please pray for an increase in vocations to the priesthood. You and those you love are in my prayers; please keep me in yours.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Francis Cardinal George".

Francis Cardinal George, O.M.I.
Archbishop of Chicago