

Retirement Fund for Religious

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News

5 Things You May Not Know About NRRO Assistance

In this Issue

5 Things You May Not Know	1
NRRO Calendar	3
Director's Message	3

Two-thousand eighteen marks the beginning of the next 10-year cycle of the Retirement Fund for Religious collection. Since the appeal began, the National Religious Retirement Office (NRRO) mission has been to assist religious communities in addressing current retirement realities and preparing for the future. Each year, the majority of collection proceeds—about \$25 million—are distributed as [Direct Care Assistance](#). Eligible communities use this assistance to help meet the ongoing needs of elder members. Funding is also disbursed through [Planning and Implementation Assistance](#), a comprehensive effort to help communities with critical deficits develop strategies to address their most pressing retirement-funding challenges.

Although a primary focus is distributing financial assistance, the NRRO also devotes substantial time and resources to promoting education in retirement planning and eldercare delivery. These tools and activities help communities stretch retirement dollars and enhance eldercare. Below are five areas to know about when it comes to NRRO assistance.

1. **Financial support is available for retirement and eldercare education.**

A portion of collection proceeds is set aside for [Management and Continuing Education \(M/CE\) Assistance](#). M/CE provides eligible religious communities with distributions of up to \$5,000 per calendar year for financial and retirement-related education and/or the acquisition of basic management tools. The application form is quick and easy to complete and can be submitted at any time throughout the year. Distributions can be used for various purposes, such as

- Workshops on eldercare, fund-raising, or financial planning
- Software and training for the first-time computerization of accounting and/or development activities
- Financial forecasts
- Eldercare consultations

Management and Continuing Education Assistance can subsidize attendance at workshops. Opportunities to speak with participants from other religious communities are an important part of the experience.



5 Things You May Not Know, continued

2.

Eldercare consultations help to lower costs and enhance care.

The [Eldercare Consultation Service](#) furnishes an on-site visit by NRRO consultants who offer a wide range of experience and expertise, particularly with regard to health care. Consultants assess all aspects of eldercare delivery—including facilities, staffing, and fiscal operations—and make recommendations for practical improvements.



Eldercare consultations include an on-site assessment in which NRRO consultants evaluate eldercare delivery and offer suggestions for improving care and reducing expenses.

3.

The NRRO can assist with assessment and long-term planning.

Various forms of support are available to help religious institutes develop a realistic understanding of long-term retirement needs and available assets. These include the following [services](#):

- A Retirement Needs Analysis calculates an institute's retirement needs based on demographics, current cost of care, and assets available for retirement.
- The Census Projection uses current data to forecast a religious institute's future census by year and by age group.

4.

There is tailored help for small institutes.

Communities with 25 or fewer members have unique needs and circumstances. For those with a substantial unfunded retirement liability, the NRRO offers [special resources](#) to reduce the deficit and assist with long-term planning.

5.

The NRRO provides online videos, webinars, and other resources.

The NRRO's [Tending the Vineyard video series](#) offers five free, online videos and accompanying support materials to promote effective property planning. Funded by the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation, the videos feature guidance from property experts and insights from religious who have completed congregational property initiatives. Watch one or all five!

In conjunction with the Avila Institute of Gerontology, the NRRO offers a free, quarterly webinar series. Our next webinar is on palliative care and will take place Tuesday, February 13. [Register now](#), and be sure to explore our [online archive](#) of past webinars.

The NRRO website features a host of [downloadable resources](#), from a wellness and aging toolbox to sample driving policies. And be sure to check out current and past issues of [NRRO publications](#). *Engaging Aging* focuses on the aging process and eldercare delivery, while the *Retirement Fund for Religious News* features success stories and tips for long-range retirement planning.

Visit the [NRRO website](#) to explore the resources above and many more. Help is at your fingertips!



Message from the Executive Director

It is both exciting and humbling to begin the next 10-year cycle of the Retirement Fund for Religious. When the first collection was held, I wonder if anyone could have predicted the overwhelming and sustained generosity the annual appeal would receive. Since 1988, U.S. Catholics have contributed more than \$775 million. And from donor letters and feedback, I can tell you that love and gratitude for senior religious continues undiminished.

I wonder too if those who first recognized the urgency of assisting religious communities with retirement needs could have envisioned the persistent challenge of meeting those needs. Could they have foreseen the skyrocketing cost of health care or the ways that aging congregational properties would strain community resources?

Indeed, the retirement landscape for religious communities has changed tremendously over the last 30 years. In the early days of our office, a primary concern was helping communities enroll in Social Security and take advantage of government programs. Focus was also given to promoting training for treasurers of religious institutes and to assisting institutes with financial and demographic projections.

In recent years, our office has sought to furnish increased support for property planning and eldercare delivery. Various educational programs, such as our upcoming dementia workshop, offer practical information that religious communities can use to enhance the quality of life for senior members.

Often the best resource religious have is each other, so we try to provide opportunities where communities can learn from one another's experiences. Our [Tending the Vineyard video series](#), for example, includes insights from religious who have completed property planning projects.

Moving forward, we will continue to respond to evolving retirement needs. In this work, we are grateful to collaborate with religious from across the country and with organizations like ours that seek to support and promote religious life. The insights and experiences of these stakeholders expand our understanding and inform our efforts.

And we want to hear from you! Give us a call or send an email. Be sure to take advantage of our many resources, even as we look to develop new ones. Our privileged ministry is to help religious communities care for senior members, today and tomorrow. We are eager to work with you!

God bless,

Sister Stephanie Still, PBVM



NRRO Calendar

February

13 NRRO Webinar—*Palliative Care: What it is and How It Embodies Church Teaching*

20–21 NRRO Dementia Workshop, Danville, CA

March

31 Direct Care Assistance applications due*

April

11 NRRO Assistance Review Committee meeting

24–26 NRRO Planning and Implementation Assistance Workshop, Dayton, OH

30 NRRO Management Committee Meeting

May

15 NRRO Webinar, topic TBD

*Must be postmarked by this date.



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The National Religious Retirement Office coordinates the national collection for the Retirement Fund for Religious and distributes these funds to eligible religious institutes for their retirement needs. Our mission is to support, educate, and assist religious institutes in the U.S. to embrace their current retirement realities and to plan for the future.

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Stay Connected

Please send changes in address, phone, e-mail, or congregational leadership to the NRRO, c/o Karen Canas (kcanas@usccb.org), so that we may keep our records and mailing lists updated.

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