

LAITY IN SUPPORT OF
RETIRED PRIESTS, INC.

CREATING A BRIGHTER FUTURE FOR THOSE WHO SERVED

LSRP NEWSLETTER

SPRING/SUMMER 2010

Dear Bishops, Priests and Laity:

Welcome to the first newsletter from the Laity in Support of Retired Priests (LSRP). We are a new non-profit organization that was formed to understand the issues of our diocesan priests in their retirement years. While LSRP is located in Bonita Springs, Fla., our dedicated Board of Directors hails from all over the United States. The Board of Directors is very excited to bring this newsletter to all the laity and servants within the Catholic community.

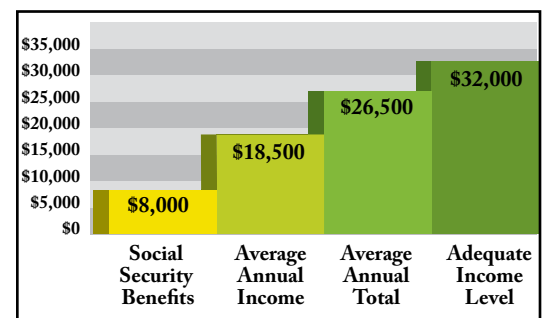
The LSRP mission is to highlight the need for service to aid retired (senior) diocesan priests. Most laity are unaware of the diverse challenges faced by senior diocesan priests. Recently, multiple studies were published by the National Federation of Priests' Councils (NFPC) and Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate, Georgetown University (CARA), which revealed the plight of the retired (senior) diocesan priests. They often face the same challenges older Americans face, including stress about money, proper housing and healthcare.

Warmest regards,

Thomas W. Hoban
President & CEO

Below are some recent facts that have come to light about retirement issues...

- The median annual pension for all retired diocesan priests is approximately \$18,000; the average cost of living for these senior priests is estimated to be around \$32,000 (Independent Living).
- Some pension plans are not portable, so priests can't take them with them, if they leave their diocese.
- Many semi-retired priests still work 30 hours per week, and often retired priests serve 14 hours per week.
- Many laity don't realize that the annual collection for retired "religious" does not benefit our diocesan priests.
- Communication is a major issue during retirement; some priests feel excluded after years of service. Including them in parish or church activities can be vital to their sense of purpose.



Average Income Level for Priests

Frequently Asked Questions

Q. What are the primary goals of the LSRP?

1. To enhance the lives of our diocesan priests in their retirement years.
2. To create an awareness with the laity of the plight of many diocesan priests in retirement.
3. To form a national association of senior diocesan priests to deal with issues of isolation and loneliness.
4. To develop guidelines for a just and equitable pension and benefit plan.

Q. Does the annual special collection for religious cover diocesan priests' retirement?

- A. No, the diocese provides for the retirement benefits of senior priests.

Q. What happens to priests when they retire?

- A. Just like the general public, priests often rely on Social Security, retirement plans and family. Throughout the years, their income levels are generally low; therefore, their benefits can be lacking in some areas.

Q. Can they take their benefits with them no matter where they live?

- A. This is actually called portability, which refers to the transfer of funding and/or credit to other retirement vehicles. Some dioceses do offer portability but others do not. It can be a challenge if a priest decides to move to another diocese or state after retirement. Approximately 70% of priests do not have portable benefits.

Q. How does a retired priest receive health benefits?

- A. Most dioceses provide health insurance. However, many are not covered for long-term health care or for nursing home facilities.

Pope Benedict XVI Has Proclaimed This the "Year for Priests."

The proclamation has been made in recognition of the 150th anniversary of the "dies natalis" of John Mary Vianney, the patron saint of parish priests worldwide. The Year for Priests, with the theme, "Faithfulness of Christ, Faithfulness of Priest," runs through June 19, 2010.

"The year is meant to deepen the commitment of all priests to interior renewal for the sake of a stronger and more incisive witness to the Gospel in today's world," the Pope said.

Quoting from St. John Mary Vianney, the Holy Curé of Ars, the Pope stated that "the priesthood is the love of the heart of Jesus."

"This touching expression makes us reflect, first of all, with heartfelt gratitude on the immense gift which priests represent, not only for the Church, but also for humanity itself," the Pope said. "I think of all those priests who quietly present Christ's words and actions each day to the faithful and to the whole world, striving to be one with the Lord in their thoughts and their will, their sentiments and their style of life."

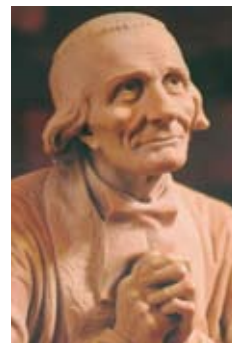
The Pope said the true dynamic center of the mission is in Jesus Christ.

"The centrality of Christ brings with it the correct appreciation of the ministerial priesthood, without which there would be neither the Eucharist, nor even the mission nor the Church herself," he said.

The Pope said it is important to encourage in priests, especially young generations, a correct reception of the texts of the Second Ecumenical Vatican Council, interpreted in the light of the Church's entire fund of doctrine.

"It seems urgent to recover that awareness that has always been at the heart of the Church's mission, which impels priests to be present, identifiable and recognizable both for their judgment of faith, for their personal virtues as well as for the habit, in the contexts of culture and of charity," he said.

The Pope asked the Most Holy Virgin to awaken in the heart of every priest a generous and renewed commitment to the ideal of complete self-oblation to Christ and the Church, which inspired the thoughts and actions of St. John Mary Vianney.



"Dear priests, Christ is counting on you," the Pope said. "In the footsteps of the Curé of Ars, let yourselves be enthralled by him. In this way you too will be, for the world in our time, heralds of hope, reconciliation and peace!"

Saint John Vianney
Patron saint of priests



Facts About Retirement

Historically, retirement was a stage of life few individuals lived long enough to experience or enjoy. In the early 20th century, the average life expectancy was age 47. As a result, most people worked until they became too sick to continue. Because the advanced medical knowledge and resources we enjoy today were not yet available, a majority of people died quickly of acute illness. Overall, time spent in retirement was only 7% of adulthood or about three years. In the early 21st century, 25% of one's adulthood can be spent in retirement. Because the average life expectancy in 2010 is 76 years, those retiring at age 65, on average, can expect to spend 18 to 20 years in the role of retiree!

The concept of retirement that we associate with leisure, travel, family activities, hobbies, and educational pursuits is a modern idea. The role of "retiree" and the stage of "retirement" we identify with today is a socially constructed concept that was created as a result of the passage of the Social Security Act in 1935. With the creation of Social Security, a financial incentive or pension was made available to older workers to encourage them to retire from the workforce and to enable younger workers to take their place; thus stimulating economic growth and progress. This opportunity to "retire" from paid employment provided older adults with a new lifestyle, the lifestyle of a "retiree."

Author: Christine A. Price, Ph.D., OSU State Extension Specialist, Gerontology, The Ohio State University.

Membership and Benefits, Why and How

If you are a retired priest or bishop and are interested in becoming a member of the LSRP, please visit our website for an application at www.LSRPinc.org or call (239) 498-0736. Over 250 of your colleagues have already joined.

Benefits

We strive to improve the quality of life for senior priests and bishops in all 50 states. Membership will provide pertinent financial information, communication to and between clergy; and address state, regional and national issues impacting retired clergy.

Considerations will be given and emphasis placed on spiritual retreats, seminars and travel plans to places of personal or religious interest. LSRP will develop a forum for retired (senior) priests and bishops to discuss individual concerns. LSRP will enable retired (senior) priests and bishops to speak with a collaborative voice.

As a member, the Board of Directors will work collaboratively to ensure you receive the most from your membership.



LSRP, Inc. Board of Directors

RETIREMENT POEM

Come, my friends,
'Tis not too late to seek a newer world.
Push off, and sitting well in order smite
The sounding furrows; for my purpose holds
To sail beyond the sunset, and the baths
Of all the western stars, until I die.

It may be that the gulfs will wash us down:
It may be we shall touch the Happy Isles,
And see the great Achilles, whom we knew.
Tho' much is taken, much abides; and tho'
We are not now that strength which in old
days

Moved the earth and heaven; that which we
are, we are;
One equal temper of heroic hearts,
Made weak by time and fate, but strong in will
To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield.
— from *Ulysses* by **Alfred Tennyson**

How You Can Help

If you are part of the general public and are interested in helping the Laity in Support of Retired Priests either by volunteering, donating or holding a fundraiser we need your help!

Our grassroots program for retired priests is completely unique within the United States. We strive to give back to the bishops and priests who have given us so much throughout the years, and have asked for so little in return. On behalf of many retired priests and bishops in the United States, we thank you for your support.

To donate any amount, please return the enclosed envelope. Or you can choose to donate via credit card at LSRPinc.org.

Contact Us

Laity in Support of Retired Priests, Inc. (LSRP)
P.O. Box 1019
Bonita Springs, FL 34133-1019

Email: info@lsrpinc.org
Web: www.LSRPinc.org

LSRP was incorporated in the state of Florida in July 2007 as a not-for-profit corporation. LSRP, Inc. has been approved by the IRS as a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization and all donations are tax deductible as allowed by law.



LAITY IN SUPPORT OF RETIRED PRIESTS, INC.

**CREATING A BRIGHTER FUTURE
FOR THOSE WHO SERVED**

P.O. Box 1019

Bonita Springs, FL 34133-1019

NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
BONITA SPRINGS, FL
PERMIT #21