



THE DIOCESE OF BELLEVILLE

August 4, 2021
Feast of St. John Vianney

Dear Friends in Christ:

Since arriving in the Diocese of Belleville a year ago, many people I've met in our parishes have spoken fondly of the priests they have known who made a lasting, positive impression on their lives. As I travel the diocese, many people can recall for me a time when they or a family member had been helped by their parish priest. These are wonderful stories, and I am grateful for the ministry of the priests who have served so well.

On September 11-12, we will have an opportunity to express our appreciation to our priests and affirm their ministry among us through a gift to our diocese's annual Retired Diocesan Priests Collection which will be taken up in all parishes. The proceeds from this collection will be used solely to provide quality health care for our current and future retired priests, including long-term care in nursing facilities, Medicare supplemental insurance and prescription medications. At present, the Belleville Diocese has 52 diocesan priests of retirement age: 29 who are currently retired and 23 who continue in active, full-time ministry.

Given the large number of retirement-age priests and escalating health care costs, I ask for your help. Your gift to the Retired Diocesan Priests Collection will ensure good retirement and health care coverage for them, providing personal dignity for those who are currently retired as well as for our younger priests who will retire in the future. The priests of the Belleville Diocese do not benefit from the December collection for retired religious, so your support for this special collection is vital.

I hope you will make a generous gift to this important collection again this year. Please remember me and all of our priests in your daily prayers. Please know that I pray for you, the people of our diocese and for all of our clergy each day.

May the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of the Church and Mother of Priests, place you close to Jesus her Son.

In our Lord,

Most Reverend Michael McGovern
Bishop of Belleville

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