

Good, holy, and compassionate priests are a gift to God's people and the parishes they serve. Our future as a Catholic community will be even more vibrant if we have a flourishing priesthood.

We are grateful that so many young men are now discerning a priestly vocation; 20 men are currently enrolled as seminarians for the Diocese of Grand Rapids. However, within the next decade 28 priests from our diocese will reach or be over retirement age.

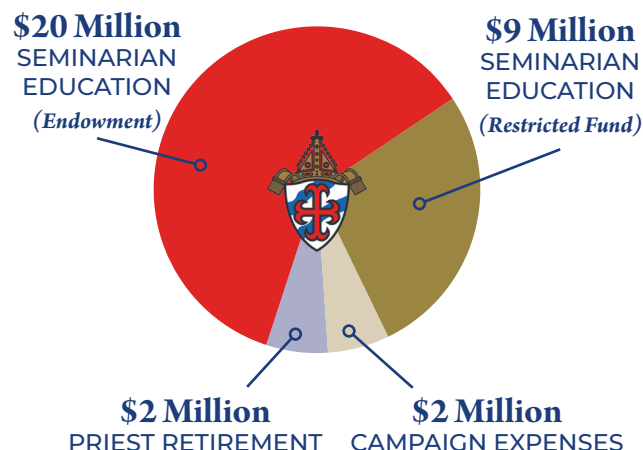
As a diocese, we have an opportunity to say thank you to these faithful and faith-filled priests who have celebrated Mass, baptized our children, buried our loved ones, and helped us to grow in our faith. This opportunity is available through the *Our Shepherds – Our Future* Capital Campaign, a \$33 million-dollar campaign to support seminarian education and priest retirement.

***We are asking everyone in the diocese to participate. How deeply reassuring would it be if 100% of the families in our diocese stood in solidarity with these men as they have stood with us?***

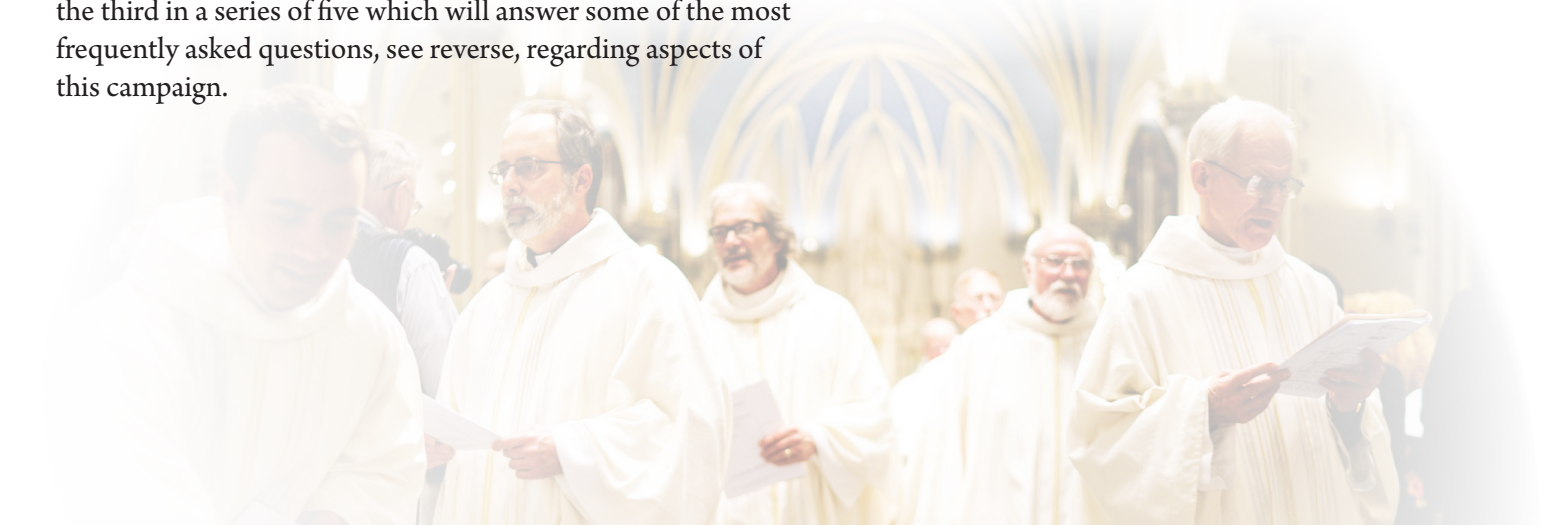
For us to successfully complete a campaign of this magnitude, we are inviting all parishioners to consider making a sacrificial gift payable over the next three years. Please know that a gift of any amount will be gratefully received and used in accordance with the initiatives of the campaign. Our young men are eager to serve, and our priests have devoted a lifetime to serving. Please prayerfully consider a gift to this campaign in support of them.

We know that you and others have questions. This insert is the third in a series of five which will answer some of the most frequently asked questions, see reverse, regarding aspects of this campaign.

## CAMPAIGN GOAL: \$33 MILLION



  
**28**  
PRIESTS WILL REACH  
RETIREMENT AGE IN  
THE NEXT DECADE



What does *Our Shepherds – Our Future* hope to raise on behalf of priest retirement?

This campaign hopes to raise \$2 million on behalf of priest retirement. This will help to strengthen the Priests' Pension Plan which is managed by the Michigan Catholic Conference. This amount will ensure that there is adequate funding to provide a dignified retirement for those set to retire soon and those who have their entire ministry ahead of them.

What does a retired priest's diocesan-paid benefit include?

Priests are encouraged to personally save for retirement throughout their years of ministry. In addition to anything they may have had the opportunity to save, priests are afforded a modest monthly pension along with health and car insurance as a small way to thank them for their years of service. A retired priest is responsible for his housing and for the purchase and maintenance of his vehicle.

Do priests removed from ministry for misconduct continue to receive benefits?

The diocese is legally obligated to provide a retirement benefit to anyone who is vested in its retirement plan. Pensions are provided based on years of active ministry.

Isn't clergy retirement supported through the Retirement Fund for Religious collection or CSA?

No, our priests' retirement fund is only supported through an annual assessment of 1 percent of a parish's revenue. Neither the Catholic Services Appeal (CSA) nor the Retirement Fund for Religious collection, which provides for the retirement of priests and religious from religious orders, supports the diocesan priest pension plan.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR  
PRAYERS FOR THIS CAMPAIGN  
AND THE DISCERNMENT OF  
YOUR SUPPORT!

If you have a question that was not answered, please submit it to Annalise Laumeyer, diocesan director of communications:  
[alaumeyer@grdiocese.org](mailto:alaumeyer@grdiocese.org)  
or your pastor.

Visit [GRdiocese.org/our-shepherds-our-future](https://GRdiocese.org/our-shepherds-our-future) to learn more about this campaign and its initiatives.

