

# Annual Appeal <sup>the 2021</sup>

## A LETTER FROM FATHER PHILIP MORRIS

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

I was ordained for the service of God's people of our Archdiocese on December 19, 1962. I retired from full-time ministry on July 1, 2008. As I reflect on my 45 years of ministry, I must say that for me, it was all 'blessing,' serving and sharing the journey with God's people in the parish communities of O.L. Mercy, Jersey City, Guardian Angel, Allendale, O.L. of Sorrows, South Orange, St. John the Baptist, Hillsdale, and serving with brother priests in the ministry of education/formation at our Archdiocesan Seminary of the Immaculate Conception.

I pray to God with thanksgiving for all the years of opportunities given to me, his imperfect servant, to touch God's people with his tender mercy, to open their minds and hearts to God's Light and Love, to motivate them to pattern their lives as disciples of Christ, and to continue Christ's mission. Truly, as a minister among God's people and through them, I was a blest recipient of those same gifts from God and being renewed in my calling.

As with most people in their senior stage of life, despite our hopes and plans to remain active, I have found myself coping with physical limitations that have me "re-framing" my life. There is less time for activism and more time for reading, reflective prayer, finding ways of being more 'present' to others, to my surroundings, to God, and for enjoying the simple blessings of life. There have been 'bumps in the road.' I have had to cope with a number of unanticipated health challenges that have required medical attention, some surgical interventions, and extended regimens of physical therapy. This past July, it was open-heart surgery.

Thanks be to God for the advances in the medical and healthcare professions.

I'm grateful for Medicare. I am grateful to the people of God in the Archdiocese of Newark for providing me with Supplemental Medical Insurance through A.A.R.P. I have not had to worry about seeking and receiving medical services or paying for them. I am sure that all my brother retired priests would join me in these sentiments of gratitude.

This past January, I received an invitation from Cardinal Tobin to participate once again in the Annual Appeal. I will do so with a generous heart. I have experienced so many blessings, especially the goodness of God's people in the Archdiocese, whom I have come to know and serve as a priest. In my retired years, I have experienced the many ways they, through the Archdiocese, continue to support me. I see the 2021 Annual Appeal as an opportunity for me to manifest my gratitude, to do my part in support of ministries of the Archdiocese that continue serving so many people in Christ's name.

I write this small message to encourage you also to participate in the Appeal.

May we Pray to know the ways God loves us and desires us to share that blessing with others.

*Father Philip Morris*

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