



How do parishes track visits to the homebound, nursing homes, hospitals etc.?

This was the question in last spring's Gleanings. These are the responses that came in:

Currently, we track visits through call in's to the parish secretary. She records them accordingly in a binder.

If the question is about coordination, there are several web-based apps that can track visits and the status of the patient. *Parishsoft* has a module that could coordinate volunteers but I haven't seen it. *Dcn. Bill Rabjohn, St. John the Evangelist, Spencerport.*

I regularly visit 6 of our current homebound myself and I have a list of the volunteer ministers and the person(s) whom they visit. The understanding is that they see their homebound at least once a month. I simply trust the visits are taking place as they should. I also make the guidelines for Communion visits to the homebound available for the ministers. *Pat Meyers, Immaculate Conception, Ithaca.*

We have a database of homebound people and the volunteers who bring the Eucharist to them. Once a month, we invite all the

homebound Eucharistic ministers to come forward for a blessing. If the homebound person postpones their visit, the minister contacts me and I make sure they have access to the Eucharist for any other time during the month. All pastoral associates have access to the master list and we update all the time. I can't say we have any problems tracking. The only problem we have is if we have someone move far away like to Churchville. Then I contact the P.A. at the parish and we arrange for their visit. *Drew Desmarais, Peace of Christ, Rochester.*

I have a spreadsheet with divisions for those out of area, those visited by staff and volunteers, and those who would like or not like a visit. Each is a separate sheet in the spreadsheet but I also have an alphabetical master list. I mark the date for whether the person received a phone call, visit or if I left a message. The other ministers go weekly or check in with me monthly. *Bernie Tomasso, Ss. Mary and Martha.*

At the Southeast Rochester Catholic Communities of St. Boniface, St. Mary's and

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**Goodbye and thank you,
Mike Miller!
Godspeed on your journey...**

Welcome to new pastoral associates and ministers, or new assignments:

Dcn. Ray Garbach, Holy Spirit, Webster

Laura Gleeson, St. Katharine Drexel, Macedon

Cathy Malik, Holy Apostles, Rochester

Aaron Wilson, St. Alphonsus, Auburn

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“A Factory of Hope”

By Cathy Kamp, Chair of Pastoral Associates’/Pastoral Ministers’ Association Executive Committee
Pastoral Associate, St. Joseph’s, Penfield, NY

Last week, 30 of us from the Diocese of Rochester made a pilgrimage to the World Meeting of Families 2015 and the Papal Visit. There we met first with 20,000 other pilgrims from around the world at the WMF Congress, and then gathered with nearly one million of the faithful and the curious to celebrate the Holy Mass with Pope Francis.

Of the many beautifully crafted addresses the Holy Father gave to the American people, perhaps none resonated more than the unscripted remarks he made at the Festival of Families on the Benjamin Franklin Parkway in Philly. After a week of meeting with “lovable” American Catholics, Pope Francis said, “The family is

like a factory of hope.” He did not say this in an idealized way. Rather, he quipped that some might think he is no authority because he is not married. He acknowledged that family life is not always easy or in any way perfect. “Families have difficulties,” he said. “Families – we quarrel, sometimes plates can fly, and children bring headaches...However, in families, there is always light.” How are the difficulties overcome? “With love.”

It’s that simple; it is that much of a pastoral challenge. He continued on this theme in his homily on Sunday at the Papal Mass. There he reminded us of the importance of the simple

gestures of a warm meal, a hug, the blessing of a child at bedtime. These signs make our families “true domestic churches. They are the right place for faith to become life, and life to become faith.” So, too, our parishes become families when we can offer these simple gestures of love and compassion.

The Pope remarked that the gathering of so many families in one place in Philadelphia was in itself “a kind of miracle in today’s world.” How do we continue the miracle in our world here in the Diocese of Rochester? Let’s continue the discussion in the months ahead as we all plan for the Jubilee Year of Mercy!

Gleanings Newsletter

We are delighted to print articles, meditations, parish stories, prayer requests, book reviews etc. from pastoral associates/ministers of all parishes and ministries in the Rochester Diocese. We also are looking to highlight one pastoral associate/minister per issue so that we can all get to our colleagues in the vineyard. Please submit ideas and contributions often to bmcdermott@dor.org; 328-3228, ext. 1287.

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Blessed Sacrament we are just starting a process of tracking visitation. We have two priests and two pastoral associates that cover the hospitals. We also have 5 volunteers who along with the staff go out to visit the homebound and folks in rehab’s or nursing homes. One of the parishes sends birthday cards to everyone over 75 years of age, two send “thinking of you cards” from the Faith Formation Families twice a year, as well as occasional cards from staff. Then of course there are the Christmas cards and Poinsettia deliveries. We have prayer shawls and prayer lists in the bulletins. And now the hospitals are calling to say we have someone in their care but they can’t tell us who!

I started an excel spreadsheet with three different pages: home-bound, hospitals, and nursing homes. I have

alphabetized the list that includes people from all three parishes. Under the ministry section I listed Holy Communion (HCM), Friendly Visit (FV), and noted if the person was for -Cards Only- or if they have received a prayer shawl. This spread sheet is available to all the staff in the staff shared drive on the network. The people who have received the Anointing of the Sick are in a separate book in the secretary’s office. I have spoken with most of the volunteers about emailing me about when they make a visit so I can add it to the list, but I left the hard copy of the visitation book in the offices in case I miss someone.

Sue Howard, Southeast Catholic Communities, Rochester.

Our goal is to engage a team of

people trained for homebound and nursing home and/or hospice visitation -- whether extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion or other. The listing is matched to the EM who has responsibility for them with people/locations and report back in on frequency, health issues, special needs, or other. We are in the process of developing this now, so can share more as we engage the process. *Ray Garbach, Holy Spirit, Webster.*

Transfiguration has an electronic, shared database of all those who need visiting Ems. The pastoral ministers update and move people around according to need. *Tim Smith, Transfiguration, Pittsford.*



Bringing joy to those who cannot come to church

By Jeriann McEvoy, pastoral minister, Our Lady of Lourdes and St. Anne

I've held the position of Pastoral Minister/Visitation Coordinator for three years. After participating in the care decisions and late-in-life experiences of my own parents, I became committed to keeping elders connected with their faith and their church community.

I started in April of 2012 with a 10 hour per week paid position that fulfilled an internship for a St. Bernard's class. I finished my studies at St. Bernard's and graduated with a Masters in Pastoral Studies in May, 2013. Along with my now 12 hours a week ministry, I also teach at The Strong Museum which keeps me grounded as a lay person, working "out in the world."

Coordinating visitation ministry for two clustered parishes in Brighton/City of Rochester, Our Lady of Lourdes and St. Anne is quite a task. I am blessed to work with 25 dedicated volunteers who, with myself, reach out to 50 – 60 homebound parishioners, as well as 150 Catholic residents in seven assisted living and nursing home facilities. With the goal of "keeping people from falling through the cracks," we try to balance the needs of those we serve with the availability and interests of volunteers by providing three methods of contact: Self-Scheduled Visitation,

Sunday Assisted Care Communion, and Phone Call Ministry.

I became committed to keeping elders connected with their faith and their church community.

Our Self-Scheduled Visitation and Phone Call ministers communicate with homebound parishioners wherever they reside, be it private home or facility. I provide them with a "reflection sheet" to record the date, topics discussed, and action taken/promised whenever they visit in person or by phone. Some use the sheet, others prefer to record their visits on 3x5 cards, in spiral bound notebooks, and through e-mail. Periodically, they send a copy of their notes to me, or I phone them and they give me the information, so that if they need someone to cover for them, or retire and a new visitor takes over, there will be background information. They also have the opportunity to "report in" at our Fall and Spring Visitation Ministry Meetings. At all times, they know they can contact me if a concern arises, or there is a request to see a priest.

Our Sunday Assisted Care ministers focus on distributing Communion in facilities on Sunday mornings, and are divided into teams based on the facility they cover. There is a "captain" for each team, who is responsible for sending me the number of Catholic residents each month. We used to have the names, but regulations prohibit release of that information now. As with the other ministers, they know they can contact me with concerns or requests.



Jeriann McEvoy

This system is a "work in progress," being continually adjusted based on the suggestions of the ministers who volunteer their time and effort in this ministry. I believe they are a dedicated group, and I know they bring much joy to the lives they touch.

Perhaps we could arrange an opportunity for those of us involved in coordinating this ever-expanding ministry to share ideas and support. I know I would appreciate professional development opportunities and the chance to meet others who do what I do. If you would like to discuss this further, please contact me: jmcevoy@dor.org or 1-585-473-9656, ext. 143.

Question for next issue of Gleanings. Please share your experience and thoughts (bmcdermott@dor.org).

From a fellow pastoral associate: "I'm just curious, what kind of time do the rest of you pastoral associates and ministers actually take off? How many of you get a whole day every week? Two days? How many are able to take all their vacation time each year? Any advice for balancing the demands of the ministry (especially funerals) with the need for a healthy lifestyle?"

New Committee Member

Lori Cunliffe from St. Patrick's in Victor is no longer able to participate on the Pastoral Associates'/Pastoral Ministers' Association Executive Committee due to a change in her job description.

Since **Tim Smith**, from Transfiguration, Pittsford, came within one vote of being elected and was one of those nominated by you, we have asked Tim to join the Committee. He has graciously agreed to serve.

2015

- Wednesday, Oct 7 **Nostra Aetate Panel Discussion** with Catholic, Jewish and Muslim communities. 7:00 pm. St. Bernard's. All are welcome.
- Sunday, Oct 18 **Tours of Religious Sites for Catholics.** 2-3pm, Hindu Temple of Rochester; 3-4 pm, Temple B'rith Kodesh; 4-5 pm., The Islamic Center of Rochester, Contact Betsy at 585-328-3228 or bmcdermott@dor.org for more details.
- Wednesday, Oct. 21** **Pastoral Associates/Ministers Fall Workshop: Volunteer Ministers: Empowering Parishioners for Leadership.** 9:00-3:00pm at St. Bernard's School, 120 French Rd., Pittsford. Register through Betsy McDermott at 585-328-3228 or bmcdermott@dor.org.

2016

- Monday-Wednesday April 11-13 **Annual Convocation of Priests and Pastoral Administrators.** Theme: Christ's Priesthood at the Cross. Speaker: Professor John Bergsma, Ph.D., Professor of Theology, Franciscan University of Steubenville.
- Wednesday, May 4 **Annual Gathering of the Ministerium.** Speaker: Professor Scott Hahn, Ph.D., The Father Michael Scanlon Professor of Biblical Theology and the New Evangelization, University of Steubenville.
- Saturday, May 28 **Deacon Ordination.** 10:00 am. Sacred Heart Cathedral.
- Saturday, June 4 **Priest Ordination.** 10:30 am. Sacred Heart Cathedral.

What's going on in the parishes this fall?



Pastoral Associate at **St. Michael's** Newark, Pat Albrecht is the "founding Mother" of a very special project. Laurel House is a comfort care home where residents spend their final days, at no cost to themselves or others, in a highly supportive, warm and compassionate environment, surrounded beloved ones and kind-hearted staff and volunteers who attend to their needs.

In this picture they are celebrating a \$10,000 check donated by the Masonic Lodge #83 of Newark.

The Time of Renewal is held each fall at **Holy Cross** offering an opportunity for our parishioners and friends to become re-energized in their faith. Each year, the Spiritual Life Committee has chosen a "Parish Theme" which is something we want to reflect on for the parish year. As an example, this year our theme is "One Church, One Family, At Home in God's Mercy." The Renewal will be held in Church for 3 evenings running from 7:00 p.m. to approximately 8:15 p.m. on Sunday, Monday and Tuesday evening, Sept. 27- Sept. 29. The presenter has usually preached at the week-end masses leading into the Renewal, giving us a "sneak peek" at the presentations. This year our presenter is Fr. Dan Riley, a native of Rochester and a Charlotte High School graduate. He is also a founding member of Mt. Irenaeus, the mountain retreat where he and his Franciscan brothers live an open and contemplative life in the foothills of the Allegheny Mountains.

Immaculate Conception parish in Ithaca is beginning its Adult Formation classes titled: *Fifth Commandment Issues*. Pat Meyers leads two groups a week for six weeks covering topics of murder/self-defense, abortion, capital punishment, war/just war doctrine, euthanasia/removal from life support and suicide/killing of the human spirit.

At Assumption in Fairport we are beginning 8 sessions on *God's Creation Cries for Justice* (Pope Francis' encyclical).

Pastoral Associates'/Pastoral Ministers' Association Executive Committee



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- Mary Jo DiNoto**
St. Rita, Webster
- Sheryl Zabel**
Assumption, Fairport
- Tim Smith**
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