



**ARCHDIOCESE  
OF PORTLAND IN**  
OREGON



**Catholic Charities**

## **PARISH VISITATION TO THE HOMEBOUND**

*Practical Tips to start and maintain a parish ministry*

### UNDERSTANDING THE MINISTRY

- Explore the theological/faith framework grounded in Jesus' healing ministry, and the idea of bringing the faith community to those parishioners who can no longer attend church.
- Understand the need to assist older adults with their desire to age in place by staying engaged in their communities, and creating support systems to meet their needs; while also recognizing the gifts and opportunities that older adults provide to a community.
- Examine how/why a visitation ministry fits into the context of parish life

### IDENTIFY PERSONS TO BE VISITED

- Identify older adults who are homebound
- Establish procedures for identifying parishioners recently released from health care facilities, or who have had a significant change in their health status.
- Work with local agencies where possible
- Determine any special needs of persons identified for visitation

### RECRUIT, SELECT & PLACE VOLUNTEERS

- Develop a recruiting strategy:
  - parish bulletin
  - presentation at Mass
  - word of mouth
  - letter to indicated parishioners
  - personal invitation
  - other approaches
- Select/appoint a Volunteer Coordinator for Parish Visitors.
- Consult with Catholic Charities Senior Services Resource Center, as needed.

PROVIDE FOR INITIAL TRAINING & ORIENTATION by participating in Catholic Charities or parish training programs.

### ESTABLISH PROCEDURES

- Define procedures regarding emergencies, absences, reporting abuse, etc.
- Establish record keeping procedures

## CONNECT WITH A VIABLE SUPPORT NETWORK

- Parish volunteer coordinator participates in network groups and/or regional training and information sessions
- Parish volunteer coordinator provides opportunities for support
- Volunteers regularly participate in parish and/or regional support groups and updated trainings

## PROVIDE FOR ONGOING TRAINING AND FORMATION

- Parish volunteer coordinator provides information about seminars, videos, web resources, etc. for volunteers, accessing support from Catholic Charities, as needed
- Parish volunteer coordinator identifies opportunities for reflection and retreats

## CARRY OUT MINISTRY REVIEWS

- Determine schedule for yearly review with Pastoral Visitors
- Use review time as an opportunity to thank, confirm and celebrate the contribution of the volunteer(s)

## ADMINISTER THE PASTORAL VISITORS PROGRAM

- Determine reporting structure: relationship to pastor, pastoral staff, parish council, health ministry, etc.
- Integrate Parish Visitors (structurally, organizationally) with other parish ministries
- Familiarize volunteers with local community resources, agencies and materials
- Provide a parish resource space for this ministry, if available
- Set up office as appropriate: space, budget, phone network