

Suggestions for Volunteers visiting residents

- The best times to visit are generally mid-morning from 10:00-11:30 am, in the afternoon from 2:00-4:30 pm, and sometimes in the evening from 6:00-7:30 pm.
- When you're entering a room, even if the door is open, knock first. Keep the door open at all times while visiting.
- Don't feel obligated to solve the personal problems of a resident. Just being there to listen and empathize is important.
- If a person doesn't want you to leave, try to get them involved in another activity. Take them to be with a group of people, turn on the television, or place something in their hands like a small memento that they can hold on to.
- **Keep promises. Don't promise to return if you aren't able to come back. Never say anything unless you mean it.**
- Bring in the Sacred Heart bulletin, a Bible, a newspaper and/or magazine. Discuss with resident what interests him/her. Share the happening of our church along with this week's Gospel readings and his/her family stories and events.
- Bring their favorite music and listen to it with them. Catholic prayers and music are available at the monthly meetings.
- Ask the resident if he/she would like to pray. Attend Mass with the resident at the nursing home if you can. (See designated times). Verify if the resident is receiving Communion. If not, contact the church's Eucharistic Ministry Coordinator, Mary Round.
- Sometimes touch can be very comforting. Do remember, though, that older skin can be very fragile.
- Bring makeup, perfume, aftershave, or other personal grooming items that would be a treat for the resident. If the resident is a woman, ask if she would like help with the makeup. (Tip: don't leave expensive items.)
- Offer to escort the resident to an event that the facility is offering such as exercise or a movie.
- Bring items that the resident used to love like flowers or a favorite candy (if diet permits) or a pair of warm soft socks.
- Bring children in the family to visit. Maybe the children could make a picture for the wall to bring and present. Have them share their school experiences and pictures.
- Bring a pet to visit. (Note: be sure to get permission from the facility and be sure the pet is clean and well behaved.)
- Take a walk with the resident especially if you can take them outside. If the resident is in a wheelchair, push them around the facility, go to visit another resident, or take them outside.
- Celebrate holidays and the resident's birthday. The celebration doesn't have to be fancy or involve more than just you and the resident. All that is needed is that the resident knows that you cared enough to remember them.
- Bring a book and read a chapter or get a book on tape and listen together. Remember to not do too much in a single visit and don't start a book reading unless you intend to finish.
- Visit regularly. The more you visit, the more you will have in common and the easier the visits will become. Involve other residents in the visit, if desired, as well. Some residents do not have family and would welcome the inclusion.
- Some of this information was found on <http://www.fullcirclecare.org> and TheLegacy.com