

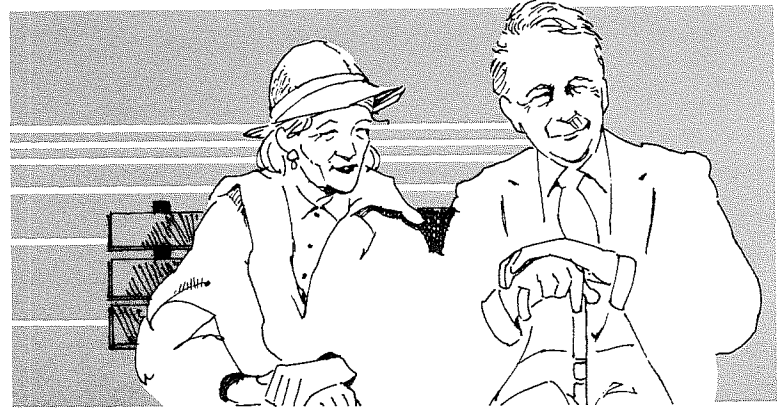
**FORSAKE
ME
NOT**

Produced by the
**INSTITUTIONAL
MINISTRIES
COMMITTEE**
Special Ministries Board – WELS

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PREFACE

When this booklet was presented for review to a number of organizations and individuals within our Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod, the question was asked, "What is its purpose?" The answer is very simple. It is the hope of the Institutional Ministries Committee of our Synod, whose joint efforts produced this booklet, that all our pastors and people will become more aware of and sensitive to the needs of those who cannot be served with the Gospel in ordinary ways – especially those confined to nursing homes and homes for the aged.

There are many challenges for the pastor who serves in our modern day and age. One of the purposes of this booklet is to help the pastor meet those challenges. In providing physical and spiritual services for residents of nursing homes and homes for the aged, the exciting news is that laymen and laywomen from the congregation are willing and able to assist in this work. In fact, under the direction of the pastor, they can carry on this work with a minimum demand on the pastor's time.

As the pastor is challenged today so the congregation and its members are also challenged. Many tasks within the congregation and outside the congregation cry for attention. The congregation cannot possibly serve all who are institutionalized in its area. But the congregation can take up the challenge by serving one, two, or more of the institutions that surround it.

With over 30 million people institutionalized, the need is great. We pray that the Lord will use this booklet to make us as concerned about the souls of people who live in institutions – especially those who live in nursing homes and homes for the aged – as we are about the souls of those who live in the homes that surround our churches.

Please add your prayers to ours that this booklet will be used to God's praise and glory.



INTRODUCTION

The Need for Institutional Ministry

Thirty million Americans live in "institutions." That means one person in eight is confined to a jail, sanitarium, mental hospital, nursing home, trauma center, general hospital, etc.

Who is so deaf that he does not hear in these bare statistics a great cry of human suffering? And we Christians hear more. They are calling us to "come over" to them – to the prisoners, the bed-ridden, the aged – and to bring them the Word of Life in their hour of need.

They certainly can't come to us! By definition they are segregated and shut away from us; their isolation is a big part of their hurt. Yet they, too, belong to that world which "God so loved," and we need to serve them where they are. The concept of "institutional ministry" highlights this need.

A Word to Our Pastors

Your work schedule is already strained. We know that if you become more involved in institutional ministry you will have even more reason to get tired. Moreover, such people will not swell your membership roll nor result in "revenue enhancement." But remember what the Master said: "When you give a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind, and you will be blessed. Although they cannot repay you, you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous" (Luke 14:13-14)

Yours is therefore a delightful burden. Be an "example to the flock" in order that the Church in our time may meet the challenge of institutional ministry. Become more intensively active in this ministry yourself and provide the leadership for your fellow Christians: train them to help in this work; keep watch; "Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor...be faithful in prayer." (Romans 12:11-12)

A Word to Our Laymen

In its widest sense ministry simply means serving. Our Savior came "not to be served, but to serve." That's why you do the same. But you can always do more.

You can minister more actively to those special people who cannot be ministered to in the normal way. You can share the love of God in Christ. Isn't that a blessed and inspiring service to others?

Permit an adaptation of the well-known movie line ("Ben Hur"): "The Master keeps you alive to serve His ship." Serving the Lord is your dignity. The Apostle Peter calls you "a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light" (1 Peter 2:9) -

In this booklet we plan to show you the many ways in which you can serve along with your congregation to bring about an effective institutional ministry. Let each person look to it. Consider well your God-given talents; then make time available and take action.

Zeroing In on the Nursing Home

They say that for whatever ails you there is an institution. Ten percent of all the institutionalized are in nursing homes, so we are suggesting that a congregation begin its concentrated effort there. We are thinking especially of the opportunities awaiting us Christians in a non-church-related nursing home.

A nursing home seems to be the easiest kind of institution to approach, the most likely to welcome our "institutional ministry." And don't you think most pastors and lay people would be more comfortable starting work there rather than in a jail or mental hospital?

Besides, the spiritual need of nursing home residents is urgent. Their average age is eighty-four; their average stay in a "home" only two years. Whether they know Christ or not, they too must die, and "after this the Judgment."

It is especially at times of crisis in their lives that God makes people receptive to His Gospel. We believe that in the nursing home God has given us an "open door" for Christian ministry. Let's begin there!



I. GETTING ORGANIZED

For any on-going project, a certain amount of organization is needed. The Church has always had its special offices: first Apostles, then pastors and teachers; deacons, and (lately) also trustees, and in many congregations boards for education, stewardship, and evangelism.

We suggest that the congregation establish a "Parish Special Ministries Board." Such a board will be able to assist the pastor in promoting and guiding this important work. Through its regular reports it will help to keep the need for special ministries close to the congregation's heart.

A Parish Special Ministries Board

The term "special ministries," as currently used in our circles, encompasses many areas of concern: services to the aging, soul conservation, the hearing impaired, special education, military services, student services, the mission for the visually impaired, and institutional ministries. This is a vast area of concern indeed! In this booklet, however, we make a beginning with the last area mentioned - institutional ministries - and specifically, a nursing home ministry.

In discussions with the pastor, the board members will try to become clear as to just what their overall purpose in the field of institutional work might be. It helps to set this down in writing; for example:

Our initial goal in the field of special ministries is to share God's Word and show Christian concern for people in our community who are institutionalized, starting with nursing homes.

Then the board will explore what intermediate goals might best fulfill this overall purpose. Such goals may be:

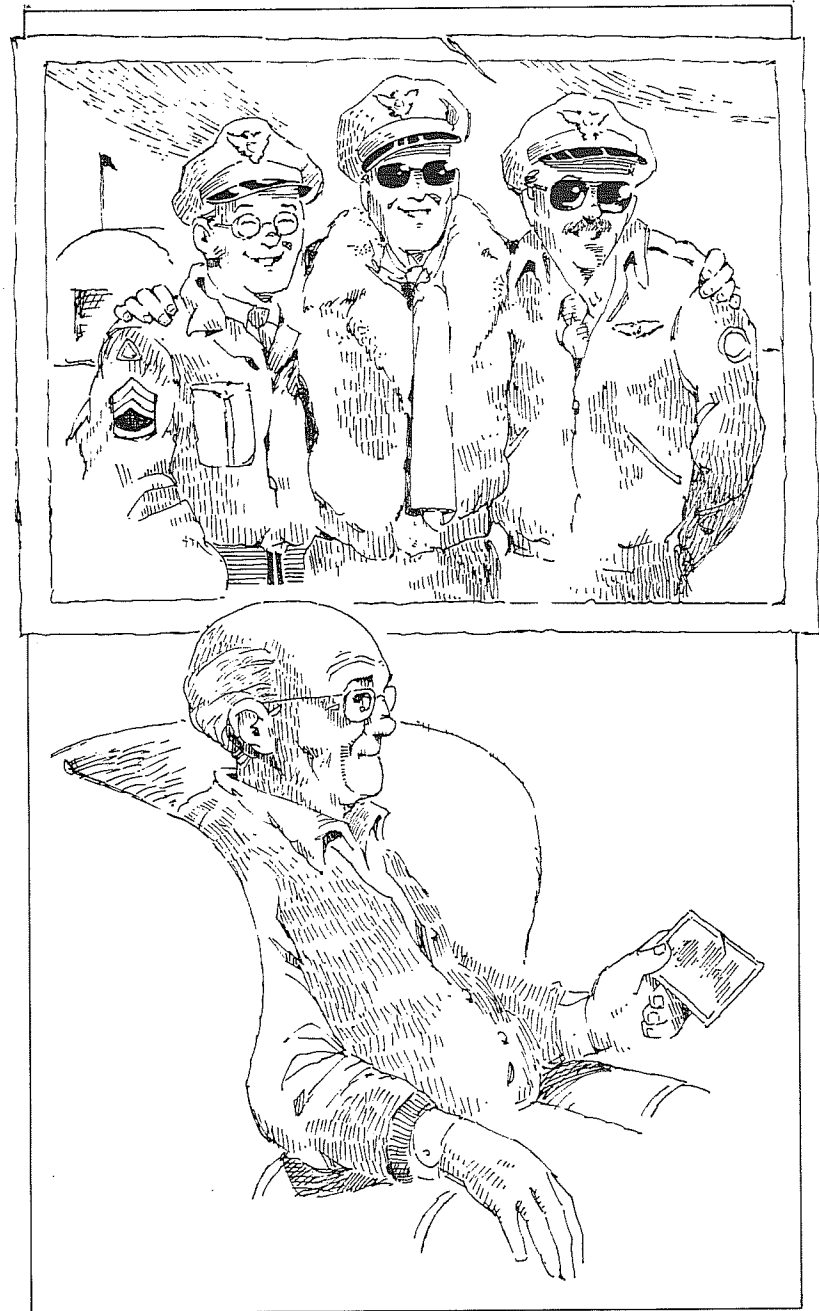
1. To set down a list of things this congregation can do in a nursing home; such as:
 - Conduct Bible classes (cf. Chapter IV)
 - Hold Divine Services
 - Have private devotions with individuals
 - Make friends with lonely residents
 - Show whatever kindness is needed (cf. Chapters V and VI)
 - Ask the nursing home staff for other ideas;
2. To recruit from among our fellow members a team of loving and dedicated persons, who would be receptive to training by our pastor for work with him in a special nursing home ministry; (cf. Chapters II-VI)
3. To find a nursing home in our community with which we can begin our special ministry. For this purpose we must choose our *contact person*, who will also serve as liaison with the nursing home from here on out. (cf. Chapter III)

Some Helpful Hints

Do not underestimate the importance of educating your fellow members in the value of special ministry. Our Synod and District boards can supply filmstrips, flyers, and displays for publicity, even a guest preacher to highlight this cause. In all of these methods the Holy Spirit can find a voice by which He will summon His people to commit themselves, their hearts and minds, talents and means to the cause of special ministries.

Involve the whole congregation in helping you find the right people for the team. The pastor, the council, and surely also the women's auxiliary will know of persons who have already demonstrated concern and care for nursing home residents. Compassionate people such as these are gifts from the ascended Lord to His Church, and you should use them in this important work.

The team should understand that it will be well-trained, with a group discussion of this booklet as a beginning. Each person will serve according to his or her God-given talents, level of training, and role in the Church. There will be a chain of responsibility with supervision by the board and the pastor. Along with every assignment that is accepted will go the responsibility to complete the assignment and make a follow-up report that the work has been or is being done. This procedure will help to keep the project from getting bogged down by carelessness or neglect. We owe as much both to the Lord who sends us and to the people we mean to serve.





II. THE NURSING HOME

For simplicity we are using the term “nursing home” to cover several types of living arrangements. The residents are generally well advanced in age, although there may be a few younger patients who are suffering from debilitating illnesses like multiple sclerosis, muscular dystrophy, and cancer. While some may be there only temporarily, for a period of post-hospital convalescence, most of them have moved in permanently because they cannot care for themselves or should not be left alone. Their families may live too far away or for some other reason cannot take them in. Some are either single or have no children to take care of them.

These residents may be mildly forgetful or seriously confused. “Who am I?” “Where am I?” or, “What day is this?” They may also be physically disabled because of strokes or chronic illness, and they may need skilled nursing care or some type of therapy under the direction of licensed professionals.

First Impressions Can Be Discouraging

Some days you may arrive at a nursing home and be confronted by a very discouraging sight. The lobby and lounge may be filled with patients in wheelchairs: some may be alert and well-dressed, but more of them will probably appear forlorn and woebegone, or have a faraway, distant look. Are they thinking about better days long since gone? Or the partner of many years who is gone now but never forgotten?

Next may come an assault on your sense of smell. Most nursing homes work hard to control unpleasant odors, but some days they just can't be helped. Or you may get an earful – a blaring television or a senile patient's uncontrollable screaming. You may hear a stroke victim

who is moaning or calling out for help, often not knowing exactly what for.

Something Can Be Done About This

The hard pressed staff is usually doing its utmost to bring order and comfort into this mix of suffering and desolation. They give care beyond the line of duty: gentleness, firmness, compassion, friendship. (We might also wish they would turn down the television!) There are diversions of all sorts: social activities, creative outlets, movies, games, celebrations, and intellectual exercises. Every attempt is made to improve the residents' quality of life whether they are confined to their rooms or can get up and about.

Now for all this the staff needs and welcomes the help of dedicated volunteers. Here is the door God has opened for the congregation and its special ministries team. The nursing home desires our help, and our purpose in this area of special ministries is (you will remember) “to share God's Word and Christian concern with people in our community who are institutionalized starting with nursing homes.”

Never doubt that your special ministry can make a world of difference in the nursing home. Your presence and kindness will generate smiles, fill lonely moments, and ease many burdens. And more: for you and your team come in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and of His Holy Christian Church, and you share a treasure more precious than gold or silver.

Before you read further, look over the following quiz about aging. Then check your opinions with the answers given on page 11.

Facts On Aging – A Short Quiz

“Aging is the turning of the wheel, the gradual fulfillment of the life cycle. ... Aging does not need to be hidden or denied, but can be understood, affirmed, and experienced as a process of growth by which the mystery of life is slowly revealed to us.”

- T F 1. The majority of persons past age 65 are senile, have defective memory, and are disoriented.
- T F 2. Older persons are not treatable because their mental conditions are inevitable and irreversible.
- T F 3. Most older persons have no interest in, or capacity for, sexual relations.

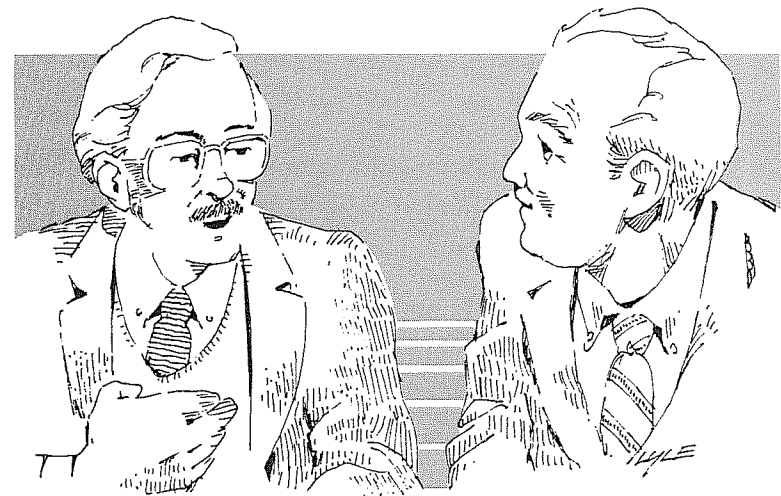
Facts On Aging Answer Sheet

- T F 4. All five senses tend to decline in old age.
- T F 5. Lung capacity tends to decline in old age.
- T F 6. The majority of old people feel miserable all the time.
- T F 7. Physical strength tends to decline in old age.
- T F 8. At least one tenth of the aged are living in long-stay institutions (nursing homes, homes for the aged, mental institutions).
- T F 9. Most old people are set in their ways and unable to change.
- T F 10. Old people usually take longer to learn something new.
- T F 11. The reaction of most old people tends to be slower than that of younger people.
- T F 12. In general, most old people are pretty much alike.
- T F 13. The majority of old people are socially isolated and lonely.
- T F 14. Over 15% of the U.S. population is now age 65 and older.
- T F 15. Most medical practitioners tend to give the aged low priority.
- T F 16. The majority of older people have incomes below the poverty level.
- T F 17. Older people tend to become more religious as they age.
- T F 18. The majority of older people are seldom irritated or angry.
- T F 19. There are approximately four times as many widows as widowers.
- T F 20. The health and socioeconomic status of older people (compared to younger people) in the year 2000 will probably be the same as now.
- T F 21. Achievement in various scientific, artistic, and creative fields is highest in younger years and steadily decreases.
- T F 22. Most elderly people can expect retirement to reduce their incomes by 50% or more.
- T F 23. The elderly are more inclined to solve their problems on the basis of past experience or solutions rather than experimenting with new ones.
- T F 24. With regard to mental functioning, many declines experienced by the elderly are not apparent except under stress conditions.
- T F 25. Though older people often express awareness of death in conversations they are not fearful of it.
- T F 26. People naturally recognize when they are old.
- T F 27. TV watching is more a leisure pursuit for the elderly than for any other age range.

- 1. F Only about 10% of persons aged 65 and older are institutionalized as a result of psychiatric illness. It is more difficult to get accurate estimates of the proportion with defective memories – partly because of the different types of memory defects and different methods in measuring it.
- 2. F It is because society considers it useless to waste time dealing with the mental and emotional problems of the aged that there is so little done.
- 3. F The majority have both interest in and capacity for sexual relations.
- 4. T Most studies agree that various aspects of vision, hearing, and touch tend to decline in old age, as well as taste and smell. Most older people fear loss of vision more than anything else.
- 5. T Lung capacity does tend to decline in old age.
- 6. F Studies show either no significant difference by age groups, or that most felt they were just as happy as when they were “young.”
- 7. T Physical strength tends to decline in old age (muscular strength).
- 8. F 4.8% of persons over age 65 and 9.2% of persons over age 75 were residents in long-stay institutions.
- 9. F Older people do tend to become more stable in their attitudes, but most of them do change and adapt to many events that affect old age.
- 10. T Statistics on experiments consistently prove this.
- 11. T One of the best documented facts on aging. It appears to be true regardless of the kind of reaction measured.
- 12. F There appears to be at least as much difference between older people as there is at any age level. Some studies show them to be less alike as they age.
- 13. F About two-thirds of the aged say they are never or hardly ever lonely. Most of these statistics are true about people who are mobile and who have family nearby.
- 14. T Only 10.3% of the population was 65 or older in 1975.
- 15. T Studies show that most doctors, nurses, occupational therapy and psychiatric personnel tend to believe the negative stereotypes about the aged and prefer to work with any other age range.
- 16. F The majority of elderly people have incomes well above the poverty level.

17. F The present generation of older people tends to be more religious than the younger generation. This appears to be an environmental difference rather than an age difference.
18. T Studies show that over one-half of the aged said they are never or hardly ever irritated, and this percentage increased to two-thirds after age 80.
19. T Wars, susceptibility to heart attacks, and other diseases are causes.
20. F It will probably be much higher. By 2000 the gaps in health, income, occupation, and education will be substantially less.
21. F There are a number of case histories to prove this false. Most creative endeavors better with maturity.
22. T Those are the facts.
23. T Life's experiences and working solutions or failures of the past guide older persons.
24. T The loss of a mate, or the discovery of serious illness, or economic misadventures will often highlight existing problems.
25. T Studies show that they are not fearful of the coming of death, but they would like to be more free to talk about it.
26. F Generally people recognize when SOMEONE ELSE is old – not themselves.
27. F Children watch far more TV than old persons.

Palmore, E., Facts on Aging: A Short Quiz. *The Gerontologist*, 1977 17(4), 315-320. Some questions from course work at University of California, Berkeley, n.d.



III. MAKING YOUR APPROACH

The Initial Contact

When you have chosen a certain nursing home in your community and want to begin a special ministry there, it certainly helps if someone you know at the nursing home can provide you with an introduction. But whether or not that is possible, the recommended protocol is that your contact person go directly to the office of the administrator or manager. During this introductory meeting, identify yourself and your congregation and indicate that you have a team of (say, five) members who would like to help the residents in this home. Quickly add,

“Would it be possible for me to discuss such an opportunity with you or some other member of your staff?”

With this you have made a good beginning, already giving an idea of how many volunteers from your congregation the nursing home can count on.

You may be directed to an activities coordinator, a social services or volunteer services coordinator, or the charge nurse. In any case you have now established contact between the congregation's representatives and that of the nursing home. Hopefully, a good rapport between the two will begin to develop, and they will learn to count on each other. The coordinator will be glad that the congregation has only one contact person who will see to it that the team is on hand when needed and who can pass on information about emergencies or changes in schedule.

Agreeing on a Program

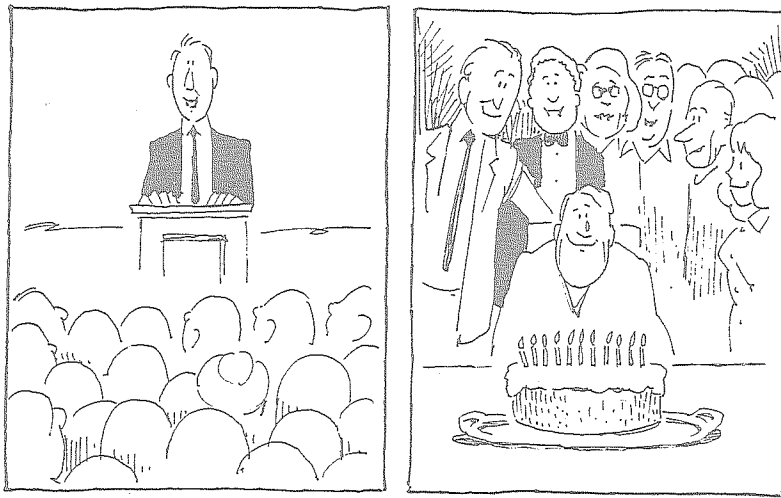
The special ministry you intend to offer at the nursing home may (for the sake of discussion) be divided into two categories:

1. Sharing the Word (cf. Chapter IV)
 - Divine Services
 - Private devotions
 - Bible classes
 - Etc.;
2. Other works of love (cf. Chapters V and VI)
 - Becoming friends with individual residents
 - Feeding patients
 - Celebrating birthdays
 - Etc.

It is essential for your contact person to come to a clear agreement with the nursing home coordinator about where to begin. Don't be afraid to express the feelings of your group concerning what you would be able to do. The staff coordinator, on the other hand, will know what gaps in the home's schedule need to be filled. Be flexible here. A beginning must be made; and the program, once established, can always branch out into other areas later.

A Word of Caution

You must understand that from the point of view of nursing home administration anything you do as a volunteer team comes under the heading "activities." Divine Services, Bible classes, birthday parties, and



other social events are all lumped together and recorded as so many hours of recreational and/or therapeutic activities needed by the home to satisfy state regulations.

In fact you may even encounter a certain reluctance on the part of the nursing home to give free rein to your plans for sharing the Word of God. They are rightly cautious over the possibility of the residents' becoming a captive audience for overly emotional proselytizing. Of course, we do not operate that way! But the nursing home administration may first have to come to know us and get confidence in us before we are given all the opportunities we desire.

Dependability

Whatever program is suggested, it is important to be honest about your capabilities and realistic about what you can actually carry through. It would be terribly embarrassing to take on more activities than your team can handle, so don't be afraid to say, No! You don't want to set yourselves up for failure right at the start.

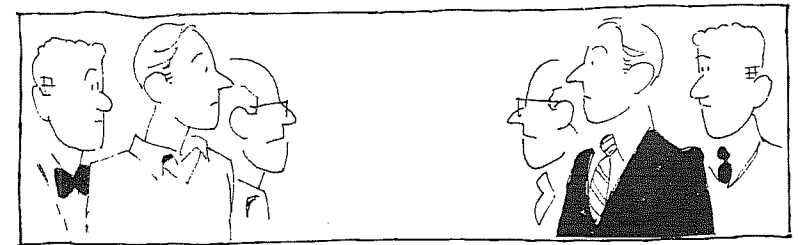
To assure dependability, you may want to divide up your team into a "first string" and a "second string." Then if a scheduled volunteer gets sick or an emergency turns up, you can send in a substitute, and the residents will not be disappointed.

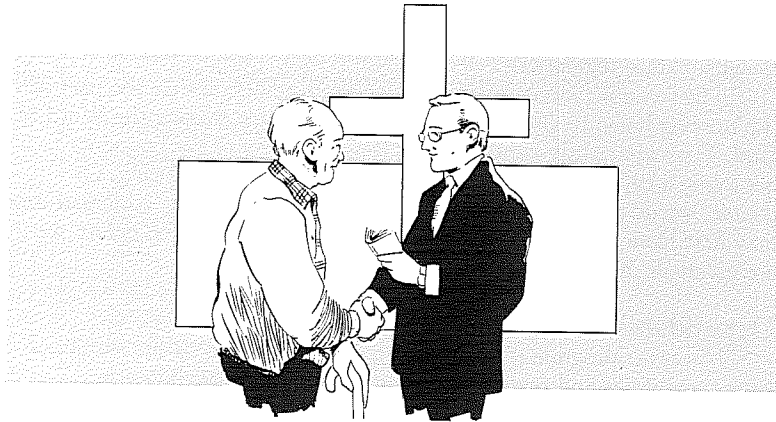
In this way the staff and the residents will come to rely upon your group, and a strong bond of friendship and mutual trust will develop. They may even wonder how they ever got along without you!

Prepare for the Long Haul

It would be fantasy to expect that every day of your volunteer work will be met with an outpouring of thanks. But remember that you are the servants of Jesus Christ, who promises: "I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me." (Matthew 25:40)

Everyone needs criticism in order to grow. Accept suggestions in a spirit of humility and a willingness to improve. If you overhear staff members gossiping about some other volunteer group, just forgive this irritation and try hard not to bring on such talk about your own team. Uphold the honor of Christ and His Church in whatever you do or say.





IV. SHARING GOD'S WORD IN A NURSING HOME

As a new team of volunteers at a nursing home, you may not be permitted to begin with religious services, as we cautioned earlier. But never forget that extending the ministry of the Word into the nursing home is still the congregation's prime objective. As soon as you are able, you should try to get this into the schedule.

Divine Services

By mutual agreement with the home, Divine Services will be held every week, every other week, or once a month. The ideal time, of course, would be Sunday morning, but you may have to settle for a weekday. The nursing home may provide the publicity, but most likely your team will have to get the residents to and from the dining hall, lounge, or other area provided for the service. They will also help with hymnals, piano or recorded accompaniment, and lead in the singing of familiar, simple hymns.

If your pastor cannot himself conduct all the services, he may be able to enlist the help of neighboring pastors. Or, he may supply or approve a brief pre-written sermon to be read by a vicar, Christian day school teacher, or other male member of the congregation. Large-print hymnals or song sheets may be very helpful.

You are encouraged to keep the service brief – a half-hour at the most. Consider that many of the residents have physical ailments which make them tire easily. Others are nervous or even mentally impaired and quickly become restless. Be prepared for awkward incidents during the service, such as loud talking, moving about, even incontinence. A team member may have to help someone leave the room.

Because of our scriptural practice of "close communion," it is difficult to celebrate the Lord's Supper during a public service in a non-church-related nursing home. Many residents will simply never understand, or else they will keep forgetting our policy. The pastor will know what sort of group he is dealing with and which elements of the normal service he might appropriately use. Here is a possible Order of Service:

- Invocation
- Hymn
- Confession of Sins
- Introit and/or Collect
- Lesson(s)
- Creed
- Sermon
- Prayer and the Lord's Prayer
- Benediction
- Doxology
- Closing Remarks.

You will discover that many of the residents have never heard the Gospel presented as we know it, and they will marvel at it and express their profound thanks. Surely, God's Word will never return empty-handed!

Bible Classes

The residents will also enjoy and profit from a weekly (or less frequent) Bible class. After a time they will open up to its more informal approach and give voice to some of the questions they always wanted to ask about spiritual things – but never had the nerve to ask. This will give you the opportunity to straighten out any false notion they may have about God's gracious plan of salvation.

The nursing home staff may be more receptive to scheduling a Bible class than a Divine Service, especially if other churches are already conducting services at the home.

The team, of course, can help get the people out; but if time permits, the leader of the class will find it helpful if he also goes from room to room to meet the residents and invite them to come. The team will probably find it necessary to help some of the residents find the Bible chapter that is to be discussed.

As to who should conduct this class, the answer is the same as for the Divine Services: your pastor, or, under his direction, a vicar, teacher, or other male member of the congregation. The class should not continue more than forty-five minutes.

Private Devotions

You can have a brief meditation and prayer with those who cannot leave their rooms yet desire the Word of God and do not have a congregation of their own. Here you will have the opportunity of speaking to the particular needs of a resident, and you may even get a personal reaction to the message. Your pastor will coach you in how to handle this. (See the appendix for sample devotions.)

Other Ways to Share the Word

People will enjoy an occasional "sing-along" of the old familiar hymns. You can even slip a new one in now and then so they can learn of our Lutheran heritage. This could be done during the last ten minutes of the Bible class.

You might mention to the nursing home representative that one of your team members reads well and would be willing to conduct a reading class using a portion of the Bible or a good piece of Christian literature. Simply another way to share the "Good News!"

As time goes on, the residents and the staff will come to realize that your congregation, and especially your pastor, is available for counseling in times of spiritual crisis.

Another spiritual service you can provide would be a tape of your congregation's Sunday Service or of a devotion by your pastor. As it is, more and more visually impaired people are growing accustomed to listening to tapes.

Throughout the year bring in your choir or your children to sing for the residents. This is usually neglected except at Christmas when nursing homes are flooded with carolers. Perhaps the vacation Bible school pupils would be able to present their closing program.



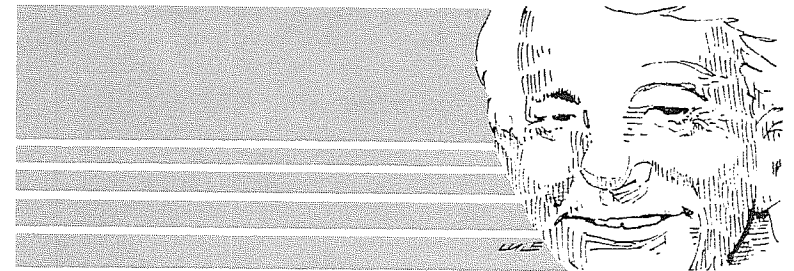
Then, too, you can line up drivers who will bring some of the more able-bodied residents to your church on Sundays, or to an organizational meeting, or to a potluck dinner. Be certain to clear this with the staff.

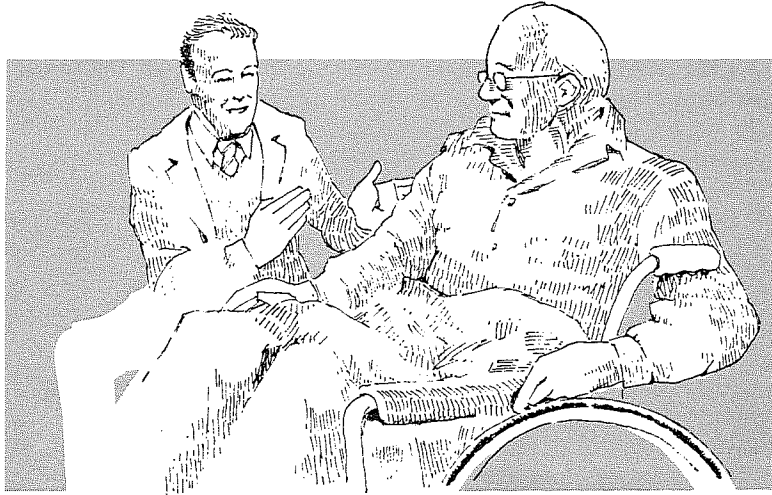
Thinking of ways to be creative, one pastor brought several of his younger children along for his weekly Bible class. "The interaction between the residents and the children was great," he writes. "The residents seemed more relaxed, happy, and open for the discussion, and the children enjoyed the attention. It really made their day!"

"They Heard the Word Gladly"

Let us share with you a true story that another pastor tells: "I have a weekly Bible class in a local nursing home with anywhere from twelve to twenty-eight residents in attendance. I also have two or three members who help gather the residents for the Bible class. Since my Bible class is held in the morning, occasionally there is a conflict with the bathing schedule of the residents. One morning we missed a woman who was getting her bath, and this was not discovered until the class was over, and we were returning the residents to their rooms. One of the members found the resident in her room (after the bath), and when the woman realized that she had missed the Bible class, she started sobbing with tears running down her cheeks. You have to know this woman. She is confined to a wheelchair and unable to speak. The only way she would respond was to lift her head from one side to the other using facial expressions to reveal her feelings. And this day she was revealing her feelings. Not knowing exactly how to respond, I went to her room, talked to her, apologized to her, and read the portion of St. John's Gospel that I had used for the Bible class. It was something special to see the Word of God console her! Her tears dried up, and she looked at me as though to say, 'Thank you and see you next week!'"

Among these nursing home residents, living as they do near the edge of this present life, you will surely find many who are eager for God's Word. "We have another little congregation going here," said one local team. "It makes you realize how powerful God's Word is." If your congregation has not yet become involved in a nursing home ministry, we hope you'll try it soon, for experiences like these are awaiting you.





V. AND OTHER WORKS OF LOVE

Next to believing and sharing God's Word, what ought to be the most important trait of a Christian people? Lending a helping hand to those in need, of course! Can you imagine our Savior's ministry of preaching and teaching without His other works of love – healing the sick, giving sight to the blind, comforting the sorrowful? This is the Savior who commends even the simple gift of a cup of cold water to the thirsty when it is done in His name.

You can hardly think of sending a special ministries team into a local nursing home and not expect their hands to become quickly active in manifold works of love.

Guidance from the Staff

In your role as servant-volunteers, who come to minister in Christ's name, you will surely be glad to accept guidance from the home's regular employees. Your team may have in mind to provide help with a birthday party; but suppose the nursing home has need for several bed-makers and someone to "do" fingernails, instead. What does that matter? Your goal is to be as helpful as possible. Those who come bearing God's Word will do whatever is needed and whatever they can. Your contact person, who knows your available time and capabilities, and the staff coordinator, who knows what the home needs, will mutually settle on what is to be done and when it is to be done. Both sides are to feel comfortable with whatever is scheduled.

The staff may have to give you special training in certain areas of work since a nursing home has required ways of doing things and endless state and federal regulations to follow. For instance, the simple task of making beds may be substantially different from the way you do

it at home. But if your team will accept training and periodic evaluation and be committed to carry out all accepted assignments faithfully, your works of love will be invaluable – both to the patients and to the staff.

What Can You Do?

Here are some examples of helpful activities in which your team may be able to get involved:

Variations on group activities

Birthday parties

Group or individual

Bingo

Sometimes combined with birthday parties

Picnics

Indoor and out

Coffee hours

Daily

Seasonal parties

Halloween, Mother's Day,

Christmas dinner or buffets

Valentine's Day, Father's Day,

Ethnic dinners or parties

Craft classes

Happy hour

Wine or beer when approved

Letter writing

Personal visitation

One to one

Exercise classes

Usually a group activity

Personal care

Shaving men, doing women's nails

Reading

Groups or individual

Shopping for personal items

Sewing name labels or mending clothes

Adoption

Adult to adult, grandparent (youth groups or individual)

Christmas caroling

Choral concerts at other than seasonal festivals

Outings of individuals or groups to activities planned at churches close by

Outings to cider mills, shopping malls when decorated, or art fairs, if accessible.

And There is More

You can see that the opportunities for works of love are endless, and your team may very well be able to suggest others to the staff coordinator. More and more of your fellow members will want to get involved as they "catch" your enthusiasm.

Your women's auxiliary can also be enlisted for many interesting projects, which can be completed outside the nursing home, such as sewing bibs and incontinent pads, making lap robes or table favors, or (at certain seasons) holiday banners. Here, too, the opportunities are endless, but they all add up to this: Christian concern demonstrated by kind and loving deeds.



VI. WHAT EVERY TEAM MEMBER SHOULD KNOW

The Christian who visits a nursing home as part of a special ministries team will always be conscious of representing the “Good News” in Christ. What a joyous, high calling! Here are some of the assets the Christian visitor can put to use in a nursing home:

Friendship and Hope

You can be a true Christian friend of the people you visit by contributing some of your time to help fill their time.

Your kinship begins with the common human experience. All of us sooner or later face illness or aging. In this respect there is much that you can understand and share. In addition, as a child of God you yourself seek courage in every trial through prayer and God’s Word. Our Savior has made us heirs of His glory, and He can be counted on to lead us safely through every severe test. This insight is the most precious thing you bring with you into the nursing home.

But time and again you yourself will be strengthened by the residents’ insight and fortitude. They have, after all, done a “heap more livin’” than most of us. This teaches us humility in the presence of the aged and the suffering. Expect to receive as well as to give!

Because they have such a rich store of memories and plenty of time to remember, many residents will enjoy the opportunity of talking with you if you are willing to be an attentive listener. Try hard to “get into” their memories. On your return visits you will be able to refer back to the things that they are thinking about – their families and experiences.

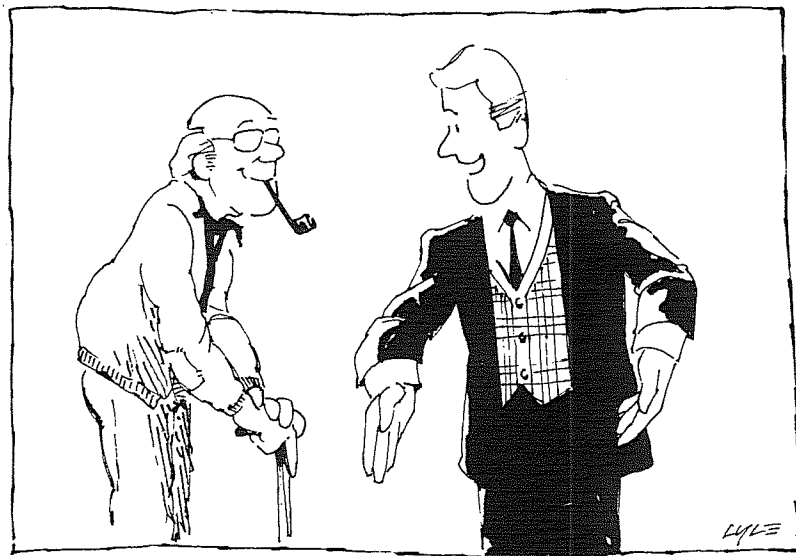
You should also be a creative conversationalist, bringing them fresh thoughts to think, news from the world outside the nursing home, a

share in your own life and activities. Many of the residents have the potential for a broad scope of interests. Follow up any clues they give you. Ask the staff for suggestions of how you can help enrich the life of a particular resident. Do what you can to overcome their sense of isolation. Communicate your own zest for life and share some laughter.

How should you react when their memories are bitter or when they grieve over losses and disappointments? In Christ our lives are firmly set upon hope, and hopefulness ought to pervade our outlook. But we cannot deny how much the “outrageous misfortunes” of this present life can hurt! So beware of dismissing your friend’s pain and sorrow too easily. Have the patience to sit in silence and share the grief when that is called for. Pray the Lord to let your underlying hopefulness in Christ find expression when the time is ripe. Perhaps your friendship must develop considerably before you can offer hope, consolation, or advice, or whatever else is needed. Otherwise you may come across as a mere “know-it-all” who doesn’t understand anything. Yet never doubt that in Christ hope overcomes dread and despair!

As you get better acquainted with the residents, you may sense that this one or that one would be receptive to the reading of a Scripture portion or a brief meditation. When the occasion warrants, you may ask permission to pray for your friend. If you have found a kindred spirit in Christ, you can suggest praying the Lord’s Prayer together. It is the special privilege of Christ’s followers to say that prayer, and it is a great comfort to us. It may also be helpful to leave a printed devotion or Scripture portion with the resident when the visit is over. (See suggestions in appendix.)





Respect

All of the residents need to have their sense of worth and self-esteem bolstered. This is because they live in an "institution." The circumstances of their present life and the "dormitory" atmosphere of the nursing home tend to strip them of their adulthood. They are no longer masters and mistresses of their own domain, but may rather feel like inmates. But in God's scheme of things, the elderly are to be held in awe and reverence: "Rise in the presence of the aged, show respect for the elderly and revere your God. I am the Lord." (Leviticus 19:32)

While it is true that current American practice tends to set aside this giving of respect to the elderly, God's natural law still calls for it. As Christians we should lead the way rather than "going along" with the times. "Do not rebuke an older man harshly, but exhort him as if he were your father. Treat younger men as brothers, older women as mothers, and younger women as sisters, with absolute purity." (1 Timothy 5:1-2) For God's sake, then, don't condescend! In everything you do or say, communicate a relaxed feeling of respect.

We owe this respect even to the "senile." The word "senile" is related to the meaning old, as in "senator." It does not mean "childish." This is an important distinction. They have lived and tasted of the human experience, and at times even the most deteriorated of them may know it!

Unfortunately, even some health care professionals fall into a patronizing manner and/or tone of voice toward the elderly: e.g., "Have

we finished our plate?" Avoid this like the plague. In Christian compassion resist the temptation to laugh at or joke about the foibles and failures of the elderly and forgetful. Don't easily presume to address them by their first names. The genial 80-year old who protests, "Call me 'Louie'" may really be crying out in despair: "I've become, after all, nothing more than a clown." Persist rather in quiet, unobtrusive respect. Then you will be a true healer of one of the most devastating wounds of old age – the loss of dignity. "A bruised reed he will not break." (Isaiah 42:3)

Special Challenges

Hearing Loss: Hearing loss is the number one physical problem among residents of a nursing home, and it is also the easiest for them to "mask." They may, in fact, be unwilling to admit that they have become hard-of-hearing and do a lot of guessing about what you are saying.

Make sure you have their attention; position yourself directly in front of their view; and stay there while you are conversing. A lower voice range is often easier for them to hear. Be conscious of your enunciation and lip movement. Watch the expression on their face for clues as to how well you are communicating. If you think they haven't understood you, repeat in different words. When it is time to leave, let them know you are going.

Vision Problems: Vision problems begin long before blindness itself so try to observe whether or not you are "in range." Their eyes are likely to be overly sensitive to light so don't stand or sit with the window or a lamp behind you. As people become blind, they delight in recalling the things they used to see. You can be their "window on the world." Read to them; write letters for them; bring them "books on tape" from the library as well as taped services and devotions from church. There's a good chance that their sense of hearing has compensated for the loss of vision. In this case, if you raise the volume of your voice, it will be very unpleasant for them.

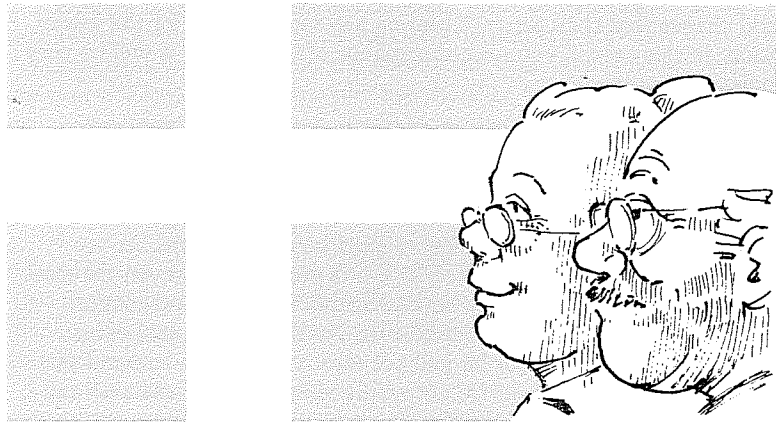
Depression: Younger people experience losses and suffer depression, too, but therapy for them is clear: life must go on; new friends and interests must be developed. But what do you do when you are old and you have lost all or most of the important things pertaining to this present life? Of course your thoughts must be turned to the life to come, and you must be comforted by God's promises. Yet even the most trusting Christian will grieve over the earthly love, joy, and comfort that is gone from this present life forever. As King David said of his child: "I shall go to him, but he will not return to me." Understand this grief and be patient with it. Do not rashly identify such loneliness and depression with weakness of faith.

Every human being needs the touch of another human being. Sometimes the elderly have no close ones left to touch. That is real loneliness! The touch of a hand, in prayer or otherwise, will surely be appreciated. When you have become good friends, a hug or a kiss on the cheek will also most likely be welcomed by those who are lonely. Think of these people as your parents in the Lord.

Crying: Crying on the part of these elderly people may unnerve you at first. You may never have seen your own parents cry, since they were the strong ones in your life. But even they would probably cry in the circumstances of old age. Let the elderly know that it is all right to cry. Let them tell you, if they will, why they hurt. Of course, you cannot make them young again or bring back their lost ones, but you can be near.

Strokes: Many people who have suffered strokes will cry, in spite of themselves, even when they are happy about something. Yes, even and especially male stroke victims do this. Take it in good grace and try to ease their embarrassment. Give the patient all the time he needs to communicate. A stroke, remember, does not necessarily affect the intelligence. Stroke victims will sometimes use an astonishing amount of profanity, even though, as Christians, they suppressed such talk when they were "in control." So withhold a harsh judgment when you hear this.

The Senile or Confused: State who you are at each visit and show a genuine interest in them. Be calm and soothing when they are anxious or terrified by some nameless fear. Do not walk away from them in disgust. "Hang in" there and speak as one adult to another, for in spite of it all, they may be able to detect condescension on your part. Do not "humor" them when they say obviously impossible things but gently remind them of reality without "putting them down" or scolding them for being confused.

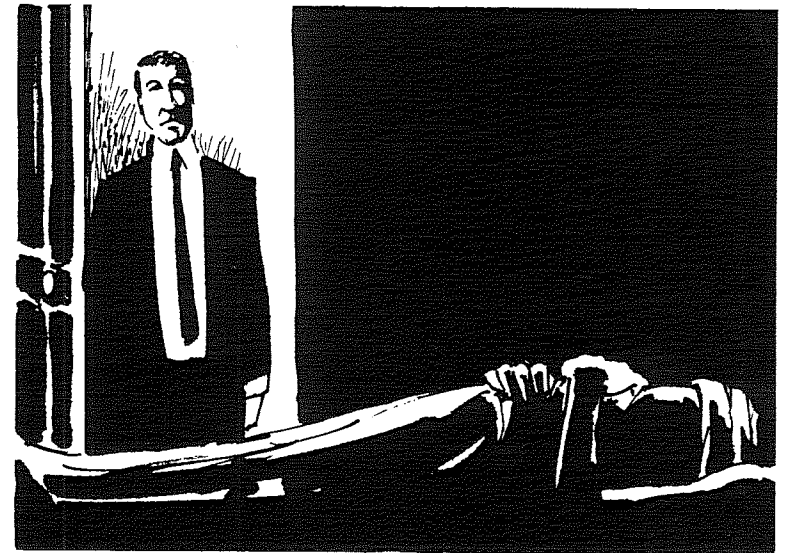


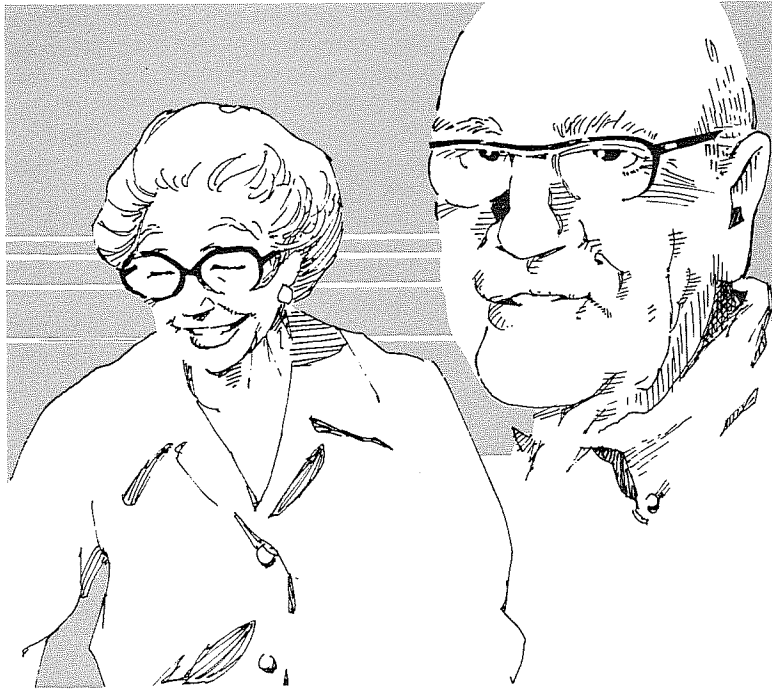
Those About to Die: When you visit someone you know is terminally ill, you can expect to have some alarming thoughts and feelings within yourself. You may feel threatened because of your own mortality. Talk with your pastor about this and spend some time thinking and praying about it. Then in God's name go ahead and make your visits.

How can you be helpful to those who are about to die? It is not your task to bring up the subject of their dying. Instead, be careful to observe their own attitude at the moment. As long as they are hopeful of recovering, share that hope. To have a fatal disease does not mean one does not hope for a cure or at least for help in living with it. You can assure them that their Savior makes all things work for good to those who love God.

Sometimes the terminally ill go through a period of anger and hostility toward others, or they may not want to talk with you at all. This is because they are struggling within themselves to come to terms with the fact of their dying. You will have to be very patient and understanding at times like this.

When those who are about to die reach the point where they "give up hope" for this life, perhaps because they have suffered beyond endurance, they will let you know. Be ready to speak of our sure hope in Christ, of resurrection and eternal life. If they are ever going to be receptive to God's Word and promises, they will be at this point. Hold their hand when you pray for and with them. Make your visits brief, but center everything on the wonderful words of Scripture.





CONCLUSION

Helping people confined to nursing homes for the aged is a God-given opportunity for demonstrating Christian faith in action. When we bring them comfort and courage from God's Word, we at the same time bring ourselves joy and satisfaction. If we fail them in their time of need, we too are losers.

Our Lord Himself established the precedent, in that he spent a lot of time in "one-to-one" care of souls. Now He has sent us to extend this ministry of caring. And as we go with His message to the byways of nursing homes and homes for the aged, we shall find ourselves maturing in our own faith-life.

We understand that the institutionalized were also created in the image of God. But the crushing circumstances of life have made them more and more dependent on the help of others. Isn't such dependency really a mirror of what faith is all about? As we help them, in their frustrations, to lean upon Christ above all others, won't we be learning the same lesson for ourselves?

"(Christ) said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you, for My power is made perfect in weakness.'" (II Corinthians 12:9)



APPENDIX

The devotions following are samples intended for use in a one-on-one situation. An example would be a visit to the room of a resident who was unable to come to the Divine Service or the Bible class.

Additional devotions such as these – tailored for the nursing home resident – can be produced by the pastor or by a layman under the pastor's supervision. In addition, such devotions are readily available in pamphlet or booklet form from a number of religious publishing houses – including Northwestern Publishing House, 1350 North 113th St., Wauwatosa, Wisconsin 53213. A list of suggested materials is found at the end of this booklet.

An Abiding and Perfect Peace

Throughout the length and breadth of this sin-sick world people are in quest of peace. However, nothing that this world has to offer can work this desired peace. Only the Gospel offers us that peace which the world cannot give. In his letter to the Philippians, St. Paul calls it "the peace of God, which transcends all understanding."

This peace consists in this, that God has reconciled the world unto Himself. Because of sin this world is estranged from God – is at enmity with God. Because mankind is by nature sinful and God is holy and righteous, it seemed nigh impossible that the two could be brought together. Yet God in His infinite wisdom found a way to reconcile the world to Himself.

God accomplished this marvelous reconciliation through the bitter suffering and death of His only-begotten Son who took upon Himself the guilt of our sin and paid the full price of our redemption. By shedding His holy, precious blood He paid the complete ransom to buy us back to God. As the holy and just God views us through the sacrifice of His Son, all our sins are washed away. As we stand in the shadow of His Cross, His blood cleanses our sin-stained souls.

This peace is intended for and offered to all sinners without money and without price. It rests with everyone who, by the grace of God, accepts Jesus to be his one and only Savior from sin, death, and the power of the devil.

This peace “transcends all understanding” because it acquits the guilty. This does not erase God’s justice and holiness. Rather it shows His great love for fallen mankind in that He had His beloved Son assume our guilt that we might be acquitted. Only the wisdom of God could conceive such a marvelous plan of salvation. Hence, it “transcends all understanding.”

This blessed peace makes no exception for it offers redemption to all. It holds out complete hope for everyone. Although one’s sin be ever so great, there is no condemnation for anyone who believes that the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us from all sin. Truly, this perfect peace “transcends all understanding.”

The Apostle further states that this precious peace also “will guard our hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.” It keeps us calm by removing all fear and worry. Without this peace we would be fearful of facing God in the Judgment to come. This peace keeps us from going down in despair. It covers our sins by blotting them out and assures us that our God loves us with an everlasting love. Hence, in this perfect and abiding peace we can say with the psalmist: “Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for You are with me.”

Prayer

Heavenly Father, in Jesus Christ, I know that You are merciful and gracious, for You have sent Your beloved Son to redeem me. Through the Gospel You offer me the forgiveness of all my sins. Remove from my life all past sins and take away all worry and anxious thoughts. Give me grace to trust in Your mercy and forgiveness. Bless me with a faith that never doubts Your promises. Finally, fill my heart and mind with that abiding and perfect peace that “transcends all understanding.” I ask in my Savior’s name. Amen.

Peace of Mind

We cannot enjoy peace of mind unless we trust in the Lord. Worry disturbs us. It robs us of peace and joy. It upsets the mind and brings anxiety to one’s heart. Furthermore, worry is sin, and as long as this sin dominates our thinking, our minds cannot find peace.

For all these worrisome problems God’s Word offers the solution. It says: “You will keep in perfect peace him whose mind is steadfast, because he trusts in you. Trust in the Lord forever, for the Lord, the Lord, is the Rock eternal.” (Is. 26:3-4) Truly, the mind can be at ease if it rests in God. In the pitfalls of life we cannot “go it” alone. We need God in the days of trouble – in the days of trial and tribulation.

If we do not lean upon God in the crises of life, we will fight a losing battle. But if we turn to God in prayer, we will find the needed strength to overcome. Prayer does something for us. It fills us with new hope and courage. It offers comfort and peace of mind in the Lord’s gracious promise: “Call upon Me in the day of trouble and I will deliver you.”

Surely, we find our greatest peace in God’s comforting and assuring Word. Therein we discover that He is a forgiving God. He blots out all our sins through the holy and precious blood of His beloved Son. He is an ever-present God who will never leave us or forsake us. He is a comforting God who strengthens our faith and fills us with new hope. He turns all things to good to those who love Him, and He assures us that no one can pluck us out of His hands. Knowing this puts our minds at ease and fills us with that perfect “peace that passes all understanding.” If we have this peace with and in our God, He is our “Refuge and Strength, a present Help in every trouble.” Having such a Refuge puts our mind at ease and we can relax. Our worryings cease for our hearts are comforted. In our God we find true peace of mind.

Prayer

Dear Heavenly Father, in Christ Jesus, You are my Refuge and Strength, a very present Help in every trouble. Therefore, I can abide in Your protecting love without being fearful. I am Your child whom You have redeemed through Your beloved Son. I thank and praise You for Your grace and mercy which has brought me to faith in my blessed Savior and given to my heart that peace which passes all human understanding. Graciously watch over me today and always. Remove all anxious cares from my mind. Forgive me all my worryings and my other sins of omission and commission. Strengthen my weak and feeble faith and keep me in Your grace unto life everlasting. I ask in my Savior’s name. Amen.

What Must I Do To Be Saved?

The Apostle Paul and his co-worker, Silas, were lying bound hand and foot in the prison at Philippi. They had been badly beaten and then thrown into the dungeon for preaching the saving Gospel. However, they deemed it a privilege to suffer for the Savior's sake, and at midnight they prayed and sang praises to God.

Suddenly, there was a great earthquake, the prison shook, all the doors opened, and every prisoner's chains were loosed. The jailer, thinking the prisoners had fled, wanted to take his own life, but the Apostle Paul restrained him. Falling trembling at the apostles' feet, the jailer cried out: "Men, what must I do to be saved?" He was deeply disturbed at the show of power which the crucified and risen Jesus had just given in behalf of His imprisoned messengers. He now feared the anger of this almighty Jesus for he also was guilty of mistreating the apostles. He realized that he deserved nothing but death – yes, eternal death – at the hands of their God. A guilty fear caused him to cry out: "What must I do to be saved?"

What answer did he receive from Paul and Silas? They did not say a single word about any penance he must endure – of any merit or worthiness he must first acquire. No, and never! Direct and unconditional came the answer: "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved." That is, accept this crucified and risen Jesus as your one and only Savior from sin and eternal death for He has redeemed you with His holy, precious blood and His innocent sufferings and death. Trust in Him for your full salvation and you have nothing to fear.

This joyous Gospel message worked saving faith in the trembling jailer's heart. He took the apostles into his house and that selfsame night was baptized, believing in God with all his house.

Here, then, we have God's own answer to the greatest question which we in our guilt and fear of death can ask: "What must I do to be saved?" No person, no devil, nor our own guilty conscience can rob us of God's own blessed answer: "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved!"

Prayer

Lord, strengthen my faith that I may never fear or faint in any trial or tribulation. Let me firmly believe that the blood of Jesus cleanses me from all sin; that though my sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow. When trials, sorrow, and affliction want to rob me of this trust, O Lord, help me to overcome and gain the victory. O almighty and most gracious God and Lord, help my unbelief and strengthen my flickering faith. I pray in my blessed Savior's name. Amen.

I Need Not Worry

"The Lord is my Shepherd!" That means that I am a member of His fold. He has a deep concern for me. It is He who has given me my life and sustains me by richly and daily providing me with life's needs. He also redeemed me through His Son who paid for all my sins by the shedding of His holy, precious blood on the altar of Calvary's Cross. By His grace He also made me a member of His flock.

In the pasture of His eternal love my God feeds me and protects me. Through the saving Gospel in Word and Sacrament He created and sustains my faith unto life everlasting. In the hours of trial and loneliness He comforts me with the promise of His gracious presence. He says: "Lo, I am with you always. Even though family and friends might forsake you, I will never leave you"

The Psalmist says: "He is our God and we are the people of His pasture, and the flock under His care." (Ps. 95:7) That means that God upholds me. Every day and hour I find that blessings still remain that encourage me and remove the gloom and loneliness of the hour.

God alone can and does keep me. He gives wisdom, patience, and loving consideration to the nurses and aides. He gives them a cheerful heart that offers me ready and willing service. Yes, He takes good care of me for I am more precious to Him than the sparrows.

Even though at times my days and nights are filled with anxieties and depression, and I feel so all alone, my God makes His presence felt in His Word and assures me that nothing will come to pass that will separate me from His marvelous love. Yes, the Lord is my Shepherd! – I am His beloved sheep! Therefore, I am not alone. I need not worry or be afraid.

Prayer

Lord Jesus, my Good Shepherd, I come to You for peace and rest. You know how disturbed and distressed I am. If it were not for the certainty of Your gracious promise that You will be with me always, I would be crushed. I have no place to turn for renewed courage but to Your loving heart.

Speak to me in Your forgiving love, and abide with me throughout my earthly pilgrimage. Then my lips shall praise You and my thankful heart will glorify Your name – now and forever. Amen.

Let Us Learn To Be Content

It can be most difficult to adjust ourselves to a situation we cannot do anything about. To accept a depressing predicament and make the best of it is not an easy thing to do – especially if the situation is not of our making. Yet life doesn't always go according to our way of hoping and planning. Life isn't always a "bed of roses."

The Apostle Paul also faced many trying situations in his life. His life was filled with one vexation after another. Yet he faced each trying situation with all grace and patience. As he sat in the prison at Rome and reviewed life with its many changes he wrote: "I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances." He also gives us his reason for such contentment when he states: "I can do everything through Him (Christ) who gives me the strength." Then he concludes with this beautiful assurance: "And my God will meet all your needs according to His glorious riches in Christ Jesus."

Contentment consists in doing without certain things and counting the blessings that remain. As Christians we have peace with God and the blessed hope of heaven. These our loving Lord has gained for us, and no sleepless night or loneliness can take them from us. Such contentment is found only in a Christian faith that puts to practice the precious Word of the Gospel. This faith works a hopeful outlook for the future regardless of how dark the present may appear.

Such a Christian faith, nourished and strengthened by the Gospel in Word and Sacrament, makes every burden in life lighter. Our Savior's gracious presence helps us to overcome all self-pity, loneliness, and discontent. Yes, with Jesus we can and shall conquer every disquieting situation and trying ordeal so that we can say with St. Paul: "I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances."

Prayer

Lord Jesus, Lover of my soul and Keeper of my being, come and abide with me in my time of loneliness and discontent. Help me through the trying situation I am facing. Blot out all my sins, and let Your gracious presence give me the needed strength and courage to carry on with all confidence and contentment. Grant me the grace to cling to Your promises in a sincere faith. Take full possession of my life as my Savior and Lord. Amen.

SUGGESTED AIDS

The following books and pamphlets contain devotions, Scripture passages, prayers, and hymn verses that can be used to bring spiritual comfort, peace, and joy to nursing home residents. This is only a partial list. Many fine materials are available in addition to these and new materials are constantly being produced by publishing houses and by the Special Ministries Board of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod.

THE BURDEN MADE LIGHT, by Alfred Doerffler – CPH (NPH)
This book contains 46 meditations prepared for shut-ins who greatly need the hope and the comfort the Gospel offers. Each meditation concludes with an appropriate prayer.

THE GOLDEN DAYS, by Paul H.D. Lang – CPH (NPH)
The 30 devotions plus 16 select prayers are designed to meet the spiritual needs of those individuals who have reached the "golden" years. It would find good use in a nursing home atmosphere.

DAILY WALK WITH GOD, by Herman W. Gockel – CPH (NPH)
This Christ-centered devotional book contains a meditation and prayer for every day of the calendar year. While not especially designed for nursing home use, it has been used on a regular basis in one of our Lutheran nursing homes and received a favorable response.

THROUGH CLOUD AND SUNSHINE,
by William A. Lauterbach – CPH
The 41 devotions contained in this work are intended to help the individual face, with God's help, those "peaks and valleys" one encounters on one's pathway through life. It can easily be adapted for nursing home use.

FOLLOW THE KING, by Jaroslav Vajda – CPH (HPH)
These 30 devotions center on Old and New Testament heroes and heroines. The focus is on the particular example of faith found in their lives. They can find application in the various situations found in the life of nursing home residents.

THE MIND AT EASE, by Alfred Doerffler – CPH (NPH)
This work contains 65 meditations based on the Psalms – each followed by a corresponding prayer. Its purpose is to free the minds of the aged from the worries and fears that often fill the anxious hours of their inactivity.

HEAVEN BOUND, by Wm. A. Lauterbach – CPH (NPH)
In this book the author seeks to strengthen and encourage the aged and the weary as he speaks to their concern about life's end, offering sweet

comfort and hope from God's Word. Each of the 39 meditations ends with a hymn or poem.

HARVEST OF FAITH, by *Paul H.D. Lang* – CPH (NPH)

Intended for the elderly, the author aims to meet their "need of a right relationship with God through our Savior, Jesus Christ." This he would hope to accomplish by means of the 33 encouraging and reassuring devotions contained in this book.

PSALMS FOR SENIORS, by *Delores Schumann* – NPH

The author presents 50 devotions based on the Psalms. The meditations are easy to understand and have meaningful and comforting applications. They are written especially for older people.

THE YOKE MADE EASY, by *Alfred Doerffler* – CPH (NPH)

While the 39 meditations in this book were intended to "bring comfort to the sick," most of them can find good use in a nursing home for they are designed to give discouraged and depressed individuals a new outlook on their present situation.

MY REFUGE AND STRENGTH,

by *Wm. A. Lauterbach* – CPH (NPH)

This work includes 43 devotions which concentrate on one's quest for eternal security and how it is provided when one becomes a member of the flock of the Good Shepherd. "Soul security" finds need in every rest home.

HEAVEN IS MY HOME, by *F.E. Pasche* – NPH

This collection of 23 devotions is most fitting for use with the elderly. The meditations focus on Christ as the only way to salvation.

TREASURES OF HOPE, by *A. Doerffler* – CPH

The author wrote this work with the elderly in mind. Part I offers Scripture readings, prayers, and hymn verses for morning and evening devotions, covering a four week period. Part II is comprised of special prayers to meet the particular needs of the "golden ager."

WORD OF LIFE, by *Edmund Beaver* – NPH

This is a collection of Scripture readings and hymns prepared with the sick and the aged in mind.

ABIDE WITH US, by *Wm. A. Lauterbach* – NPH

This devotional booklet presents a selection of Scripture passages and hymn verses. Each of the 32 devotions is illustrated. It is designed for the aged and the bedridden.

WHEN SHADOWS FALL, by *Wm. A. Lauterbach* – CPH (NPH)

Here the author offers a collection of short Scripture readings and hymns.

GOD MAKES OLD AGE YOUNG, by *Erling Ruud* – CPH

This is not a devotional book as such, but it does speak to the needs, problems, questions, and feelings of older people. It has value when working with rest home residents as each of the 39 short chapters "sparkles with inspiration to lift the spirits of the aged."

SELECTED HYMNS FROM THE LUTHERAN HYMNAL,
by *the WELS Special Ministries Board* – NPH

This 112 page publication with its 8½ by 11 format includes the basic Order of Service – with and without communion – plus 84 favorite hymns, index and table of contents. The music score is not included. Its plastic comb binding makes it easy to handle, even for the hands of the elderly and infirm. Its large print helps make it ideal for nursing home use.

FORSAKE ME NOT, by *the WELS Institutional Ministries Committee*

This filmstrip is available from the chairmen of the various District Special Ministries Boards, the Institutional Ministries Committee of WELS, or the Audio Visual Aids Department of Northwestern Publishing House. It is not designed for nursing home use. However, it provides inspiration and direction for nursing home work. When viewed by the congregation or congregational organizations, it can aid in creating enthusiasm for institutional work. A "Quiz on Aging" on 8½ by 11 sheets may be ordered together with the filmstrip to stimulate discussion.

NPH – Northwestern Publishing House
1350 North 113th St.
Wauwatosa, Wisconsin 53213

CPH – Concordia Publishing House
3558 South Jefferson Avenue
Saint Louis, Missouri 63118

IMC – Institutional Ministries Committee
Pastor Edgar M. Herman, Chairman
25375 East Huron River Drive
Flat Rock, Michigan 48134

Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary Library
11831 W. Seminary Drive. 65W
Mequon, Wisconsin

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