

Senior Ministry Committee—Sts. Seb's and Catherine's 2014 Ongoing Implementation Plan

Members present: Carl B., Warren B., Bernadette D., Ralph K., Marian L., Sally O'N., Steve O'C., Carol S., & Leroy S.

The demographics of both parishes: This will be used as part of our presentations. We are reporting the numbers in units, not individual persons, unless specified.

- **St. Catherine's:**
 - **Total units: 370**
 - **Total units 60+: 274**
 - **Total asking for prayers: 33 (+group that gets the bulletin weekly)**
- **St. Seb's: we now have the list**
 - **60+ age group represents about 11% of membership**
 - **There are 464 older adults 60+ on the rolls**
 - **Leroy and (Steve will contact Maggie Blaha) to garner some more current understanding of the rolls as listed in the Parish Directory**
 - **The Parish Directory lists approximately 1050 units.**

Mission Statement

To engage older adults at both parishes through sacramental outreach, provide cross-generational and appropriate worship experiences, coordinate educational programs that are relevant to older adults, and finally to enliven the faith of the two parishes by a recognition of the need for all ages to be engaged in worship, spiritual growth and social engagement.

Committee members will create written word and serve as speakers at the Sunday liturgies:

- ***Reflections of Faith*** themes and Senior Ministry—Bernadette brought us up to speed on the purpose and history of the ***Reflections***.
 - We should avoid an overview type of document—with a list of things that have been discussed, etc.—this is not the appropriate place for such information
 - The next edition will be on the Beatitudes—we should include stories or anecdotes from our lives as we have engaged others

who are older adults or our experience as an older adult living the beatitudes. We can reach out to others and ask them to write/tell a story about their life living the beatitudes. (deadline—1/10)

- Steve submitted a reflection on one of the older adults at the Sherman Park Gathering Place

Bulletin announcements and deadlines—

- St. Seb's—Tuesday at noon (1/7,14,21,28) (Mondays during the holidays)
- St. Catherine's—Wed at noon (1/8,15,22,29)
- Steve will write the announcements and e-mail them to everyone for editing. **First announcements have to be ready by Monday, Dec. 30th.**
- *Bulletin themes:*
 - Jan 5th—introduction and overview of the whole program
 - Jan 12th—introduction of homebound ministry and *Sunday Conversations*
 - Jan. 19th—review of homebound ministry and *Sunday Conversations*
 - *See below—ongoing announcements*

The parishes will be introduced to the ministry starting Sunday, Jan 5th through the bulletin and Sunday, Jan 12th with pulpit announcements at all the liturgies.

- The **homebound forms** will be introduced in the Jan. 12th bulletin and they will be in the pews on the 12th, 19th and 26th. Everyone who knows someone who could benefit from this ministry will be encouraged to fill them out at that time or take them home and return them in the next couple weeks (Leroy and the ushers will have baskets/boxes prepared for the cards). Steve will work on the form—editing to come.
- The **first conversation** starts on the 26th; the surveys will be passed out at this first meeting and to follow at the next two Sunday liturgies (Feb. 2nd and 9th).

Listening sessions—we are initiating a new monthly program at both parishes called *Sunday Conversations* aimed at older adults, but knowing that anyone can attend, if they feel so moved.

- *Conversations* leaders—Steve and Ralph
- Format—Warren is preparing the material using Pope Francis as our inspiration
- Flier inserts for the bulletins? Check with Dick and Jack? Steve
- Opening prayer—Steve & Ralph
- Food—Marian and Sally (will check with Bernadette) (coffee, OJ, fruit, and breakfast breads)
- Closing Song—check with Mike for a leader from the Seb’s choir and Doug at St. Catherine’s

Minutes from the January 16th meeting

Members present: Carl B., Marian L., Sally O’N., Steve O’C., Carol S., & Leroy S.

Surveys to be distributed at the first Conversation and then at the next two weekend liturgies (Feb. 2nd and 9th).

- By consensus, we will use the one page assessment. (Attached)
- We decided to make the surveys a card—back-to-back so that they do not clutter up the pews. They also can be placed in the special baskets at the entrances. We’ll make sure that there are periodic reminders in the bulletin about the cards.

Meetings and contacts at both parishes: Consensus was reached on an outreach plan.

- Steve will work with Sally and Maggie Blaha to set-up meetings with the women who attend weekly Eucharistic Services.
- Steve will meet with Mike K to discuss the plan and to solicit his input on the program
- Steve and Leroy will set up a meeting with the ushers. They know so many of the older adults who attend Liturgy on a regular basis.
- Carl and Bernadette will work with the Outreach Committee at St. Catherine’s to start to compile a list of members who are homebound
- Steve will contact the school at St. Seb’s to talk about the Enabling Ministry and families and students who need service hours. Sandra and the

confirmands will be encouraged to think about this ministry as a way to serve others at both parishes.

- We will reach out to all the Eucharistic Ministers at both parishes to discuss taking Eucharist to the homebound. Mary Anne Houndel at St. Catherine's will be a good resource. Mike K. will be our go-to person at Seb's.
- Steve will contact Patrick Schley to discuss the website at Seb's.

Stephen Ministry—Carl introduced the committee to this program. We will look into it. Might be a ministry to explore.

Communion to the home bound—Steve will talk to both pastors about bringing back the ritual of sending out the ministers to the home bound at the end of the meditation period.

Next meeting: we wish to meet monthly on the second Thursday of the month—this coming month: February 13 at noon. We will meet at St. Catherine's.

Meeting Minutes--February 13, 2014

Members present: Warren B., Sally O'N., Carl M., Steve O'C., Carol S., & Leroy S.

Sunday Conversations

- What worked and what didn't?
 - St. Seb's—we were waylaid by one individual—too much tension and thus we lost the guests—will revisit the discussion
 - St. Catherine's—took up the goal of contacting everyone on their prayer list and those who receive the weekly bulletin—will initiate individual contact
- Second Conversation—theme and conversation—will continue the conversation about Pope Francis and set some goals before the next meeting—and start to brainstorm some themes for the conversations
- Ways to invite more people? —weather at the last one was frightful
 - Some feedback about doing this on a week day, not between the liturgies on Sunday—to be discussed
 - Need more people to attend so that we can converse as a group

Listening Meetings –mostly Seb's right now

- Mike K.—already met—seems that Mike will be our clearing house at Seb's
- Julia Galligan—already met—need to work on the list of homebound/those who receive the bulletin on a weekly basis and start to work with her on the homebound list that we are gathering
- School—Paul Hohl—no response at meeting time (contacted twice with no response—will seek help from Mile K
- Ushers—Brian K and ushers at St. Catherine's—interest in both groups to talk with us—both promised to set up a meeting—St. Seb's will blend us into their Lenten planning meeting

- Maggie Blaha and women from St. Seb's—Friday, the 28th
- Eucharistic Ministers—Mike K.—the initial response on the surveys shows interest in this program—lay people committing to visiting homebound and others
 - Discussion on this point focused on the logistics of this effort, contact with the lay ministers and how we garner names of individuals both who wish to serve and who wish to have Eucharist brought to their home
 - Training—who will handle this
 - Sending ceremony at the end of each liturgy—be re-instituted—will be a constant reminder of the need to pray for our homebound
- Others? St. Vincent de Paul—March meeting
- St. Catherine's? Contacts? Groups that need to be contacted? Ralph and Carl will continue the efforts at St. Catherine's as they reach out to all those on the prayer list—Carl stressed the need for the outreach committee(s) to be involved.
 - Steve will contact St. Seb's Outreach Committee

Survey report

- How to engage more people to fill them out
 - Will keep up the announcements—extend to the week of the 23rd—the video last weekend seemed to prolong everything
 - Ralph will place them in the pews on Sunday
- A mailing? At both parishes?
 - Steve will check with Mike K about this effort at Seb's—budget issue?
 - Maybe a mailing with the bulletins that goes to those on St. Catherine's list?

Homebound Ministry—cards will be at the usher's stands—reminder periodically

- Eucharistic Ministers—list of ministers—Mike and Mary Ann at St. Catherine's
- Clearing house person? At both parishes—need to develop a leader for this
 - Home visits
 - Hospital visits
 - Rehab facilities

Enabling Ministry—Change the title to Compassion Ministry? Not keen on this name—will work on this—will be on the next agenda—hopefully, the school visits will help develop this ministry

- how to introduce the concept—esp. at Seb's (family commitments)
- School meeting

Bereavement Ministry—start to think about it

Final thought from the meeting: All that we are proposing is human contact, interacting with active members of the parishes who are called to connect with those who cannot attend parish activities for a variety of reasons. Recruiting and assigning lay ministers in a variety of different ministries is a priority as we strive to invite all parishioners to serve.

Senior Ministry Committee—Sts. Seb's and Catherine's

2014 Implementation Planning

Meeting minutes

April 10, 2014

Job Description—Senior Ministry Coordinator—ideas were discussed—ultimately, we do not want to supplant the outreach performed by Interfaith. Information about Interfaith will be shared in the bulletin for the next month—Senior Ministry Corner. At the next meeting we will finalize the job description, submit it to Frs. Dick and Jack and the Outreach Committees before it goes to the Parish Councils.

Letter Senior Ministry—Steve will re-edit the first draft—members are asked to submit their ideas. The goal is to mail the letter to all older adults in the two parishes along with the two cards.

Listening Sessions/Meetings--reports

- Schools—still have not contacted St. Catherine's—seems to be an issue with how many of the families are actually involved in the parish
- **Ushers**—Brian K at Seb's hosted a meeting—we discussed how they can have an impact on the lives of the old adults that they see in Church each week. They will contact us if they notice any changes in the patterns of older adults or if they notice their health changing.
- Ushers at St. Catherine's—spoke to them—will get back to me
- **St. Seb's knitting groups**—Sally reported that the women appreciated that we contacted them. They would like to be kept in the loop—they are willing to help in any way that they can. The knitters would be willing to knit shawls for older adults. They also suggested that we list volunteer opportunities for older adult. Folks need to know what they can do to be of service.
- Eucharistic Ministers—Mike K. and Marianne at St. Catherine's—still no dates
- **Seb's St. Vincent de Paul**—Steve met with them. They had about 10-15 people at the meeting. They are quite traditional in their outreach. They receive names of individuals or families from the main office and then visit the people. They assess their needs and then procure what they need; the goal is to stabilize the people referred. There is no follow-up unless they receive another call. We discussed the importance of contacting Interfaith when they visit with older adults. And they should let us know about older adults and their needs so that we can also follow-up with Interfaith. They agreed to list Interfaith in the resource sheets that they offer older adults.
- Human and Social Concerns Committee—St. Seb's the third Monday of the month—we're welcome to visit—how about a combined meeting?—Steve will suggest it.
- Scouts—First Monday evening in May
- Others groups?

Seb's Ministry Sunday—Sally, Lee, Steve and Warren were present to answer questions. We talked to a couple people, handed out a description of our goals and programs that we are discussing. The one negative issue—the schnechts were too close and thus folks were not

focused on the tables along the walls. At least we put material in the hands of those who were curious about Senior Ministry

Confirmands clean-up and assistance day for older adults—Saturday, May 3rd

- People that we might contact who would appreciate a helping hand

Survey report--attached

- Pulpit announcement?
- On-line—websites—Working with

Homebound Ministry—discuss options (cards are few and far between)—still have work to do in this area. A staff person would make this happen—too much for us as volunteers and the letter that we are planning will hopefully give us more feedback.

- Eucharistic Ministers—list of ministers—still do not have this from either parish
- Home visits
- Hospital visits
- Rehab facilities

Enabling Ministry—new name—*Curbside Hospitality*

- People are parking in the one loading zone spot at St. Seb's—might be time to look at disability parking along 54th—west side of the street along with the loading zone.
- Snow plowing and shoveling so that the sidewalks are free of snow and ice—both parishes, but more importantly St. Catherine's. Plows dump snow along the curb which becomes a burden for older adults and those with challenges.
- Steve will talk to the scouts about being volunteers who assist older adults and those with disabilities.

Senior Ministry Committee—Sts. Seb's and Catherine's
2014 Implementation Planning
Meeting Minutes
May 8, 2014

Members in attendance: Warren B., Bernadette D., Ed D., Ralph K., Sally O'N., Steve O'C., and Carol S.

Job Description—Senior Ministry Coordinator—finalize the description

- Warren will re-write the job description--attached

Letter Senior Ministry (attached)--finalize

- Bernadette will re-edit the letter in two different fonts--attached

Listening Sessions/Meetings--reports

- Ushers at St. Catherine's—spoke to them—will get back to me
- Eucharistic Ministers—Mike K. and Marianne at St. Catherine's—still no dates

- Human and Social Concerns Committee—trying to set-up a meeting of both committees—third Monday of the month
- Scouts—Boys--First Monday evening in May—report by Steve; Girls mid-May meeting
- Others groups?

Confirmands clean-up and assistance day for older adults—Saturday, May 3rd—Report from Steve—looking to make this happen twice a year—fall/spring. The teachers of the confirmands were very positive about the experience.

Survey report—presentations? How do we want to inform parishioners of the results?

- Pulpit announcement?
- On-line—websites?
- No discussion

Homebound Ministry—Discuss options (cards are few and far between)—maybe the letter will bring more people to the fore?

- Eucharistic Ministers—list of ministers
- Home visits
- Hospital visits
- Rehab facilities

Curbside Hospitality

- People are parking in the one disability spot at St. Seb's
- Look at parking along the side of the churches and the parking lots—disability parking along 54th Street
- Snow plowing and shoveling so that the sidewalks are free of snow and ice
- Steve will reach out to Alderman Murphy

**Senior Ministry Committee—Sts. Seb's and Catherine's
2014 Implementation Planning**

Meeting minutes—St. Catherine's

August 14, 2014

Job Description—Senior Ministry Coordinator

- Action plan—Steve and Ed will work with the outreach committees—we need to focus on the actual costs so that the presentation to the parish councils will be clearly stated.
- Will analyze the results before we come up with a plan to engage our older adults
- Right now our response will be limited—we are all volunteers. We will need more involvement on the part of the parishes' members.
- The mailing lists can be cleaned up if we get returned mail.

Survey report—presentations? How do we want to inform parishioners of the results?

- Wait for the mailings—see what is returned.
- Pulpit announcement—will actually prepare a report to the parish

- On-line—Steve will work with Barb Haig. It will be important to post our results—more and more old adults are computer savvy.

Homebound Ministry—Discuss training of ministers

- Eucharistic Ministers—list of minister—schedule a meeting with the Liturgy Committee. We need to recruit ministers depending on the need.
- Discussion of the *Sending Ritual* after Communion—discuss with Fr. Larry. Ed pointed out that Fr. Larry has done this in his other parishes, so this is nothing new to him.
- Training will be provided to new Eucharistic Ministers.

Social event for older adults—discuss

- Options—will take the lead from the input from our mailing
- Anointing of the sick and older adults—have a combined anointing for all who wish it—on a regular annual schedule
- Annual celebration of older adults in the two parishes

Representation on the Interfaith Boards

- Possible people to recruit—need a job description of a board member—Steve
- Jane and Ralph—Sherman Park?
- Leroy from Seb's?

Initial discussion of end-of-life issues—Steve and Ed

- Sept 20th—end of life legal and ethical issues for caregivers—at St. Catherine's

Curbside Hospitality

- Proposal went to the building folks at Seb's
- We have to set-up a meeting with Ald. Murphy and the new Pastor—will start the ball rolling

Bulletin Announcements

Bulletin announcement: Jan 5th

Senior Ministry 2014

A committee of 10 parishioners from both parishes has been meeting for a year exploring how we might reach out to older adults who worship and look to our two parishes for spiritual nourishment and social engagement. The goal of our efforts in 2014 will be to engage older adults at both parishes through sacramental outreach as we provide cross-generational and appropriate worship experiences. Members of the committee will also coordinate educational programs that are relevant to older adults. And finally, the committee will seek to enliven the faith of the two parishes by promoting events that will engage parishioners of all ages in worship, spiritual growth and social engagement. Over the next three weeks, we will be announcing the different programs that we propose to introduce to parishioners and

seeking input from our fellow older adults about how we can best serve one another.

Bulletin announcement: Jan 12th

**2014 Senior Ministry
Outreach to Home Bound Members and *Sunday Conversations***

This week as part of our introduction to our Senior Ministry program, the Senior Ministry Committee is looking to engage parishioners who are home bound. We would like to begin to have an impact on our fellow Catholics who are not able to worship on a regular basis, or wish to receive the sacraments on a weekly basis and/or may just wish to have some periodic companionship. If you know someone who is home bound and expresses a desire to be connected to our parish, there are cards at the end of each pew. We would like everyone at worship today and over the next three weeks to fill out these cards and return them to our ushers; there are also special boxes and baskets at the entrances where you can place them as you enter or leave church. Think about your family members or neighbors or friends who express a desire to be connected, but are unable for a variety of reasons to attend church on a regular basis.

Next week, we will be introducing a new program called *Sunday Conversations*. The first *Conversation* will be held on Sunday, Jan 26th. At St. Seb's the sessions will be held between the two morning liturgies at 9:15 AM. St. Catherine's sessions will be held after the morning liturgy. More information to come!

Bulletin Announcement for Jan 19th:

**2014 Senior Ministry
Outreach to Home Bound Members, Caregivers, and *Sunday Conversations***

Last week you may have noticed the cards in the pews asking for information about home bound parishioners who might be interested in someone from the parish contacting them. We are inviting everyone at worship today and over the next two weeks to fill out these cards and return them to the ushers; there are also special boxes and baskets at the entrances where you can place them as you enter or leave church. Think about your family members or neighbors or friends who express a desire to be connected to the parish, but are unable for a variety of reasons to attend church on a regular basis. If you are a caregiver, it is very important for you to fill out the card.

Next Sunday, we are kicking off at both parishes the program called *Sunday Conversations*. The first conversation will be a reflection on Pope Francis' invitation to focus on our call to be Christian to all whom we meet. We will use this session to start our conversation on how we can improve our outreach to our older members and our home bound members. All are invited; you do not have to be 60+. And we ask all who are caregivers to make sure that you attend. St. Seb's *Conversation* starts at 9:15 in the faith formation room, between the two liturgies. **St. Catherine's meets after the morning liturgy.**

Bulletin announcement—Jan 26th

2014 Senior Ministry Outreach to Home Bound Members, Caregivers, and *Sunday Conversations*

Committee members wish to thank all those who have filled out the cards requesting information for home bound parishioners who might be interested in someone from the parish contacting them. We also thank those who used the cards to express their desire to assist the committee as we strive to address the needs of older adults at both parishes. We will start to contact all those people in the next couple weeks. You can continue to return the card to special boxes/ baskets at the entrances of the church.

The first *Sunday Conversations* started this Sunday. At this event all participants were asked to fill out a survey about the needs of older adults in the two parishes. Knowing that not all older adults were able to attend, we are placing survey cards in the pews over the next two weekends. We encourage all who are 60+ to fill out these surveys so that we can start to address the important issues affecting the lives of older adults who call St. Seb's or St. Catherine's home.

Bulletin Announcement—Feb. 3rd

2014 Senior Ministry Outreach to Home Bound Members, Caregivers, and *Sunday Conversations*

Thank you to all who have returned the Homebound Cards in the last couple weeks. These cards will be in special baskets at each entrance. You can continue to return the card to these baskets at the entrances of the church.

The first *Sunday Conversations* was held last Sunday. All those in attendance were asked to fill out a survey about the needs of older adults in the two parishes. We also discussed the goals of the program and the different programs that we will be introducing throughout the year. There will be survey cards in the pews over the next two weekends. We encourage all who are 60+ to fill out these surveys so that we can start to address the important issues affecting the lives of older adults who call St. Seb's or St. Catherine's home.

Bulletin Announcement—Feb. 9th

As the Senior Ministry committee explored ways to refresh our commitment to the older adults at both parishes the question of demographics came up. Globally, according to the World Health Organization, the number of people age 60 and over has doubled since 1980. By the time we reach 2050 the number of people age 80 is expected to quadruple to 395 million. Within the next 5 years, the number of adults aged 65 and over will outnumber children age 5 and under. And by 2050 these older adults will outnumber all children under the age of 14.

With this global perspective, we localized our conversation. At St. Catherine's, there are 370 total units (family units) of which 274 units are 60 or older. At St. Seb's, the 60+ age group represents about 11% of the overall membership. There is a total of 464 individuals enrolled who are sixty or older. We encourage all who are 60+ to fill out the surveys at the ends of the pews so that we can start to address the important issues affecting the lives of older adults who call St. Seb's or St. Catherine's home

Bulletin Announcement—Feb. 16th

A couple housekeeping items this week and reminders. Last week, the video *Christ at the Core* was the focus after Communion. Once again, we would like to remind anyone 60+ to fill out one of the survey cards at the end of the pew. So far we have received 23 cards at St. Seb's. St. Catherine's will be starting this Sunday. There is some fascinating information being gleaned even from so few cards. This effort will continue through the liturgies on the 23rd. If you wish to take one home and fill it out, simply return it to one of the baskets at each usher stand. A report will be shared with the parishes when the surveys are completed.

The second *Sunday Conversation* at St. Seb's is scheduled for Sunday, February 23rd in the faith formation room at 9:15, between the two morning liturgies. At St.

Catherine's the meeting will take place in the rectory after the morning liturgy. We hope for better weather.

Bulletin Announcement—Feb. 23rd

Once again, we would like to remind anyone 60+ to fill out one of the survey cards at the end of the pew. So far we have received 35 cards at St. Seb's. If you wish to take one home and fill it out, simply return it to one of the baskets at the usher stands. The initial report will be shared with the parishes next week. Thanks to all of you who have submitted your survey.

Members of the Senior Ministry Committee are conducting listening sessions with different groups at both parishes. The overall goal is to elicit ideas of how we can serve all members of the parishes while we are more aware of each other's needs. At our monthly meeting this last week we ended the meeting with this thought: All that we are proposing is human contact, interacting with active members of the parishes who are called to connect with those who cannot attend parish activities for a variety of reasons. Recruiting and assigning lay ministers in a variety of different ministries is a priority as we strive to serve all ages.

Bulletin Announcement—March 2nd

Last call! We would like to remind anyone 60+ to fill out one of the survey cards at the end of the pew. So far we have received 39 cards at St. Seb's. If you wish to take one home and fill it out, simply return it to one of the baskets at the usher stands. After this weekend, the two cards—the survey cards and the home bound cards will be at the usher stands.

An initial report will be shared with the parishes next week. Thanks to all of you who submitted a survey.

Bulletin Announcement—March 9th

Surveys continue to come in—thanks to all who have completed them. Rather than report the numbers at this time, the committee would like to list comments that we have received and disclose the efforts that we are taking to address the written concerns. Listed below are the first two comments and our plan of action.

- ***Provide a drop-off area, serviced by the scouts who would assist seniors getting out of their cars.*** The drop-off area is in place at St. Seb's; the

parking lot at St. Catherine's is accessible to the church. We are contacting different groups at the parishes to recruit volunteers who can assist those who need assistance. At Seb's, the Confirmands have chosen a date—May 4th as their first day of service. We are looking for families at both parishes who can serve in this capacity. If you are interested, please contact Steve O'Connell—445-7472.

- ***Dedicated Eucharistic Ministers to bring Communion to the home bound or those living in assisted living facilities.*** Both parishes are in the process of setting up a meeting with Eucharistic Ministers to discuss this exact issue. On the survey, parishioners will be pleased to see that there is a surprisingly large number of older adults “*who supported a visit from a lay parishioner who is an Eucharistic Minister bringing me Eucharist on a regular basis*”.

Bulletin Announcement: March 16th

Before we delve into some of the other comments from the senior surveys, the Senior Committee members would like to remind everyone about the designated drop-off area on 54th Street. In the last two weeks, older adults who wished to be dropped off at the curb could not use the service because someone was parked in the spot. Please, be mindful of the signs and do not park in the designated disabled parking spot.

Listed below are the two more comments and a personal plan of action for Lent.

- ***Mix with younger folks.*** Members of the committee are meeting with the principals of the schools to discuss cross-generational programs that might bring younger members of the parishes together with older adult members.
- ***Reach out with kindness and patience.*** The committee, at its meeting this past week met with representatives from Interfaith Programs for Older Adults and discussed all the programs that they offer. Our goal is to collaborate with Interfaith so that we can link older adults to programs that are being offered in the community that enhance the lives of older adults. Aging can be stressful; our Baptism calls all of us to service. The goal of the Senior Ministry program is to encourage all of us to care for each other, especially those who are aging in our two communities. One suggestion for Lent—call an older adult each week; enquire about how he/she is doing and finally, close by wishing that person a blessed day.

Bulletin Announcement: March 23rd

Before we delve into two more comments from the senior surveys, we would like to bring you up-to-date on our March monthly meeting. The Committee members met with two representatives from Interfaith Older Adults Program. We learned about a variety of programs that are sponsored by the organization. The most important program is the two neighborhood outreach programs that serve both parishes. St. Seb's is served by the Greater Tosa office and St. Catherine's by the Sherman Park/Northwest office.

Listed below are two more comments and suggested plans of action for Lent.

- ***A daily check on those that live alone—oldest to the youngest just to see that they are alive.*** Interfaith's program is called the Telephone Reassurance Program. Volunteers call older adults every day checking on their welfare. If you are interested in volunteering for this program in this time of Lent or you would like someone to call you, please contact Diane Euting at the Greater Tosa office—453-5750 or Niedra North in the Sherman Park/Northwest office at 466-8858.
- ***Maybe help with practical needs—access to medical help; shoveling snow; lawn care; or getting groceries carried into the house.*** All these needs are addressed by Interfaith. Yes, older adults in need of these services should call the numbers listed above. But Committee members would like to encourage all our fellow parishioners to consider assisting an older adult in your neighborhood or someone you know from the parish whom you know that needs help. There may be other needs that you might consider. Lent is a time for performing good works!

Bulletin Announcement: March 30th

Committee members are amazed at the referrals that we have been receiving from parishioners. We attended the St. Vincent de Paul chapter monthly meeting. There is a growing interest in meeting the needs of older adults. The Vincentians have agreed to add Interfaith Older Adults Program to their list of resources. The needs of older adults were discussed and how St. Vincent de Paul can be a resource for older adults who are members of the two parishes.

Listed below are two more comments and suggested plans of action for Lent.

- ***I am even more concerned about the Catholic Church and young people—late teens and up. To my way of thinking, since they are the church of the***

future, parishes need to make a concerted effort to involve the younger members heavily in church activities—urge them to be on the council, to be lectors, ushers, SVDP members. We are pleased to announce that the Confirmands have taken up the call to serve our older adults. They have set aside one Saturday morning—May 3rd—to volunteer to assist older adults in the two parishes who might need to have their yards raked, storm windows removed and screens hung while they prep and wash the windows for summer storage and do anything else that is needed in the yard. For more information, please contact Steve O’Connell at 445-7472.

- ***More adult education opportunities.*** Our new Faith Formation Director is offering a series of Biblical Reflections for the season of Lent at both parishes. The sessions are held three times during the week: Monday after the 8:00AM liturgy at St. Catherine’s; Tuesday at 7PM, and finally, after the 8:15 AM liturgy on Wednesday, both at St. Seb’s. Lent is not only a time for performing good works, but also a time of prayer and reflection. Members of all ages are invited to the Scripture series.

Bulletin Announcement: April 6th

A quick reminder: This year’s Confirmands have taken up the call to serve our older adults. They have set aside one Saturday morning—May 3rd—to volunteer to assist older adults in the two parishes who might need to have their yards raked, storm windows removed and screens hung while they prep and wash the windows for summer storage and anything else that is needed in the yard. For more information, please contact Steve O’Connell at 445-7472.

And the cover sheet of the St. Seb’s bulletin will now present the information for Greater Tosa Interfaith. Please do not hesitate to call Diane Euting, the Director, if you have a need for their services. And St. Vincent de Paul will be notified about the address, etc.

Listed below is another comment from the surveys that have been returned.

Address spiritual role in aging and perhaps in major illness connected with again, e.g. Alzheimer’s, loss of mobility and independence. The committee is attending to some of the more important issues as we re-engage older adults in the two parishes. There has been discussion about a series of presentations directly aimed at the needs of older adults. All we can say is—stay tuned!

Bulletin Announcement: April 13th

The information for Greater Tosa Interfaith and Sherman Park/Northwest Interfaith now appears on the front of the two bulletins. Each parish is served by a different Interfaith office. Parishioners have asked about Interfaith Older Adult Programs. Interfaith responds to the diversity of aging and current social challenges by providing innovative programs, rewarding opportunities, caregiver resources, and the often much needed extra helping hand. The overall goal is to provide services and opportunities uniquely designed for older adults so that they can maintain the highest level of health and independence. There are four categories of programs. Below is a description of one program.

Neighbors Helping Neighbors: Interfaith offices assist older adults by sharing pertinent information that will assist them with daily living skills. Staff will also arrange transportation for those who need to visit their doctor, go to the bank or the grocery store, and volunteers also take older adults to the pharmacy. In-home care for the home bound means friendly visits from dedicated Interfaith volunteers who will also perform minor home chores.

Easter Sunday—April 20th

Last Call

We are pleased to announce that the Confirmands have taken up the call to serve our older adults. They have set aside one Saturday morning—May 3rd—to volunteer to assist older adults in the two parishes who wish to have their yards raked, storm windows removed and screens hung while they prep and wash the windows for summer storage and do anything else that is needed in the yard. If you are interested or you know of an older adult in your family or your neighborhood (they do not have to be a parish member), please contact Steve O’Connell at 445-7472.

Bulletin Announcement: April 27th

The headline on the brochure that Interfaith provides older adults states: **No One Can Do It Alone.** It is all about connecting seniors to life sustaining programs. One of the important services is focused on the Health and Well Being of older adults. Daily telephone checks are performed by volunteers who call daily to check on older adults. The bond established between the volunteer and the older adult is life giving. The meal sites located throughout the community—both Greater Tosa and Sherman Park/Northwest refer clients on our side of the City to Washington Park Senior Center for nutritious noon-time meals. There are Personal Care

Assistants at the site to interview and line up volunteers who visit and check on clients who are not at the Center every day. And even more important, there are daily fitness programs for older adults. There are exercise rooms for those who wish to work-out alone. Interfaith is all about maintaining the highest level of health and independence for older adults.

Bulletin Announcement: May 11th

First of all, committee members would like to thank the confirmands who assisted four older adult households who needed help in accomplishing their spring chores around the house and yard. Kudos to our young parishioners!

In the last two installments about Interfaith Older Adult Programs, we focused on the various programs offered to older adults. Many of the programs are staffed by volunteers, the majority of whom are older adults themselves. Interfaith depends on volunteers! On an annual basis, more than 2,500 individuals serve as volunteers. Older adult volunteers serve as tutors in MPS schools, are members of the Foster Grandparents Program, drive other older adults to medical appointments, grocery shopping, and even stop in to visit with a warm nutritious meal or perform minor home chores while sharing time with a fellow older adult. We encourage you to join a special team of older adult volunteers who give of their time to serve others in the community. Interested? Contact Niedra North at Sherman Park/Northwest Interfaith. Her phone number is: 466-8858. Or, Diane Euting at Greater Tosa Interfaith. Her phone number is: 453-5750. They look forward to talking to you.

Bulletin Announcement: May 18th

The Senior Ministry Committee has been meeting with different groups in the two parishes, discussing how we can better connect older adult parishioners with others in the parish or how older adults can be of service to all generations in the parish. Our most recent meeting was with the Boys Scouts at St. Seb's.

Committee members have heard many comments about parking for older adults and those who are disabled. Yes, we now have a small loading zone as Seb's. But we continue to see people parking in that spot. Out of our discussions has come the notion of a new service called *Curbside Hospitality*. Our goal is to have someone out at the curb along 54th Street and in the parking lot at St. Catherine's to assist those who need a helping hand/arm so that they can safely enter church without falling, etc.

We broached the subject with the Scout leaders and they were more than willing to volunteer to take up the challenge of leading the Curbside Hospitality program. Scouts and their families will be welcoming worshippers and assisting those with special needs. We continue to look for ways to assist parishioners at St. Catherine's as they move from the parking lot into the Church.

Bulletin Announcement: May 25th

One of the buzzwords for senior ministry efforts is cross-generation. The ELCA Synod of the Lutheran Church is calling their efforts Cross-Gen. The focus of this aspect of ministry is to bring young church members into contact with older adults whose lives and experience can serve as a resource in schools, organizations, and finally in other pastoral ministries.

With that introduction, one of the issues that we discussed at the recent listening session with the boy scouts was the possibility of older adults in the parish who served as scout masters volunteering to assist young scouts with their merit badges and other scouting experiences and programs. The discussion focused on how older adults can be a resource to not only the leaders but the children who enjoy scouting. Interested? Contact Steve O'Connell at 445-7472 or oconsase@gmail.com.

Bulletin Announcement: June 1st

Senior Ministry inherently has to spend time addressing end of life issues. Over the next two years, there will be presentations on various life choices and theological concepts that affect us as Catholics. Please mark your calendars for Saturday, June 28th. A team of parishioners will present a workshop addressed: Feeling Financially Secure after the Death of a Spouse. Spouses who have lost their partner usually go through three phases from grief through growth to grace—a transition that can take years according to financial advisors. Please join us on the 28th from 10:00AM to noon for this informative presentation in the Faith Formation room at St. Sebastian's.

Bulletin Announcement: June 8th

If you recall last week's announcement—we mentioned a workshop scheduled for Saturday, June 28th focused on financial security after the death of a spouse. The initial discussion of life ending issues came from a contact by a member of the St.

Seb's Foundation. Members of the Foundation Board expressed a willingness to collaborate with the Senior Ministry Committee in the development of a series of presentations for adult members of the two parishes. Themes of the presentations will be issues such as health care in the age of HIPAA, ethical issues pertaining to end of life choices, hospice care programs, and pre-planning of funerals. The committee will start to design and coordinate quarterly presentations as we go forward. We will keep everyone informed as we schedule these informative workshops.

Bulletin Announcement: June 15th

One issue that the Senior Ministry Committee hears from family members when an older adult is in the hospital, a care facility, or a rehabilitation facility is that parish priests and other pastoral ministers do not visit their loved ones. The reason that care facilities cannot release information about patients is the HIPAA law. HIPAA, which stands for the American Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996, is a set of rules to be followed by doctors, hospitals and other health care providers. HIPAA helps ensure that all medical records, medical billing, and patient accounts meet certain consistent standards with regard to documentation, handling and privacy. Care facilities are mandated to protect the privacy of patients, even to the point where they do not even release the names of patients who are in their facility. The Senior Ministry Committee is encouraging family members to contact the parish office to let the pastoral staff know when your loved one would like a visit from the parish pastoral staff.

Bulletin Announcement: June 22nd

A quick reminder: The Senior Ministry Committee in collaboration with the St. Seb's Foundation is presenting a workshop addressed: *Feeling Financially Secure after the Death of a Spouse*. Spouses who have lost their partner usually go through three phases from grief through growth to grace—a transition that can take years according to financial advisors. Please join us this coming Saturday, June 28th from 10:00AM to noon for this informative presentation in the Faith Formation room at St. Sebastian's.

Bulletin Announcement: June 29th

The Senior Committee is presently exploring disability parking and parking for older adults at both parishes. Alderman Murphy said that he would be willing to help us at St. Seb's. We are thinking about reserving the west side of 54th Street so

that older adults can easily enter the gathering space safely. At St. Catherine's we are looking at the parking along 51st Street. It is quite dangerous when there is snow that accumulates on the sidewalk after the City plows go through. We would like to look at a plan that calls for the snow to be pushed onto the grass so that the bank that is formed after the plows go through is not a hazard. And of course, at both Churches, we need to stress safe passage for older adults and all those who are challenged.

Bulletin Announcement: July 6th

Summer time brings vacations every year! The Senior Committee members are committed to serving older adults in both parishes. Within the next couple weeks, all the older adults who are on the parish rolls will be receiving a letter and the survey that we have been using to learn more about the needs of older adults and the wishes and concerns of our fellow older adults. We will make sure that we announce when the letter is mailed. Your input is really important with the change in leadership and the increasing number of older adults who call St. Sebastian's and St. Catherine's their spiritual home.

If you are interested in the pastoral staff and members of the Senior Committee visiting you or a member of your family who might be in the hospital or rehab center or simply homebound, please contact the parish offices. May God comfort you in our illness and/or loneliness!

Bulletin Announcement: July 13th

Help Wanted: Interfaith Older Adult Programs is looking for volunteer drivers who are interested in taking older adults shopping on a regular basis. It might be on a weekly basis, but more often a bi-weekly commitment. Interfaith is also looking for drivers who are available to take folks to the doctor or dentist office. Bring a good book and the time flies by quickly as you wait for the older adult.

Both parishes are now looking for a representative for both of the two Interfaith Neighborhood boards. Fr. Jack is leaving the Sherman Park/Northwest board. If you are interested in representing your parish on the Greater Tosa or the Sherman Park/Northwest board contact Steve O'Connell. He will also be able to give you an overview of what it means to serve on an Interfaith Board. He serves on the Sherman Park/Northwest board as the representative of the Sherman Park Gathering Place.

Bulletin Announcement: July 20th

At the July monthly meeting, the Senior Ministry Committee agreed upon a letter that is being sent to all older adults on our parish rolls. Those who are 60+ can expect a letter from Committee members, the older adult survey and a card for those who are homebound and wish parish members to visit or bring Communion on a weekly basis. If you have not submitted a survey or filled out a homebound ministry card, please take a couple minutes to respond to the questions. They can be mailed back to the parish offices or dropped in the collection basket or the Senior Ministry basket at each usher stand.

A second discussion focused on our end-of-life series. Committee members focused on designing an annual program with quarterly presentations. The four topics are: sacramental care at the end of life; end of life decisions; pre-planning a funeral; and, physical and medical end of life issues and ethical decisions that confront us as Catholics. Look for the dates and times in the bulletin and on-line.

Bulletin Announcement: July 27th

The survey is in the mail! As we have discussed in our announcements in the last couple weeks, the Senior Ministry Committee is interested in the thoughts and wishes of our older adults. As we look forward to sitting down with Fr. Larry, it will be important for us to represent the wishes of older adults who call St. Sebastian's and St. Catherine's home. The cover letter is accompanied by the older adult survey and a card for those who are homebound and wish parish members to visit or bring Communion on a weekly basis. If you have not submitted a survey or filled out a homebound ministry card, please take a couple minutes to respond to the questions. They can be mailed back to the parish offices or dropped in the collection basket or the Senior Ministry basket at each usher stand. Committee members look forward to your input.

Bulletin Announcement: August 10th

A focal point of a Catholic's faith life is the weekly parish Eucharistic Celebration. We approach the table of the Lord to partake in the Lord's Last Supper as we receive the body and blood of Christ. A discussion that has been part of our meetings is the importance of including the homebound in the activity of the parish. There is nothing more central to this goal than the weekly gathering around the Table of the Lord. The committee is looking to recruit parish members who are

willing to take Eucharist to either family members or neighbors or fellow members who are homebound for a variety of reasons. If you are interested in taking an active role in this ministry, please contact Steve O'Connell at: 445-7472 or by e-mail at: oconsase@gmail.com.

Bulletin Announcement: August 17th

One of the overarching goals of the Senior Ministry is engage older adult members through social events. Yes, spiritual growth is important, but so is the social sense of wellness. The committee is looking for ideas about how to bring older adults together. Your ideas are needed as we start to plan social events. If you are interested in offering suggestions, please contact Steve O'Connell at: 445-7472 or by e-mail at: oconsase@gmail.com. And don't forget to return your surveys. We look forward to your input. Thank you!

Bulletin Announcement: August 24th

First of all, older adults at both parishes have received a letter asking for input as we strive to meet the needs of our seniors. Your comments and responses are important to us! And thanks to all of you who have called or contacted us with your ideas about social events. It is great to hear your ideas. Our goal is to kick-off the fall with some interesting social events. And save the date: the second of our End of Life presentations is scheduled for September 20th. We are meeting at St. Catherine's—9:00 to 10:30 AM. Watch for a creative title!

Bulletin Announcement: August 31st

First of all, thanks to all who have responded to our survey. Keep those ideas coming! And special thanks to those who are volunteering to help us in our efforts to serve our parishes' seniors and homebound members. Your calls, supportive comments at church, and written notes are appreciated!

The 5th Annual Mount Mary University Grief Education Conference— **Coping With Grief after Death: for adults, families & friends grieving the loss of someone due to death**—is scheduled for Thursday, September 18th (6:30 – 8:30pm). Doors open at 6:00pm. The event is to be held in the Alumnae Dining

Room, Bergstrom Hall—2900 North Menomonee River Parkway. The conference is free to the general public.

People grieving a death often feel like no one understands what they're going through. And truthfully, no one's grief is exactly the same. But people tell us the help they appreciate most comes from sharing with others who are also grieving a death. There is no right or wrong way to be. Nobody can tell you it's time to move on.

Bulletin Announcement: Sept. 14th

The Senior Ministry Committee members are starting to review all the input that we have received for our older adult members. A report is coming and a call for volunteers. We thank all of you for the letters, calls and returned surveys.

Last reminder for two important educational events for older adults and those who will be faced with end of life issues within the family.

The 5th Annual Mount Mary University Grief Education Conference— **Coping With Grief after Death: for adults, families & friends grieving the loss of someone due to death**—is scheduled for Thursday, September 18th (6:30 – 8:30pm). Doors open at 6:00pm. The event is to be held in the Alumnae Dining Room, Bergstrom Hall—2900 North Menomonee River Parkway. The conference is free to the general public.

The second of our quarterly End of Life Presentations at both our parishes is scheduled for Saturday, September 20th. We are meeting at St. Catherine's— 9:00 to 10:30 AM. The presentation will focus on the Church's teaching on end of life decisions and some of the legal implications borne by family members as family members face end of life decisions for a loved one.

Bulletin Announcement: Sept. 7th

The second of our quarterly End of Life Presentations at both our parishes is scheduled for Saturday, September 20th. We are meeting at St. Catherine's—9:00 to 10:30 AM. The presentation will focus on the Church's teaching on end of life

decisions and some of the legal implications borne by family members as family members face end of life decisions for a loved one.

We wish to remind everyone of two important educational events for older adults and those who will be faced with end of life issues within the family. Please save the date and plan to attend.

The 5th Annual Mount Mary University Grief Education Conference— **Coping With Grief after Death: for adults, families & friends grieving the loss of someone due to death**—is scheduled for Thursday, September 18th (6:30 – 8:30pm). Doors open at 6:00pm. The event is to be held in the Alumnae Dining Room, Bergstrom Hall—2900 North Menomonee River Parkway. The conference is free to the general public.

Bulletin Announcement: Sept. 28th

The Senior Ministry Committee wishes to thank Attorney John Conforti and Jim Schiller for their assistance with our first two end-of-life presentations. It is good to know that we have excellent resources in our parishes.

After the presentation last weekend, we decided to share some of the salient points. The issue is vitally important in this new era of healthcare and follow-up care for the loved ones who have experienced the loss of a spouse or loved one.

We will be quoting passages from an interesting article by Alan D. Wolfeldt, Ph.D. He starts his article with the emphatic statement: “Few events in life are as painful as the death of your spouse or companion. You may be uncertain you will survive this overwhelming loss. At times, you may be uncertain you even have the energy or the desire to try to heal.”

Next week, we will focus on the issue of mourning.

Bulletin Announcement: Oct. 5th

We continue the article by Alan D. Wolfeldt, Ph.D. He reminds the reader and the one affected by the death of a spouse or loved one that “you are beginning a journey that is often frightening, overwhelming and sometimes lonely”.

Allow Yourself to Mourn

“Your husband or wife has died. This was your companion, the person you shared your life with. If right now you are not sure of whom you are, and you feel confused, that is appropriate because you have lost a part of yourself. When you experience the death of someone you love, live with and depend on, feeling disoriented is natural.

You are now faced with the difficult but important need to mourn. Mourning is the open expression of your thoughts and feelings regarding the death of your spouse. It is an essential part of healing”.

Next week, we will focus on the issue of grief.

Bulletin Announcement: Oct. 12th

Recognize Your Grief is Unique

Our author, Alan D. Wolfeldt, goes on in his article to point out that every person’s grief is unique “because no one else had the same relationship you had with your spouse. Your experience will also be influenced by the circumstances surrounding the death, other losses you have experienced, your emotional support system and your cultural and religious background.”

He states that “you will grieve in your own special way. Don’t try to compare your experience with that of others or to adopt assumptions about just how long your grief should last. Consider taking a ‘one-day-at-a-time’ approach that allows you to grieve at your own pace.”

Next week, the focus will be on a support system as you mourn.

Bulletin Announcement: Oct. 19th

Find a Support System

Our article stresses that “reaching out to others and accepting support is often difficult, particularly when you hurt so much. But the most compassionate self-action you can take at this difficult time is to find a support system of caring friends and relatives who will provide the understanding you need. Seek out those persons who will ‘walk with,’ not ‘in front of’ or ‘behind’ you on the journey

through grief. Find out if there is a support group in your area that you might want to attend. There is no substitute for learning from other persons who have experienced the death of their spouse.”

Dr. Wolfeldt goes on to stress that a person should “avoid people who are critical or who try to steal your grief from you. They may tell you ‘time heals all wounds’ or ‘you will get over it’ or ‘keep your chin up.’ While these comments may be well-intended, you do not have to accept them. Find those people who encourage you to be yourself and acknowledge your feelings—both sad and happy.” He states emphatically that “you have a right to express your grief; no one has the right to take it away”.

Next week we will focus on your spouse’s personal belongings.

Bulletin Announcement: Oct. 26th

A quick heads-up: If you have a neighbor or know someone who might not be able to get to the polls on November 4th, please offer him/her a ride. We have found that older adults are very conscientious about voting.

Take Your Time with Your Spouse’s Personal Belongings

Continuing our article by Alan D. Wolfeldt, he goes on in his expose to address an important part of healing after the death of a spouse—deciding what should be done with your spouse’s personal belongings. “Don’t force yourself to go through these things until you are ready to. Take your time. Right now you may not have the energy or desire to do anything with them.”

Wolfeldt goes on to say “that people may try to measure your healing by how quickly they can get you to do something with these belongings. Don’t let them make decisions for you. Odds are, when you have the energy to go through them you will”. He concludes this section with a noteworthy comment: “Again, only you should determine when the time is right for you.”

Next week’s topic: Treasure Your Memories

Bulletin Announcement: Nov. 2nd

Lest we forget, we vote on Tuesday. If you know an older adult or disabled individual who needs a ride to the polls, please offer to take him/her to the polls.

Treasure our Memories

Wolfeldt starts this section with a factual statement: “Memories are one of the best legacies that exist after your spouse dies”. He goes on to talk about how memories can be comforting, but also troubling. It is important “to share memories with those who listen well and support you. Recognize that your memories may make you laugh or cry. In either case, they are a lasting part of the relationship you had with a very special person in your life.”

Our author goes on to make some practical suggestions about how to commemorate your spouse’s life. For example, plant a tree if your spouse loved nature; play a certain piece of music that you shared together. “Or, you may want to create a memory book of photos that portrays your life together as a couple”. But above all, “remember—healing in grief doesn’t mean forgetting your spouse and the life you shared.”

Next week’s topic: Expect to Feel a Multitude of Emotions

Bulletin Announcement: Nov. 9th

Expect to Feel a Multitude of Emotions

This section of the article that we have been studying focuses more on the individual who has lost a spouse. Wolfeldt says that “experiencing the death of your spouse affects your head, heart and spirit, so you may experience a variety of emotions as part of your grief work. It is called work because it takes a great deal of energy and effort to heal. Confusion, disorientation, fear, guilt, relief, and anger are just a few of the emotions you may feel. Sometimes these emotions will follow each other within a short period of time. Or, they may occur simultaneously.”

“As strange as some of these emotions may seem, they are normal and healthy. Allow yourself to learn from these feelings. And don’t be surprised if out of nowhere you suddenly experience surges of grief, even at the most unexpected times. These grief attacks can be frightening and leave you feeling overwhelmed. They are, however, a natural response to the death of someone loved. Find someone who understands your feelings and will allow you to talk about them.”

Bulletin Announcement: Nov. 16th

One quick thought as we approach the holiday season: if you know a homebound person who might be in need of assistance of any kind, please go out of your way to help that person. The holiday season is especially hard for the homebound.

Embrace Your Spirituality

Our Author, Alan Wolfelt closes the article with a call to renewing your faith.

“Allow yourself to be around people who understand and support your religious beliefs. If you are angry with God because your spouse died, accept this feeling as a normal part of your grief work. Find someone to talk with who won’t be critical of whatever thoughts and feelings you need to explore.

You may hear someone say, ‘with faith, you don’t need to grieve.’ Don’t believe it. Having your personal faith does not mean you don’t have to talk out and explore your thought and feelings. To deny your grief is to invite problems to build up inside you. Express your faith, but express your grief as well”

Bulletin Announcement: Nov. 23rd

In a spirit of thanksgiving, the members of the Senior Ministry Committee ask everyone to take a moment on Thursday to thank God for all those others in our lives who have played an important role in our lives. God has blessed us with life; our parents, grandparents, etc. have nurtured us as human beings and helped to form our spiritual personhood. As we pray our blessing over the family meal on Thanksgiving, let our prayer reflect a sense of thanksgiving to God for his care and guidance through others who have influenced us in our lives.

Bulletin Announcement: Nov. 30th

The winter months can become challenging for older adults. With this in mind, Interfaith and other Senior Ministry groups encourage older adults to avail themselves of social gathering places to alleviate depression and the frustrations that come with the winter months. The Greater Tosa Interfaith office encourages people to visit the **Washington Park Senior Center Main Hall** located at 4420 W. Vliet St. For more details, visit the **Interfaith website** or call 933-2332. The Sherman Park/Northwest Interfaith encourages its members to visit the **Sherman Park Gathering Place**, located at Capitol Drive Lutheran Church. For more

information, please call Steve O'Connell at 445-7472 or on line at:
oconsase@gmail.com.

Bulletin Announcement: December 7th

One very important ministry that is part and parcel of the Senior Ministry outreach effort is sacramental care of the homebound, especially during winter months. The committee is always looking for Eucharistic Ministers, those who are interested in taking Communion to the homebound on Sunday and/or during the week. And, if you know someone who is interested in receiving Eucharist at home, or if you cannot attend liturgy on any given Sunday because of the weather, please let us know. If wish to receive Eucharist, know someone who is interested in receiving Eucharist, or if you are interested in volunteering to be a Eucharistic Minister, please contact Steve O'Connell at 414-445-7472 or by e-mail at:
oconsase@gmail.com.

Bulletin Announcement: December 14th

The Senior Ministry Committee has been working diligently over the last couple months as members considered all the input that we received through the surveys of seniors from both parishes. Over the next month, members will be releasing a plan for 2015 with the intent of offering more services for older adults. Time, treasure, and talent are the hallmarks of parish support; the committee will be looking for talent and time from fellow parish members. In short, volunteers of all ages will be needed to help us carry out the mission of the committee.

Bulletin Announcement: December 21st

As we stated last week, the Senior Ministry Committee which met on Thursday, the 11th would be laying out a plan for meeting the needs of older adults at both parishes. We have six priorities for the year. The plan will be outlined in the bulletin over the next five weeks and laid out on the parish website.

The first priority will be engaging more volunteers who wish to serve the needs of older adults, either through the parish or through Interfaith Older Adult Programs. Committee members are cognizant of the parishes' finances and staffing. The ten members are committed to taking a leadership role as we interact with volunteers and/or refer older adults to Interfaith which offers a plethora of programs designed

for older adults. In short, volunteers of all ages will be needed to help us serve our older adult parishioners.

Bulletin Announcement: December 28th

Continuing our quest to lay-out our priorities and goals for 2105: we intend to put more effort into serving our home bound parishioners! The survey and the cards requesting home bound care are making us more aware of the needs of our older adults. Our first effort has to be making sure that all our members who request to receive Eucharist at home have that request met. As we mentioned last week, we will rely on volunteers. We are looking for parishioners who are willing to serve as Eucharistic Ministers to the home bound. Deacon Ralph and his wife Jane are more than willing to train volunteers on how to serve in this ministry. We will have all the materials available for those who wish to serve in this ministry. And lastly, please make sure that you contact us if you wish to serve in this ministry or know of someone who wishes to receive Communion in their home on a regular basis or if you have a family member in this situation. You may contact Steve O'Connell if you are willing to serve in this ministry at: 445-7472 or by e-mail: occonsase@gmail.com.

Bulletin Announcement: January 4th

The third priority for the 2015 calendar year will be to continue the presentations on End-of-Life Issues. Last year, the committee hosted two presentations; they were held on Saturday mornings. In order to draw more people, the 2015 quarterly seminars will be presented on Thursdays mornings at 10:00 AM. Following each presentation there will be food and a chance to mingle with those in attendance. We will be contacting everyone through the bulletins, pulpit announcements, on-line, and through the parish websites. Mark your calendars—the first presentation will be Thursday, January 15th at St. Sebastian's. The discussion will focus on End of Life Decisions.

Bulletin Announcement: January 11th

As we mentioned last week, the Senior Ministry *End of Life Series* will kick off 2015 with its first presentation—End of Life Decisions. Attorney John Conforti, Financial Advisor, Jim Schiller, and Ed Duncklee, our Faith Formation Director will present the basics when facing the end of life. We will be meeting at St. Sebastian's on Thursday, January 15th at 10:00 AM in the Faith Formation Room. A light lunch will be served which will give us a chance to discuss the presentations. Committee members look forward to being able to engage our

fellow older adults as we reflect on seminal decisions as we age. Questions or concerns, contact Steve O'Connell at 414-445-7472 or on-line at iconsase@gmail.com.

Bulletin Announcement: January 18th

The Senior Ministry Committee members wish to thank all who attended our first presentation—End of Life Decisions. We look forward to other stimulating discussions on a quarterly basis.

Our fourth 2015 priority is called **Curbside Hospitality**—providing safe passage from the parking lots at both parishes. We are working with the scouts at St. Seb's and ushers at St. Catherine's. These volunteers would be present to assist those who need a helping hand getting to each building. Not only is it reaching out to provide a helping hand, but it is a way for our young parish members and ushers to meet our older adults.

Bulletin Announcement: January 25th

Our fifth priority in 2015 is a focus on collaborating with our two Interfaith Boards. Almost from the beginning of refocusing our efforts to meet the needs of older adults at the two parishes, the overall priority has been the spiritual growth of our older adults. Interfaith meets the social and daily needs of older adults; the Senior Ministry committee designs programs to meet spiritual needs. There are two parish representatives who are considering joining the boards. We will be highlighting the social events offered at both Hart Park and Washington Park Senior Centers. Presently, we are collaborating with Interfaith to insure parish members who are volunteering as drivers for older adults who wish to attend a

Bulletin Announcement: February 1st

Our sixth priority is to keep older adults in our two congregations apprised of the social events and programs offered at the three local senior centers: Washington Senior Center and the Hart Park Senior Center—both staffed and coordinated by Interfaith and the Sherman Park Gathering Place at Capitol Drive Lutheran Church. In the next three weeks, we will have a schedule of the weekly events at the three centers. The committee will also continue to work with parish staff and committee members to host cross-generational events in the parishes. The goal is

to bring families together with all the other members of the parish through educational and social events and sacramental, worship, and prayer events.

Bulletin Announcement: February 8th

Following up on our efforts to keep parishioners informed about the events at Washington Park Senior Center, Hart Park, and the Sherman Park Gathering Place, we want to point out some of the events being offered at Washington Park this week. All three of these sites are coordinated by Interfaith.

This week at Washington Park the following events might interest you. On Monday morning there is a presentation about Heart Disease at 10:00 AM. Senior Ambassadors from Interfaith will be present on Wednesday morning; they answer questions about community services for older adults. The February book club kicks off on Wednesday, February 11th. The discussion features *Sea Creature*, by Susanna Daniel on the 11th; February 25th features *The Hired Man* by Aminatta Forna.

The Interfaith ***The Connection-A monthly guide to activities and community resources for adults age 50+*** will be available on the ushers' stands starting this month.

Bulletin Announcement: February 15th

This week's featured senior center is Hart Park Senior Center. Interfaith is now partnering with the City of Wauwatosa to manage the Center. The staff offers exciting trips, exercise classes, arts and crafts classes, a book club, cards, interesting speakers, special events and much more. Meals are served weekdays at 11:30 AM. Membership is required: annual membership for Tosa residents is \$15 for those 62+ or \$21 for those 50-62 years old. Residents from other communities can join for \$28 per year. The Interfaith staff invites all older adults to stop in to say hello and check out this wonderful facility in Wauwatosa. It is located at 7300 Chestnut Street.

Interfaith's ***The Connection-A monthly guide to activities and community resources for adults age 50+*** will be available on the ushers' stands starting this month.

Bulletin Announcement: February 22nd

We have featured the two larger Interfaith Older Adult Centers in the last two weeks. This week's featured program is the Sherman Park Gathering Place located at Capitol Drive Lutheran Church, 53rd and Capitol Drive. When the program opened 15 years ago, participants voted to keep it a neighborhood drop-in center with a religious focus. Bible classes are held each session; the YMCA offers an exercise program and there are guest speakers and presentations each week. A very important element of the program is the celebration of all the religious holy days and secular holidays in prayer. Pastor Alexis plans the religious celebrations with the participants. The Gathering Place meets on Monday and Wednesday with programs starting at 10:00 AM; Wednesday features a hot lunch. For more information, please call Steve O'Connell at 414-445-7472.