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# Bethany Ministry

Caring for the  
Sick, Homebound, and Bereaved

Encouraging a Healthy Lifestyle  
for All

“Love your neighbor as yourself”

“Your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit”

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## Byzantine Catholic Archeparchy of Pittsburgh

February 2012

Glory to Jesus Christ!



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### A Reflection on Bethany Ministry

The Church is, and has always been, a place of healing.

People easily grasp the idea that the Church is concerned with the spiritual health of the faithful. But how many understand how profoundly the Church can influence physical and mental health as well.

The health care experience for many of us amounts to a 15-minute doctor's office visit when we're sick or to monitor a chronic problem, like hypertension or diabetes. Others may experience several days of hospital treatment for an acute illness or surgical procedure.

But upon leaving the doctor's office or being discharged from the hospital, many individuals still have a long way to go. Others in our parishes are dealing with the loss of loved ones and all manner of difficulties in life.....stresses which can have a negative effect on health of body, mind, and spirit.

Bethany Ministry aids the parish in its role of responding to the wholistic needs of its people by ministering to the sick, the homebound, and the bereaved.....those who are grieving a loved one or dealing with some other personal loss.

Loneliness and feeling isolated will make any problem worse. There isn't much you can get at the doctor's office or hospital to treat loneliness. While healing is one of life's mysteries, it is certain that we impact the healing process.....by visiting, caring, helping, listening, and trying to bring God's healing presence to others by following the Gospel teaching,

*'Lord, when did we see thee hungry and feed thee, or thirsty and give thee drink? And when did we see thee a stranger and welcome thee, or naked and clothe thee? And when did we see thee sick or in prison and visit thee?' And the King will answer them, 'Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brethren, you did it to me.'*

The name Bethany Ministry is based on the relationships and events that took place in the town of Bethany, found in John 11:1 – 46, the story of the raising of Lazarus from the dead.

Our role models:

- Lazarus, a symbol of our imperfect human existence, prey to sinfulness, illness, and death
- Mary and Martha, the examples of faithful witness and service
- Jesus, who shows true human emotion as He weeps with Mary and Martha in their grief, and then affirms the fundamental hope of Resurrection

In the light of this Gospel passage, we must bring the same comfort and caring to those in difficulty as Jesus did for his friends in Bethany.

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**Nutrition Information:****Health, according to Genesis...**

In the beginning, God created the Heavens and the Earth and populated the Earth with broccoli, cauliflower and spinach, green and yellow and red vegetables of all kinds, so Man and Woman would live long and healthy lives.

Then using God's great gifts, Satan created Ben and Jerry's Ice Cream and Krispy Kreme Donuts. And Satan said, "You want chocolate with that?" And Man said, "Yes!" and Woman said, "and as long as you're at it, add some sprinkles." And they gained pounds. And Satan smiled.

God created the healthful yogurt that Man and Woman might eat tasty but good food. And Satan brought forth white flour from the wheat, and sugar from the cane and combined them. And Man and Woman gained pounds.

So God said, "Try my fresh green salad." And Satan presented Thousand Island Dressing, buttery croutons, and garlic toast on the side. And following the repast, Man and Woman unfastened their belts.

God then said, "I have sent you heart healthy vegetables and olive oil in which to cook them." And Satan brought forth deep fried fish and chicken-fried steak so big it needed its own platter. And Man gained more weight and his cholesterol went through the roof.

God then created a light, fluffy white cake, named it "Angel Food Cake," and said, "It is good." Satan then created chocolate cake and named it "Devil's Food."

God then brought forth running shoes so that His children might lose those extra pounds. And Satan gave cable TV with a remote control so Man would not have to toil changing the channels. And Man and Woman laughed and cried before the flickering blue light and gained pounds.

God brought forth the potato, naturally low in fat and brimming with nutrition. And Satan peeled off the healthful skin and sliced the starchy center into chips and deep-fried them. And Man gained pounds.

God then gave lean beef so that Man might consume fewer calories and still satisfy his appetite. And Satan created McDonald's and its 99-cent double cheeseburger. Then said, "You want fries with that?" And Man replied, "Yes! And super size them!" And Satan said, "It is good." And Man went into cardiac arrest.

God sighed and created quadruple bypass surgery.

Then Satan smiled and created insurance companies.

**Ideas for Caring**

Since the Great Fast is approaching, it's a good time to start planning what the parish will do for the homebound at Pascha. Since they are not able to come to church, we must bring the church to them with our visits and perhaps a small token of our caring.

The Valentine gift baskets prepared by St. Gregory's Bethany Ministry were very graciously received. Items included a pair of colorful Valentine socks, hand lotion, small notebook & a Valentine pencil, Chap Stick, hand sanitizer, liquid soap in a dispenser, hard candy, snack crackers, a cheerful Valentine card, and of course some homemade cookies.

Phone calls were made to ask, "Could we could stop by to see you today.....we have a little something for you for Valentine's Day from the Church.....", and every visit just fell into place. Our recipients responded so warmly....."This is such a surprise.....I didn't expect this.....I never get any company.....I was just sitting here.

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This is so nice of you.....You really made my day – not only my day.....you made my entire week!” A lovely lady stood at the door waiting for us.....and called out, “Here come the 3 Good Samaritans!”

Some visits were brief because of the parishioner’s condition. Some visits lasted over an hour, giving the person time to talk and time to be heard.

We laughed together, and we got a few hugs.

It took some effort to make this happen, but it was definitely worth it.

### **A Joke**

A pastor of a small country church knew that improvements were needed on the church building. He gathered the parish council and suggested that the church purchase a chandelier. After discussing it among themselves, they voted the idea down.

“Why are you opposed to buying a chandelier?” the pastor asked.

The president of the council said, “First, no one can spell it. Second, no one can play it. And finally, what we really need in the church is more light.”

### **Read more about Health Ministry and Parish Nursing**

The Faith Connection - from Mercy Parish Nurse and Health Ministry Program, Pittsburgh, PA

<http://www.pmhs.org/pdf/The%20Faith%20Connection%20-%20February%202012.pdf>

Church Health Reader - from the new home of International Parish Nurse Resource Center, Memphis, TN

<http://www.chreader.org/>

[http://www.chreader.org/parishnurses.aspx?listWebPage\\_id=1](http://www.chreader.org/parishnurses.aspx?listWebPage_id=1)

### **Contact Us**

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Help with coordinating a parish Bethany Ministry

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Thank you for reading.

*Please pass this newsletter along to anyone who might be interested.*

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