

Whatever you do for the least of my brothers, You do for me.

Matthew 25:40



**Prayer Shawl
Ministry**

**St. Mark Catholic Church
Highlands Ranch, CO**

adapted from St. Mary's of Georgetown-Rowley, MA

VISION

To combine the wonderful fellowship found in our church & community with our talents of knitting & crocheting and form a prayerful ministry that reaches out especially to those in need of comfort and solace.

MISSION

To bring people together in small groups to knit and crochet prayer shawls, to pray for those in our church family and community in need of prayer (whether in joyful or trying times) and to support each other.

PRAYER SHAWL BACKGROUND

In 1998, Janet Bristow and Victoria Cole-Galo, two graduates from the first class of Women's Institute at Hartford University in Connecticut, decided to pray and knit shawls for new mothers and for women in treatment for disorders such as breast cancer. Bristow said, "Sometimes there are no words. A prayer shawl wraps someone in a hug that's the accumulation of thoughts and prayers for them".

WHAT IS A PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY?

This is a ministry that creates handmade knitted and crocheted prayer shawls that are a tangible gift representing the many and continuing prayers for comfort, caring, healing, and love offered for an individual experiencing serious illness, grief, loss, emotional trials or spiritual upheaval in their lives. Prayer Shawls can also be given in times of great joy, celebration or appreciation. The recipient is any member of the parish family or community.

HOW ARE PRAYER SHAWLS MADE?

This ministry combines knitting/crocheting and prayers as they are stitched with care and love for those in need. Prayer Shawls can be knit or crocheted following very simple directions. Prayers are said as the shawls are being stitched. They can be formal prayers or prayers from the heart. Members of St. Mark Church and the community volunteer to stitch the shawls to be given freely for comfort and love.

WHO RECEIVES THE PRAYER SHAWLS?

Men, Women, Children, young, or old with a great need for love and prayer can receive a Prayer Shawl. We reach out to meet the needs of any of God's children who He brings to us. Requests to be covered in prayer and a Prayer Shawl can be directed to St. Mark Parish office. Prayer Shawls are almost always available in the office.

DO I HAVE TO BE A MEMBER OF ST. MARK'S PARISH TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS MINISTRY?

This ministry is open to anyone who would like to share their talents of knitting/crocheting and who would like to be a blessing to God's children who have need of prayer and love. You are welcome to invite friends who can knit/crochet (or would like to learn) to join with you.

HOW MUCH TIME AM I COMMITTING TO IF I VOLUNTEER?

There is no Prayer Shawl quota or recommended time requirements.

The Ministry gathers once a month as a group but you can stitch at your own pace in the privacy of your own home, or wherever you feel comfortable knitting/crocheting. You can make "1" shawl or "100" shawls. The calling is between you and Jesus. This ministry is what you want to make of it.

IS THERE ANYTHING ELSE I NEED TO KNOW BEFORE I COMMIT TO KNITTING/CROCHETING?

This ministry is guided by God. God tends to work through those who make themselves available to Him. Do not be surprised when you pull out your needles/hook and yarn that people begin to ask what you are making. As soon as you tell them you are making a Prayer Shawl, YOUR ministry will begin to grow. You never know who you will meet and what impact YOUR ministry will have on those God brings to you. Being open to God and allowing Him to work through you takes the Prayer Shawl Ministry to a higher level.

HOW CAN I BECOME INVOLVED IN THE PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY?

To volunteer your gift of time, talent, and love call the Parish Office to be put in contact with the Prayer Shawl Ministry Leader.



We would like to give a special thank you to everyone who takes their time to make this ministry continue and grow.

Without you there is no ministry.

Thank YOU so much.

PRAYERS

Weave prayers into the shawl as you knit/crochet. Begin with a prayer for blessing the shawl itself. Then as you stitch, pray for the person who will receive the shawl.

WHAT PRAYERS CAN BE USED WHEN MAKING THE PRAYER SHAWL?

The best prayers to say when stitching a prayer shawl are ones that are personal and come from your heart. Prayer Shawls are a gift of love. There is no wrong prayer when it is done with love. There are some formal beautiful prayers that can be used as well that are included.

Tips for praying from the heart:

- † Begin by focusing on Jesus Christ.
- † Thank God for His love and goodness toward the person who will be receiving the finished Shawl.
- † Thank Jesus for His plan of good for this person's life.
- † Thank and praise the Lord for Jesus' death on the cross and the Holy Spirit's presence as you knit or crochet.
- † Visualize Jesus sitting with you as you make the shawl. See the person being held in His arms and feel the love they share.
- † Have positive thoughts about that the person receiving your shawl and focus on healing, improved quality of life and believe that the person will be restored, healthy, and complete in God's time.
- † Ask the Lord to guide you as you pray and knit/crochet. Pray for blessings on the recipient of your shawl.
- † Pray for strength and courage in the person's life and in the lives of loved ones.
- † Pray for comfort and healing and for the doctors, nurses, and all who care for the person. Pray for whatever need the person has in life. Let the Lord lead you and pray whatever Jesus lays on your heart.
- † Pray for the person to draw closer to Jesus and if the person is not a believer, pray for salvation. Pray for the Holy Spirit to lead the person to Jesus Christ and for the person to be open to the Lord. Pray for this person's heart to be open to receive Jesus our Lord and Savior.

PRAYER FOR EACH TIME YOU WORK ON YOUR PRAYER SHAWL (by Teresa Weider)

Dear Jesus,

I ask you to bless my hands, my thoughts, my yarn and my needles, You know who will receive this shawl and what their needs are even before this shawl is complete. Use my hands and my time in completing this to your glory. May your love surround the recipient as they wrap this Prayer Shawl around their shoulders. Heal all areas of the recipients life that needs to be made whole.

Through Jesus Christ, my Lord, my savior and my healer I pray. Amen

I CALL NINE BLESSINGS FROM ABOVE (adapted from Cathleen O'Meara Murtha, DW)

I call nine blessings from above, In the name of God: the creator, the giver of life, the holder of time

In the name of Jesus: the savior, the healer, the lifter of pain.

In the name of the Holy Spirit: the comforter, the consoler, the sustainer of life.

I stitch a mantle of caring, I stitch a mantle of protection, I stitch a mantle of wholeness I knit a mantle of strength, I stitch a mantle of healing I knit a mantle of patience, I stitch a mantle to enfold you, I knit a mantle to encircle you, I stitch a mantle to empower you

WHAT ARE THE DIRECTIONS TO MAKE A PRAYER SHAWL?

Throughout our Christian faith the number 3 is a very important number. Three symbolizes the Trinity (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit). It is said that the number 3 is used 523 times in scripture.

The 3-stitch seed pattern was selected as a symbolic "planting" of peace, healing, love, comfort and hope.

KNITTING PATTERN

MATERIALS ♦4-5 Skeins of Yarn ♦Size 10, 11 or 13 Knitting needles

PATTERN

Cast on the number of stitches in multiples of six + two to create a small/medium or large shawl
(small-24"x54", medium 27"x60", large 30"x66")

ALL ROWS

Knit (K) 3, Purl (P) 3, to the last 2 stitched Knit (K) 2.
Continue until desired length.

FRINGE (Optional) – ***Does not count as part of the finished Size*

Knot the ends of each fringe piece. Fold in half and loop through the stitches on the ends of the Prayer Shawl using a slip knot.

CROCHET PATTERN

MATERIALS ♦4-5 Skeins of Yarn ♦Size J, L, M/N crochet

PATTERN

Chain on the number of stitches in to create a small/medium or large shawl
(small-24"x54", medium 27"x60", large 30"x66")

Row 1

Turn, Chain 1, single crochet in each chain to the end of row. (You should have the same number of stitches you chained on at the beginning in each row) count, count, count!

Turn, Chain 3

Row 2

Double crochet in the top of each single crochet.

Turn, Chain 3, and repeat Row 2 twice.

REPEAT PATTERN (1 row single crochet, 3 rows double crochet)

Continued until the desired length.

END with a single crochet row.

(OPTIONAL) Add Fringe as for the knitted version ***Does not count as part of the finished Size*

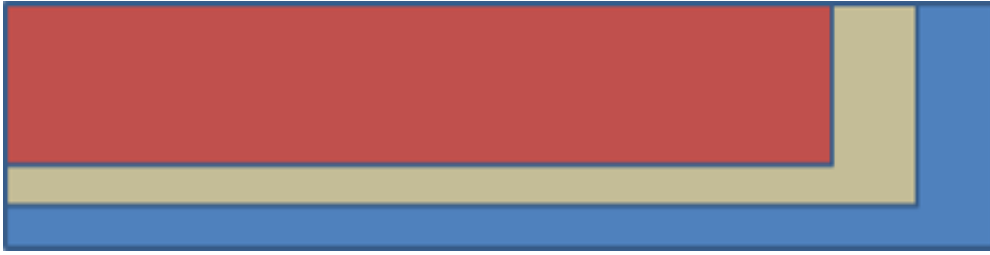
CAN I ALTER THE PRAY SHAWL PATTERN?

Creativity is encouraged and appreciated. Just as each needle worker and recipient are individuals each shawl can have its individuality.

The length and width should be as close to size as possible, but the overall pattern should remain the same to keep in the theme of the Trinity. Please do not spray yarn or shawls with any fragrances as recipients may have allergic reactions. Keep in mind that these Prayer Shawls go to people of all age groups and health situations. **WHAT**

RECTANGULAR

24 x 54 (Small), 27 x 60 (Medium), 30 x 66 (Large)



Note: Because different prayer shawl ministries make their shawls in their own ways, there is a great deal of variation amongst the result. The patterns used by the St. Mark Prayer Shawl ministry are basic knitted and crochet patterns of how to make a rectangular Prayer Shawl. Your individual choices in yarn and needle/hook size will affect the thickness of the shawl. Remember, there isn't one "right" way the prayers you weave into each shawl and the sizes within the dimensions are the most important.

****Use yarns that are washable and dryable
NO yarns that need special care!****

DO I DO WITH THE PRAYER SHAWL WHEN IT IS COMPLETED?

When the Prayer Shawl is completed, you can bring your completed Prayer Shawl(s) to the next Prayer Shawl gathering and the ministry leader will wrap each shawl with ribbon add a cross charm to corner of the shawl and place a card under the ribbon. The will be blessed by the priest and given to the office Secretary to store and distribute.

Another option is to take your completed Prayer Shawl(s) to the church and leave at the front desk labeled Pray Shawl Ministry. The ministry leader will be contacted and will complete process of having them prepare for delivery and blessed.

For you created my inmost being;
you knit me together in
my mother's womb. I praise you because
I am fearfully and wonderfully made;
your works are wonderful, I know that full well.
Psalm 139:13-14

*Now trust in the Lord, let GO and let God
continue to work through the Prayer Shawl as it leaves your hands.*

PRAYER TO BEGIN A MEETING (by Kay Donnelly)

Our Heavenly Father, thank you for this opportunity to gather together and celebrate our ministry. We've been blessed with the opportunity to share our love and concern for others through something tangible - the Prayer Shawl.

We come in joy this day and pray for our ministry to continue as a way to glorify God. Please give us your blessing as we daily reach out to others and spread your word of LOVE.

GATHERING PRAYER AND BLESSING (by Cathleen O'Meara Murtha, DW)

As we gather in community to share our prayer, our stories, the work of our hearts and hands, we pray for God's blessing on our endeavors.

As Blessing to my mind - to be free to enter this contemplative activity...

As Blessing to my hands - to be the source of creating something of beauty and love...

As Blessing to my soul - to be open to the promptings of loving and caring...

As Blessing to my yarn - to be shaped into patterns of loving and caring...

As Blessing to my needles - to be the holders of stitches as they become a garment...

As Blessing to my knitting - to be a work of heart and hands, body and spirit...

As Blessing on the one who will receive the fruit of my prayer and my knit-ting...

May this shawl be welcomed in the spirit in which it was knitted...

May we become one with the One who knitted each of us in our mother's womb...

I join my blessing, my prayer and my stitching with people all over the earth in this common effort to bring healing and wholeness, comfort and celebration. Amen

PRAYER AT THE CLOSING OF THE MEETING

Dear Lord,

We thank you for the generous gifts we have received and ask for your continued blessing on our homes and families.

May the Holy Spirit guide us as we share of our time, talents, prayers, and love in this Prayer Shawl Ministry.

We also ask your blessings on the recipients of the shawls that they may feel comforted by your steadfast love, and if possible that their health be restored.

We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

PRAYER AT THE CLOSING OF THE MEETING (BY JUNE GAUTHIER© 2018 ALL RIGHTS RESERVED)

Heavenly Father you who know the deepest desires of our hearts to encourage to nurture to soothe the weary worn travelers of this earth.

As we wait expectantly for the return of your Son, Jesus we create these shawls with purpose. Purpose to lift the heavy loads and burdens from the backs of the bearers.

With each stitch that is made, let it be a representation of the love that flows freely from the throne's room of grace.

Merciful Redeemer gives us the strength to accomplish this labor of love.

Bless every part of our being, so that we are able to create one shawl after another, never growing weary.

Let all be done to Your Honor and Glory in the Precious Name of Your Son, Jesus.

COLOR CHART

THIS IS A BASIC LIST OF COLORS AND SOME OF THE ATTRIBUTES ASSOCIATED WITH THEM. IT MIGHT BE HELPFUL TO USE IT AS A GUIDELINE WHEN YOU'RE SELECTING A COLOR FOR A PARTICULAR PERSON FOR WHOM YOU'RE MAKING A SHAWL.

RED	LOVE, PASSION, ENERGY, ENTHUSIASM, COURAGE, UNDERSTANDING, MOTIVATION, STRENGTH, WARMTH, VIGOR
PINK	FRIENDSHIP, COMPASSION, SENSITIVITY, GENEROSITY, WARM HEARTEDNESS, NURTURING
ORANGE	THOUGHTFULNESS, VITALITY, ATTRACTION, STRENGTH, AUTHORITY, CREATIVITY, ENERGY
YELLOW	WISDOM, LEARNING, OPTIMISM, INTUITION, FAITH, WELL-BEING, FRIENDLINESS
GREEN	EARTH, HEALING, PROSPERITY, FERTILITY, CLARITY, SYMPATHY, HOPE, RENEWAL, CONFIDENCE, ABUNDANCE, GROWTH, LIFE
AQUA	COURAGE
BLUE	WATER, HEALING, MEDITATION, TRANQUILITY, HONESTY, LOYALTY, JUDGMENT, SINCERITY, WISDOM, SPIRITUALITY
INDIGO	WISDOM, INSIGHT, INSTINCT, SPIRITUAL NATURE
VIOLET	SPIRIT, SPIRITUALITY, INTUITION, TRUTH, MEMORY, NOSTALGIA, HUMILITY, COMFORT DURING GRIEF OR MOURNING
PURPLE	POWER, LEADERSHIP, ROYALTY, TRUTH, JUSTICE, TEMPERANCE, SPIRITUALITY, WISDOM
BROWN	AMBITION/DRIVE, ORGANIZATION, GROWTH
BEIGE	OPTIMISM
BLACK	ABSORBS NEGATIVITY, MATURE WISDOM
WHITE	SPIRIT, INNOCENCE, PROTECTION, PEACE, PURITY, GENTLENESS, PERFECTION, MAIDEN, ILLUMINATION.
GOLD	MASCULINE ENERGY, ENLIGHTENMENT
SILVER	FEMININE ENERGY, FLEXIBILITY
GRAY	STRENGTH

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

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