Yarns 'n Prayers
St. Giles Prayer Shawl Ministry

News from the 1st Quarter, 2020

1- Do you know someone in need of our community's prayers? Whether it's a physical, emotional or spiritual problem, our prayer shawls and blankets carry our prayers to those in need. You can get a shawl or blanket for that someone you know at the Parish Center when it's staffed, or ask someone on the Pastoral Team, or the contact below.

2- There is no charge for this but donations of yarn, or money to buy yarn, are appreciated to carry on this ministry.

3- Do you knit or crochet? Would you like to participate in this ministry? We gather at the Parish Ministry Center on the second Monday of each month at 1 PM to bless and record new shawls and blankets, share patterns and ideas, and get yarn for new projects. Attendance is not required. You can join this ministry by making at least one shawl or lap blanket. Send your contact info to Paul Joseph Schleitwiler, FCM to be added to the roster

4- Do you have a story to share about prayer shawls or blankets? Or other things related to this ministry or the making of shawls and blankets? Did something in this newsletter inspire you to comment about it?
Share what you have to say by email to pjschleitwilerfcm@yahoo.com

Prayer Shawl Ministry meeting dates in 2020
The 2nd Monday of each month

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To confirm a particular meeting date, contact Paul Joseph Schleitwiler, FCM at pjschleitwilerfcm@yahoo.com

Due to the corona virus pandemic, we will not meet in April. We are continuing to produce shawls, blankets and scarves while social distancing at home. Some are also sewing masks to help others in this crisis. We are praying as we continue to work.

Pocket Prayer Shawls Renamed
The Pastoral team of the Family Mass introduced these prayer cloths sized to fit a pocket or purse for those who want an easily portable reminder of our prayers. We decided that a better description of these cloths is "blessing squares" even if they are not square.
Currently they are available from the Family Mass Pastoral team and some of the members of the Prayer Shawl ministry. We welcome suggestions on ways to make them available to the whole parish.

Statistics for the Quarter
Members in this ministry made and submitted thirty-nine shawls, lap blankets and scarves this quarter. Adding scarves was decided in our February meeting to provide another option for those who need our prayers.
Twenty-nine shawls and lap blankets went to people in need of our prayers. We have not kept a record of the number of blessing squares made and given to those who need them. We have continued to make them every month and people have been asking for them.

An Invitation to All
Your hands are needed. If you can make at least one shawl, lap blanket or scarf, that one will bring our prayers to someone who needs them.
You too can knit or crochet. You need take no test, nor apply for a license or membership. It doesn't matter how fast or how much you do or if you just started or have been doing it for years. All that is required is that you want to do it.
Your age doesn't matter either. If you would like to learn to knit or crochet, we can teach you. Yarn is available from our stash.
Please prayerfully consider participating in this ministry.

"The only difference between an experienced knitter and new knitter is that the experienced knitter makes bigger mistakes faster. Be bold; there are no terrible consequences in knitting."
~Stephanie Pearl-McPhee
Who are we praying for?
A parishioner since 1976 whose father is in the hospital due to a fall and many more.

**Availability of Shawls, Blankets and Scarves**
Although we cannot access the finished items at the Parish Center during the pandemic, we do continue to make them and meet via Zoom to pray over and bless them. We are sending from these to people in need of our community's prayers. If you know of someone in need, tell us by email to pjshleitwilerfcm@yahoo.com.

**Caring for Asylum Seekers**

“Oh that you would bless me indeed, and enlarge my territory, that your hand would be with me, and that you would keep me from evil, that I may not cause pain.”
1 Chronicles 4:10 - Prayer of Jabez

This has been my prayer for many years, and the Lord not only blessed me, but enlarged my territory all the way to Casa de Refugido (CDR), site where I volunteered for two weeks in February in El Paso. What a wonderful place it was for me to begin the holy season of Lent. I was blessed, stretched, challenged and converted by all the immigrants that touched my heart in such a special way.

CDR provides hospitality to guests who are seeking asylum, a welcoming place for them to come and shower, provide clean clothes, get nourishment, rest and sleep before they can make their journey to family members who will look after them.

I came with an open heart and mind to be of service. The stories I was so privileged to hear were heart-wrenching, especially when families are being divided. I was given no assigned task but was fortunate enough to spend the majority of my two weeks interacting with the guests and transporting them to the airport. My Spanish was limited, but I quickly picked up phrases and was able to communicate on some level with them and knew more of the language by the end of my two weeks. On any day we had anywhere from 2 to 29 guests who arrived.

I often wondered about the guests getting off the van. I was honored to receive a glimpse of what some had been through who openly shared some of their experiences with me. What a privilege it was for me to welcome them to a safe and comforting place, knowing that their next step was a plane, bus or train trip to a whole new world...though probably not an easy one. My gift to them was a pocket prayer shawl and written prayer with the hope it would bring them some comfort and know that they were being thought of and prayed for. The gratitude they expressed in receiving this small token made from loving hands. I often think about how they are doing, especially now living with our new reality of shelter in place, social distancing and COVID-19.

In my time in El Paso I heard histories filled with layers of trauma. The trauma of why they fled their homeland to the trauma of the dangerous journey through Mexico and across the border. There is the trauma of being in the overcrowded detention centers and being dehumanized. I heard a lot of pain. A lot of pain to hold and no words that I could say but to be present and listen. But I also saw hope and joy and relief. I still recall many of the faces and conversations that will forever be embedded in my mind and heart. I felt so blessed to be in their presence. What a life changing experience it has been.

~ Maudette Carr
Parishioner of St. Giles Parish and Family Mass Community

**Why Am I in this Ministry?**

What is your story?
Will you share it?
Others may be inspired by it to join in this good work.
Erika Wright with purses and headbands for the Mercy Home girls

2-26-2020

Thank you all so very much for your kindness in sending me the prayer shawl. It makes this journey easier to hear knowing you all are praying for me - prayer is powerful! The shawl is very comforting.

With gratitude and love,
Scott McCullagh

To the Prayer Shawl Ministry:

What a very special gift was delivered to our home last week - a beautiful lap shawl! Thank you for all the prayer and this very special gift! All along this cancer journey, Scotty has felt the love and concern of the St. Elias Parish Community and this is what carrying me through it. Scotty has a rough road ahead as he faces radiation, more chemo and possibly surgery. Your precious gift will be a reminder of the many prayers being offered on his behalf.

Wishing all a very blessed and prayer-filled Christmas season and a year filled with treasured memories with family and friends. Fondly,

Perry & Helen
Grayson
by Leah McGlone

Grayson is inspired by the meeting of tree tops along a
ridgeline, the points of a mountain range, or the ever so
important directional hiking arrow. My father's family hails
from a small farming town named Grayson known for its
spawling farmlands and treacherous Appalachian
mountainsides.

Grayson brings my love for this mountainside town back
with me to the city in the form of a large, knitwear hug
perfect for battling those brisk fall days as we head into the
death of winter.

FINISHED MEASUREMENTS
Version A - Length: 65 inches/165 cm; Width: 14
inches/35.5 cm
Version B - Length: 81 inches/205.74 cm; Width: 12
inches/30.48 cm
MATERIALS
Yarn
Version A 185 yds/169 m per skein; 4 skeins
Version B 274 yds/250 m per skein; 4 skeins

Recommended needle size [always use a needle size that
gives you the gauge listed below - every knitter's gauge is
unique]
Version A - US #5/3.75 mm needles for working flat
Version B: - US #6/4 mm needles for working flat

Notions - stitch markers, yarn needle

GAUGE
Version A: 28 sts/32 rows = 4 inches/10 cm in Stockinette
Stitch
Version B: 24 sts/28 rows = 4 inches/10 cm in Stockinette
Stitch

PATTERN NOTES
CHARTS - see charts below

DIRECTIONS
CO 102[78] sts.

Border
Row 2 [WS]: P3, k2, (p3, k3) 10[7] times, p3, k2, (p3, k3)
Work Rows 1-2 15[17] times, or until piece measures

First Half of Body
Next Row [RS]: K3, work Chart A 5[4] times, work
Chart B 11[8] times, k3.
Next Row [WS]: P3, work Chart B 11[8] times, work
Work as set until you have completed 32[35] full repeats of
the charts, 6 rows of a 33rd[36th] repeat.

Second Half of Body
Next Row [RS]: K3, work Chart C 5[4] times, work Chart
D 11[8] times, k3.
Next Row [WS]: P3, work Chart D 11[8] times, work Chart
Work as set until you have completed 6[8] full repeats of
the charts, 4 rows of 7th[9th] repeat.

Border
Repeat first Border.

Bind off in ribbing pattern. Block and weave in ends.
"Heirloom" is knitting code for "This pattern is so difficult that you would consider death a relief."
~Stephanie Pearl-McPhee

**Beautiful Occasions Evening Shawl**
Weekend or two Crochet Project

This Victoria Lacy Shawl is a pattern that goes quickly. If you need a gift for someone, that would make such a lovely gift. The shawl looks complicated to complete, but it is just two rows of setting up and the pattern repeats until your desired length. The border is crocheted as you complete each row. Saves time.

Finished Size = Laying flat, this shawl measures 20 inches wide X 68 inches long.

Pattern Alteration: The pattern can be altered to any width or length that you desire. The width can be adjusted by adding or decreasing 8 plus 2 stitches for the foundational row of chain stitches. Along with changing the width of the pattern, you can make the shawl the length that works for you. Be creative and make it a style that you want to use as a fashion staple.

Yarn Used: Caron Simply Soft 3 skeins. Each skein is approximately 315 yards (3 skeins = 945 yards). This is not only a soft yarn, it is washable and dryable. Or the yarn of your choice, worsted or sport weight. Sport weight may require more yardage.

Size H (5mm) crochet hook, Yarn Needle, Scissors

Abbreviations: CH = Chain; DC = Double Crochet; SC = Single Crochet; ST = Stitches; SP = Space

Directions:

Chain 90
Row 1: SC in 2nd CH from Hook *CH 4, Skip the next 3 ST (SC, CH 3, 3DC) in the next CH, Skip the next 3 CH, SC in the next CH. Repeat from * ending with a SC in the last ST.
Row 2: CH 3, SC, in the top of the first DC SP of previous row. CH 4, SC in the top of the next DC SP of previous row. CH 4, SC in the top of the next DC SP of previous row. SC in the top of the CH 3 SP of previous row. CH 3, 3 DC in the previous row CH 3 SP. SC in the next CH 4 SP.

*CH 4, in the next CH 3 SP, SC, CH 3, 3 DC. SC in the next CH 4 SP*

Repeat directions between * until you reach the end. End with a SC in the last ST.

Repeat row 2 until the desired length

**Falling Rocks Scarf**

Supplies:
- worsted or bulky weight yarn, one skein
- Hook Size: G6/4.25mm to 1/5.00mm
- Tapestry Needle for Weaving in the ends.

Abbreviations:
- ch – chain
- dc – double crochet
- sc – single crochet

Gauge: (Gauge is not critical for this project)

Finished Measurement: approx. 6" - 7" wide by 70" to 78" long (or your desired length, add yarn if needed)

Ch 3 in the first st is considered the first st in the row.

Multiple of 12 plus 4

Row 1: Ch 28, dc in 4th ch from the hook, dc in next 2 chs, *ch 3, 3 dc in next ch, skip next 3 chs, sc in next ch, ch 3, skip next 2 chs, **dc in next 5 chs, repeat from * ending last repeat at ** until last 3 chs, dc in last 3 chs, turn. (17 dc, 4 ch-3 sps, 2 sc)
Row 2: Ch 3, dc in next 2 dc, ch 3, 3 dc in next ch-3 sp, sc in next ch-3 sp, ch 3, dc in next 5 dc, ch 3, 3 dc in next ch-3 sp, sc in next ch-3 sp, ch 3, dc in next 2 dc, dc in top of ch 3, turn.

Repeat Row 2 until you have reached your desired length. Fasten off. Weave in the ends.

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I do not run from my problems. I sit on the couch, crochet, and ignore them like a normal adult.
I like making a piece of string into something I can wear. ~Author Unknown

“It turns out that knitting isn't about the yarn or the softness or needing a hat (although we really can't argue with these secondary motivators). It's really about this: Knitting is a magic trick. In this day and age, in a world where science and technology take more and more wonder and work out of our lives, and our planet is quickly becoming a place running out of magic, a knitter takes silly, useless string, mundane sticks, waves her hands around (many, many times...nobody said this was fast magic), and turns one thing into another: string into a hat, string into a sweater, string into a blanket for a baby. It really is a very reliable magic.” — Stephanie Pearl-McPhee

10 things desired by knitters and crocheters

1- Yarn
2- More yarn
3- Friends with yarn
4- Storage space for all the yarn
5- Money for yarn
6- Yarn
7- A spouse who is okay with yarn
8- A vehicle big enough to bring home all the yarn.
9- More space for all that yarn
10- Yarn

Our Blessing for Shawls and Lap Blankets
(adapted from Janet Severi Bristow - 2000)

May God's grace be upon these shawls and blankets...

warming, comforting, enfolding and embracing.

May these mantles be a safe haven ... a sacred place of security and well being ...
sustaining and embracing in good times as well as difficult ones.

May those who receive these shawls and blankets be cradled in hope,
kept in joy, graced with peace,
and wrapped in love.
Blessed be!