



Among Friends

Newsletter of the Friends of St. John the Caregiver

Summer 2007

This Calls for a Cup of Tea

This July we were so very pleased to welcome our first member from England. Tessa — who has asked for prayers for John — lives in the southern part of the country, about 100 miles west of London.



FSJC is a 'Gator-Aid'

Go, Gators! Also among our newest members are Bob and Anne and the family caregivers at St. Augustine Church in Gainesville, Fla. For more than 80 years, St. Augustine Catholic Student Center has been a "home away from home" for students of the University of Florida.

To Send a Memorial or Gift Card

It's not unusual for the family of a loved one who has died to suggest friends and family make a donation to the charity of the donor's choice. May we suggest you choose the Friends of St. John the Caregiver?



Or perhaps you would like to make a donation to mark an anniversary or birthday. (Something for that couple or person who seems to "have everything.")

We'll send a card to the family, telling them a thoughtful -- and greatly appreciated -- memorial gift has been given in their loved one's honor.

Or a card to the individual or couple telling them about how you're marking their special occasion.

You can send a donation and information to Friends of St. John the Caregiver, P.O. Box 320, Mountlake Terrace, WA 98043.

Or donate on-line at www.FSJC.org. Thank you!

A Depression Checklist

Has your loved one (or have you) had any of these symptoms for more than two weeks?

- A persistently sad, anxious, or empty mood
- Feelings of hopelessness, pessimism, and apathy
- Feelings of worthlessness, helplessness, and guilt
- Frequent crying
- A loss of interest in doing things that were once pleasurable
- Disturbed sleep: insomnia, early waking, or oversleeping
- Disturbed eating: a loss of appetite, weight gain, or weight loss
- Decreased energy and constant fatigue
- Recurring aches and pains
- Restlessness and irritability
- Difficulty performing daily tasks, such as going to work
- Difficulty concentrating, remembering, or making decisions
- Neglect in personal appearance
- Thoughts of death or suicide

Seek professional help. An early diagnosis is important. Treatments have been very successful.

Some changes in lifestyle will help restore emotional health:

- Take time to pray each day and nurture your spiritual life.
- Join a support group.
- Get together with friends and have fun.
- Reduce stress and avoid overloading your schedule.
- Learn to recognize your negative thoughts and be positive.
- Identify problems and explore solutions and coping strategies.
- Look for something pleasant to do, and do it.
- Maintain your sense of purpose.
- Cherish family relationships.
- Exercise and eat healthy foods.
- Be patient with yourself.

--From *A Catholic Guide to Caring for Your Aging Parent*, by Monica Dodds (Loyola Press)



U.S. Bishops Promoting Care for Family Caregivers

Great news! The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops' Secretariat for Pro-Life Activities has included material for family caregivers in its 2007-2008 Respect Life Program.

U.S. Bishops (continued on page 2)

Thank You! We Wish You Could See *This!*

It was just three years ago – August 2004 – that we launched YourAgingParent.com. And only 18 months ago – January 2006 – that FSJC received its papers of incorporation!

Since then, thanks to you, we've learned more about caregivers and care-receivers to better help both.

Having the opportunity to meet you and hear your stories at national conferences and parish workshops; through e-mails, letters and telephone calls; and in informal and chance meetings — in a grocery store or church parking lot, for example — has been a true blessing for us.

Thank you so much!

We never tire of being able to say to caregivers and care-receivers "You are not forgotten. You are not alone. Members of the Friends of St. John the Caregiver are praying for you and your loved one." We never tire of seeing the look of gratitude we receive

after offering those encouraging words.

You make that possible.

We wish you could be with us at those moments. We wish you could see, firsthand, what you're doing. You can't know in this life; you surely will in the next.

A List of Prayer Requests

Speaking of learning from you . . .

We know now that there was a page title on YourAgingParent.com that didn't reflect what's *really* going on. That's why "Caregivers Praying for Caregivers" is now "Prayer Requests."

It isn't just caregivers asking for prayers and it isn't just caregivers doing the praying!

Please visit YourAgingParent.com/prayer_requests.htm often and keep these intentions in your prayers.

And please don't hesitate to send in your own requests, too.

'Dear Friends':

A Weekly Greeting

We invite – and encourage – you to check out "Dear Friends" each week on YourAgingParent.com's home page for news, encouragement and inspiration. A new letter is posted each Monday and there's an RSS update for those using a feed reader.

Upcoming Conferences

FSJC will have an information table at:

—Catholic Charities USA, Cincinnati, Sept. 13-16

—National Council of Catholic Women; Columbus, Ohio; Sept. 20-23

—Catholic Medical Association, Atlanta, Oct. 4-6

Tell your parish about...

CatholicCaregivers.com. Material is updated every month!

*Caregiving is pro-life.
El cuidar de alguien es pro-vida.*

Friends of St. John the Caregiver is...

An international Catholic organization addressing the growing needs of family caregivers by providing:
—spirituality, information and resources to individual caregivers

www.YourAgingParent.com

—training and educational material to dioceses and parishes

www.CatholicCaregivers.com

—a membership association* offering spiritual support for:

- those who need care
- those who give care
- those who assist others giving care

www.FSJC.org

The **Friends of St. John the Caregiver** firmly believes: ***Caregiving is pro-life!***

No membership dues! No meetings! All we ask is that you pray for family caregivers and those receiving care.

Donations greatly appreciated. FSJC is a 501(c)(3) organization. Donations are tax deductible as provided by law.

Four easy ways you can help family caregivers today

- Invite a friend, family member, or fellow parishioner to become a member of the Friends of St. John the Caregiver.
- Ask your parish to include a link to www.FSJC.org on its Web site.
- Send a \$25 donation to:
Friends of St. John the Caregiver
P.O. Box 320
Mountlake Terrace, WA 98043
- Pray for caregivers!

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U.S Bishops Promote Care for Caregivers

The bishops' annual packet, which features material on a variety of life topics, is sent to some 100,000 dioceses, parishes and pro-life offices and is made available on-line at: www.usccb.org/prolife/programs/rfp/rfp0708.shtml.

The articles and pamphlets are available in English and Spanish.

We want to thank Susan Wills at the USCCB and Jeanne Berdeaux at the Respect Life Department of the Diocese of Venice, Fla., for their help making this happen.

And a "thank you" to Marina A. Herrera, Ph.D., who translated the FSJC material into Spanish.