



# Among Friends

Newsletter of the Friends of St. John the Caregiver

Fall 2015

## Thank You, Donors!

Please see page 2 for a list of those who made donations to the Friends of St. John the Caregiver between January and August 2015.

## Celebrating Our 10th Anniversary

*Thanks to our volunteers and many faithful donors, FSJC has continued and grown.*

Dear Friends,

This fall has been an emotional jumble for me as the Friends of St. John the Caregiver marks its tenth anniversary.

Some of you may know that FSJC has its roots in a monthly newspaper column my wife, Monica, and I began writing for Catholic News Service in 1991. That led to a book on caring for an aging parent and that led to the website YourAgingParent.com in 2004. The following year we began FSJC.

Monica had been a social worker with Catholic Community Services in Seattle and I was a long-time writer and editor for the Catholic press.

We each got to bring our strengths and background to the task and what an exciting, challenging, and deeply satisfying time it was. We knew we had been given a gift: working together to help to family caregivers.

The reaction and the response in those early years—from families, parishes, dioceses and the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops—was so encouraging! I have no doubt that was due in very large part to the fact that Monica was the director of the whole operation and what a talented woman she was!

Some of you may also know that Monica died of uterine cancer in early 2013 at the age of 60. Thanks to our volunteers (the ministry has always been all-volunteer) and many faithful donors, FSJC has continued and grown but...

Yes, I'm sure she's praying for all of us and helping us in many ways but...

I'm deeply grateful you and I can continue her legacy but I do miss working side-by-side with her.

You and your loved ones remain in my prayers.

Bill Dodds

## The Role of Spirituality in a Caregiver's Life

One of the last things a caregiver wants or needs is pious platitudes about the spirituality of caregiving. Those saccharine, greeting-card sentiments with a religious spin often fall flat. Some of the "spiritual" things that get said to caregivers make matters worse.

Let's be honest: there are times in our lives when our spirituality is on the back burner at best. Spirituality—God, prayer, sacraments, and all the rest—may not make the top-ten list of our concerns when



we're caught up in life's many demands. But there is some good news.

If you haven't been too spiritual before now (or if it's been awhile), it's a small step for your "Oh dear God!" to be transformed from an exclamation muttered in fear and frustration to a quick prayer . . . muttered in fear and frustration. It's God's presence that not only lets you take that small step but also makes you aware you've done so.

How did that happen? Grace. Amazing grace.

A prayer that begins, "I know I haven't talked to you in a long time, and there are a lot of things I've done that I shouldn't have and a lot of things I didn't do that I should have . . ." is a very good prayer. So, too, one that begins, "I know I haven't believed in you in a long time . . ." or "I know I've been mad at you for a long time . . ."

What if your spiritual life is strong and active? When you find yourself in a caregiving role, you might feel as if you have to put your spiritual life on hold. You can't make it to weekday Mass. You can't attend the prayer group meeting. You can't head to the retreat house for your an-

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## In Loving Memory

We remember caregivers, care-receivers, family members and friends who have recently died:

Mary R. Castillo	Tess Reiman
Rafaelita Maestas	Janice Reynolds
Tom Schneider	The mother of Sister Therese
Jean O'Gara	Robert Martz

*Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them. May they rest in peace. Amen.*

# Thank You to All Who Donated to FSJC!

Here's the list of FSJC donors from January –September 2015.

On behalf of caregivers around the world: Thank you and God bless you!

On behalf of care-receivers around the world: Thank you and God bless you!

On behalf of dioceses and parishes now better able to help families who are providing care: Thank you and God bless you!

And on behalf of the volunteers at FSJC: Thank you and God bless you!

Anonymous 3  
Jan Alkire  
Martha Barber  
Diane & Gary Buckley  
Patrick & Diane Dodds  
Rita Dougherty  
Rita Fenton  
Deborah Grenquist  
Sue & Larry LoJacono  
Mark Luczak  
Marian Malonson  
Mary & Roger Metz  
Mother Seton Parish

John O'Gara  
Clemence Pella  
Mary Jo Reichmann  
Jeannette Spokus  
Marci Thomsen  
Marilyn Wiedemann  
Virginia Williams  
John Zambrano

*(Please let us know if we have made a mistake and misspelled or left your name off the donor list. We apologize for the error.)*

## The Role of Spirituality in a Caregiver's Life

*(Continued from page 1)*

nual weekend away.

But you don't need to "go there" to experience God in a very particular and personal way. God has come to you.

Or, more accurately, God — present with your care receiver at this time in his or her life — has invited you to join him.

Now your spiritual life may consist of receiving Holy Communion from an extraordinary minister of the Eucharistic who has come to visit your loved one. Now it may be saying prayers and reading Scripture with your care-receiver — for the first time in a long time, if ever. Now

God's presence may help you realize that a bedside, a car, or a doctor's office has replaced the retreat house this year.

Now you may realize that you and your loved one are on a pilgrimage. The bedroom, the car, the doctor's office — all are holy ground, because the two of you are making a truly sacred journey. Together, you're preparing for what is to come: one of you will continue into the next world, and one will remain behind. On that day, one will grieve, even

***Now you may realize that you and your loved one are on a pilgrimage. The bedroom, the car, the doctor's office — all are holy ground, because the two of you are making a truly sacred journey.***

as she knows her care-receiver is rejoicing. And one will rejoice, even as he knows that—for a time—his caregiver is grieving. This can be a once-in-a-lifetime experience: a walking with God that can never be duplicated or repeated.

These aren't pious platitudes meant to gloss over the realities of caregiving.

You know the truth: Caregiving is exhausting. Caregiving is maddening. Caregiving is frightening. Caregiving is frustrating. But the truth is also that, in the middle of all that, you can experience an awareness of the presence of God.

Whether you feel it or not, God is constantly

present with you in your new role. And whether you like it or not, you've been given an assignment, a mission, a vocation: you are a caregiver. ("Oh, God help me!" That's another good prayer.)

This is God's will for both you and your loved one. He has prepared you for this all your life. By loving you, God and your care-receiver have taught you to love.

And love is the essence of caregiving.



### **If You No Longer Want to Receive the Newsletter...**

Please just send us an e-mail ([billdodds@youragingparent.com](mailto:billdodds@youragingparent.com)) or give us a call (1-800-392-JOHN) if you no longer want to receive the quarterly newsletter.

### **...Or Prefer E-mail to Mail**

And please let us know if you would prefer to receive the newsletter in an e-mail rather than through the mail. (E-mailing it saves money!)



## Friends of St. John the Caregiver

P.O. Box 320 • Mountlake Terrace, WA 98043 • 1-800-392-JOHN  
www.FSJC.org • www.YourAgingParent.com • www.CatholicCaregivers.com

# Order Form

We know that some family caregivers and FSJC members don't have access to the Internet. Here's a handy way to order a variety of resource material for yourself, your family member, your parish . . . or anyone else.

**Thanks to the generosity of FSJC donors we can offer all these items at no charge.**

Just let us know what you would like and where you want to have it sent.

\*Brochures, Checklists and Topics are also **available online in a printable format** at [CatholicCaregivers.com](http://CatholicCaregivers.com) under "Fliers." Videos can also be viewed at our YouTube channel: [JohnTheCaregiver](http://JohnTheCaregiver).

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Please send this material to:

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Street \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_ State/Prov \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_  
Country \_\_\_\_\_

Mail your request to:

**Friends of St. John the Caregiver**  
P.O. Box 320  
Mountlake Terrace, WA 98043

E-mail us at:

**BillDodds@YourAgingParent.com**

Or call us at:

**1-800-392-JOHN (5646)**

There is no charge for any material and no charge for shipping or handling.

All donations are gratefully accepted.

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

**Friends of St. John the Caregiver**  
**An international Catholic organization promoting care for family caregivers.**

### \_\_\_\_ Quantity Requested

#### Prayer Books

- \_\_\_\_ The Little Book of Caregiver Prayers
- \_\_\_\_ The Stations of the Cross for Caregivers

#### Holy Cards

- \_\_\_\_ St. John the Caregiver
- \_\_\_\_ Our Lady in Need
- \_\_\_\_ Caregiver's Prayer bookmark

#### \*Brochures

- \_\_\_\_ The Basics of Catholic Caregiving
- \_\_\_\_ The Friends of St. John the Caregiver

### \*Checklists

- \_\_\_\_ Overall Assessment of Care-receiver
- \_\_\_\_ Assisted-Living Facility Evaluation
- \_\_\_\_ Nursing Home Evaluation
- \_\_\_\_ Legal and Financial Paperwork
- \_\_\_\_ Depression —and— Elder Abuse Information for Family Caregivers
- \_\_\_\_ Driving Skills
- \_\_\_\_ Home Safety

### \*Topics

- \_\_\_\_ The Stages of Caregiving
- \_\_\_\_ Alcoholism and Aging
- \_\_\_\_ Dealing with Caregiver and Care-receiver Anger

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\_\_\_\_\_ Choosing the Best Solution  
\_\_\_\_\_ 'I Don't Want to Be a Burden'  
\_\_\_\_\_ Helping Your Parent Give Up the Car Keys  
\_\_\_\_\_ Challenges of Communication  
\_\_\_\_\_ Preparing Your Children to Visit Your Parent  
\_\_\_\_\_ In Case of an Emergency or Disaster  
\_\_\_\_\_ Exhaustion: Care for the Caregiver  
\_\_\_\_\_ Caregiving is a Family Affair  
\_\_\_\_\_ Your Parent's Generation  
\_\_\_\_\_ Your Parent's — Your Care-receiver's — Grief  
\_\_\_\_\_ Caregiver Grief: Sorting Out, Moving On,  
Remembering  
\_\_\_\_\_ Dealing with Caregiver Guilt  
\_\_\_\_\_ Independence, Control and Self-determination  
\_\_\_\_\_ Keeping Secrets, Telling Lies  
\_\_\_\_\_ If You Are a Long-distance Caregiver  
\_\_\_\_\_ Helping Your Loved One Deal with Losses  
\_\_\_\_\_ When You're Married to the Caregiver  
\_\_\_\_\_ Should Mom or Dad Move In?  
\_\_\_\_\_ When Mom or Dad Moves In  
\_\_\_\_\_ Not My Loved One  
\_\_\_\_\_ Choosing a Nursing Home  
\_\_\_\_\_ Guidelines for Caregiving  
\_\_\_\_\_ Finding Respite Care  
\_\_\_\_\_ Respectful Caregiving as the Parent-Child Roles  
Reverse  
\_\_\_\_\_ The 'Sandwich Generation'  
\_\_\_\_\_ Caregiving Stress: Warning Signs  
\_\_\_\_\_ The Need to Talk  
\_\_\_\_\_ When Your Loved One Has Poor Vision  
\_\_\_\_\_ Turning to Prayer  
\_\_\_\_\_ The Stations of the Cross for Caregivers  
\_\_\_\_\_ Celebrating Birthdays and Anniversaries  
\_\_\_\_\_ The Role of Spirituality in a Caregiver's Life  
\_\_\_\_\_ Returning to the Church  
\_\_\_\_\_ What Anointing of the Sick Is . . . and Isn't  
\_\_\_\_\_ Caring for Your Children as You Care for Your  
Aging Parents  
\_\_\_\_\_ Preventing Slips and Falls  
\_\_\_\_\_ How to Nourish Your Spiritual Life  
\_\_\_\_\_ Understanding Aging  
\_\_\_\_\_ Caring for an In-law or a Stepparent

\_\_\_\_\_ When Professionals and Your Care-receiver Disa-  
gree — *and* — Always a Parent: Worries About  
Adult Children  
\_\_\_\_\_ At the Hospital  
\_\_\_\_\_ Encouraging Good Nutrition  
\_\_\_\_\_ Depression and Suicide  
\_\_\_\_\_ Helping Your Loved One Find Forgiveness and  
Peace  
\_\_\_\_\_ Taking Care of a Crabby or Formerly Abusive  
Parent  
\_\_\_\_\_ Problems with Mobility  
\_\_\_\_\_ The Need to Have Fun  
\_\_\_\_\_ Refereeing Fights Between Mom and Dad  
\_\_\_\_\_ Tips for the Caregiver and Care-receiver  
\_\_\_\_\_ Dementia and Alzheimer's Disease  
\_\_\_\_\_ The Danger of Isolation  
\_\_\_\_\_ Words That Sting, Words That Comfort  
\_\_\_\_\_ Talking to Your Children about Death  
\_\_\_\_\_ Dealing with Your Parent's Racial  
and Ethnic Prejudices  
\_\_\_\_\_ Your Care-receiver's Spiritual Health  
\_\_\_\_\_ Help for Men Who Are Family Caregivers  
\_\_\_\_\_ Promoting Leisure-Time Activities  
\_\_\_\_\_ The Sacrament of Reconciliation  
\_\_\_\_\_ Preparing for Your Loved One's Death  
\_\_\_\_\_ Saying Good-bye to the Family Home  
\_\_\_\_\_ The Beatitudes for Caregivers  
\_\_\_\_\_ God Knows Caregiving Is Hard  
\_\_\_\_\_ Hiring a Case Manager  
\_\_\_\_\_ When Your Care-receiver Doesn't Want Help

**\*Videos on DVD**

\_\_\_\_\_ Catholic Caregiving, Volume 1  
A Caregiver's Prayer; Caregiver Advice from St.  
Francis de Sales; Helping Your Loved One Give  
Up the Car Keys; Keeping Secrets, Telling Lies  
\_\_\_\_\_ Catholic Caregiving, Volume 2  
Caregiving from a Care-receiver's Point of View  
(Independence/Interdependence; Dealing with  
Losses; "I Don't Want to Be a Burden"); Guide-  
lines for Making Decisions; Stages of Caregiving;  
Principles of Catholic Caregiving

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*\*Brochures, Checklists and Topics are also **available online in a printable format** at  
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channel: JohnTheCaregiver.*

**Friends of St. John the Caregiver**  
FSJC.org YourAgingParent.com CatholicCaregivers.com

## **Friends of St. John the Caregiver Prayer Requests**

February– September 2015

Please keep these intentions in your prayers. The list can be found online at:

[www.youragingparent.com/prayer\\_requests.html](http://www.youragingparent.com/prayer_requests.html).

To request prayers, *write*: FSJC, P.O. Box 320, Mountlake Terrace, WA 98043; *call* 1-800-392-JOHN (5646); *or go online at*: [www.YourAgingParent.com](http://www.YourAgingParent.com).

For Pam who is receiving chemotherapy after breast cancer surgery.

Please pray for my sister, Patricia, who beat lung cancer and breast cancer but now has a reoccurrence of lung cancer with some spreading. She is a non-smoker. And for her husband, Dick, who is caring for her. And please pray for my mother who had a stroke 15 years ago and for her caregivers: Ken, her husband, and Deborah, her daughter. And please pray for our injured military, for both their mental and physical state of health.

Please pray for Mary, age 96, who is suffering. That she learns to walk again, or to strengthen my spine so I can continue to care for her at home and not put her in a facility.

Please pray for my cousin, Susan. She has been a caregiver to four ailing and dying family members in the last decade. Now she is caring for her father who has stage 4 cancer. I don't know how she does it, but I do know her faith has given her strength and comfort. Also please pray for my Uncle Buck that he continues to fight the brave fight and not be in any pain.

Please pray for my sister, Alice (diabetic, heart problem, paralyzed right arm), and her husband, Lennis (Alzheimer's/dementia), that they get the care needed and deserved. Also for all their children helping them at this time of stress.

Please pray for my dad, Charles, who is 95 years old. Last year he had two strokes and a subdural hematoma.

He now has cognitive problems. I am his primary caregiver.

For a happy death for my mother who is now in hospice.

For Anne Marie M.

For my wife, Catherine, who has fronto-temporal dementia.

For Deborah and Evelyn O., sisters that my daughter and myself care for; and also for my daughter, Mary F., and myself, DeeDee J., to continue -- with the grace of God -- to give care to these wonderful ladies with the love of Jesus.

Please pray for my father, Ernest K., fighting stage 4 lung cancer of the liver.

For the repose of the soul of Jean O'G. and for those who love her. May she rest in peace.

For the repose of the soul of Tom S. and for those who love him. May he rest in peace.

For Nancy and Vinny, and their sons.

Parkinson's disease is decimating my husband, Warren. Please include us on your prayer list.

For Richard and Margaret C., and for their beloved family.

For Ken and Dorothy G., and the family. And for the poor souls in purgatory.

For David and Gretchen's granddaughter Addison who has been diagnosed with a brain tumor.

For Bill R. and his family, Bonnie, Bill B. and his family, and the patients at University Hospital Case Medical Center.

For our pastor who was just diagnosed with dementia. Please pray for all those afflicted with this diagnosis and their families.

For Helen N. and the N.-D. family.

For my mother, that I care for.

For the sick, lonely, and elderly.

For Joella, who helps me with my 95-year-old mom, Myrtle L. She's a wonderful caregiver. She also sees about Jeannette D. Please pray for all three of them, along with myself, Gadic F. Thank you for your prayers!

For my 97-year-old mom, Alejandra. Thank you.

For our daughter, Mary Elizabeth, who is in remission with colon cancer. And for me, Roger M., who is under treatment for prostate cancer. And for our sister-in-law, Elinor B. who is under treatment for cancer.

Please pray for me, Rita, caregiver for my husband, John. And for him, that he won't get depressed from so much pain. And for my sister-in-law who has bone cancer. Also for Joe and Jean D., Don and Margaret M., and Sisters H. and A.