

GUIDELINES FOR MEMBERS OF SAINT PAUL CATHEDRAL LADIES OF CHARITY

GENERAL GOALS:

The work of the Ladies of Charity is, in general terms, Social Service to the poor of the parish and community (Poor because of physical, spiritual, emotional, social, or financial needs).

A large number of those we serve at Saint Paul Cathedral are elderly or physically handicapped, often shut-ins. The numerous referrals of those of advanced years result from demographic aspects of the neighborhood and community with its many large apartment buildings appealing to the aging and physically disabled because of the convenience and security offered by these dwellings. However, our services are not limited to any age group. The Ladies of Charity also serve younger individuals and families. The approach of the Ladies of Charity is rooted in the Christian Gospels and in the Teachings of Saint Vincent de Paul, who founded the Ladies of Charity in France in 1617 "To serve the Poor with Humility, Simplicity, and Charity."

COLLABORATION WITH OUR PASTOR AND OTHER PARISH RESOURCES:

The work of the Ladies of Charity is carried on in collaboration with our pastor and spiritual advisor, or parish social minister. The Saint Vincent de Paul Society provides generous financial help in meeting expenses for urgent financial problems of individual clients.

ACTIVITIES OF LADIES OF CHARITY:

Activities of the Ladies of Charity include both group and individual types of services. Our current major group activities include sponsoring a Mass for the Anointing of the Sick in September and a Christmas Party for those we minister to through the year.

*Some **suggested** specific **social services** for individuals are as follows:

- Visiting shut-ins in their homes
- Visiting individuals in hospitals and nursing homes
- Accompanying elderly, ill, handicapped persons to medical appointments
- Providing “respite” times for those caring for ill parents, children, or other relatives, enabling them to do errands or have time for themselves.
- Attending funerals whenever possible
- Helping with clerical support for Ministry of Prayer each month
- Telephoning elderly, ill, or shut-in individuals: reassurance calls for those living alone, or friendly conversation for the lonely
- Visiting at the time of death; attending funerals of those we serve
- Making referral of clients to other community agencies as required. These are channeled through the Social Minister. She is available for information and consultation on such resources as the Area Agency on Aging (for Meals on Wheels, housekeeping services, help with shopping, medical facilities, hospital social services, etc).
- Volunteering for various duties in the social service office: correspondence, filing, phone calls, etc.
- Sewing baptismal robes
- Ministry of Prayer

REFERRALS TO MEMBERS:

The Social Minister refers individual clients to members. From a review of her caseload, she selects individuals who may be able to utilize the services of the Ladies of Charity. The Social Minister then makes an appointment to interview new members or current members who have not received an assignment and endeavors to match clients with particular Ladies of Charity in view of members’ individuals in need of service, or the clergymen or other persons in the community may make referrals. In these instances, members are to notify the Social Minister of their involvement and activity.

FOLLOW UP ON REFERRALS:

Activity and outcome of each referral should immediately be reported to the Social Minister in the Social Service Office and recorded on the 5 x 8 card maintained for each case in the Social Service files.

SOCIAL COMMITMENT OF LADIES OF CHARITY:

Each member is encouraged to carry one or more individuals or families on an ongoing basis. This type of service requires making regular visits to their homes, keeping in contact between visits through phone calls, and helping by working with our Sister Social Worker in the use of other community services to meet specific needs. Members who are available may also be called upon in one-time or emergency situations- for example, to help when transportation for medical care or hospitalization is urgently needed by a member of the parish community.

Members are not expected to volunteer specific numbers of hours of volunteer services per day, per week, or per month, but only to give freely and generously of the time they have available in accordance with their responsibilities to family, job, and other church or volunteer commitments

USE OF THE LADIES OF CHARITY TREASURY OF THE DIOCESAN EMERGENCY FUND FOR URGENT NEEDS:

Requests for meeting urgent financial needs among those we serve, not covered by existing social agencies may be made by members through the Saint Paul Cathedral Ladies of Charity Treasury or the Diocesan Ladies of Charity emergency fund for individuals ages 50 and over. Requests for assistance should be made through our President, Saint Paul Cathedral Ladies of Charity. Requests for help from the Diocesan fund must be made on a special form, signed by the Pastor of Saint Paul Cathedral and submitted for approval to the Director of the parish Social Services Program

OFFICERS:

Elected officers are the President, Vice-President, Secretary, and Treasurer. Term of office is one year, with elections held in May. Re-election is an option.

DUES:

Dues are \$6.00 per member, payable in May. The Treasurer is responsible for collecting the dues and for mailing the check for the Saint Paul's group to the Diocesan office of the Ladies of Charity.

INVESTITURE:

Each new member is required to be invested in a ceremony held in March in Saint Paul Cathedral. Application for investiture requires approval by the Pastor of Saint Paul Cathedral. The Ladies of Charity on a parish Level pay for the newly invested members' luncheon fee.

AFFILIATION WITH NATIONAL AND INTER-NATIONAL LADIES OF CHARITY:

Saint Paul Cathedral's Ladies of Charity is affiliated with the Diocesan Ladies of Charity. Members of the parish group are urged to attend the events planned by the Diocesan Board of the Ladies of Charity (which consists of the parish presidents). Major events include the Diocesan Fall Workshop in August, Service for the Unclaimed Dead at Calvary Cemetery in November, the Investiture Ceremony at Saint Paul Cathedral in March, and the Mass of Thanksgiving and Annual Diocesan President's Report in June. The organization of the Diocesan Ladies of Charity in Pittsburgh is affiliated with the Association of Ladies of Charity of the United States (A.L.C.U.S.). The United States organization is also affiliated with the International Association of Ladies of Charity, with membership groups throughout the world. Both A.L.C.U.S. and the International Association have regular national and international conferences, which all members are eligible to attend. There are presently 1500 members in 83 parishes in the Pittsburgh Diocese, and 200,000 members worldwide.

PUBLICATIONS:

The Diocesan Ladies of Charity publishes a newsletter "DeMarillac News" sent to all members four times a year. A.L.C.U.S. publishes a journal: "The Servicette" at \$5.00 yearly for subscribers.