

## SACRAMENTS FOR SENIORS

is a committee of Catholic lay persons who want to advocate for Catholic residents living in long term care facilities to help them gain access to Clergy and receive the Sacraments of Anointing of the Sick, the Holy Eucharist and Reconciliation.

Many elderly people have not been able to fully practice their faith due to Covid-19 restrictions.

Through the Mass and the Sacraments, Catholics receive sanctifying grace which comes from Jesus Christ to comfort, heal, and sanctify.

**"THE FRUIT OF THE SACRAMENTAL LIFE IS THAT THE SPIRIT OF ADOPTION MAKES THE FAITHFUL PARTAKERS IN THE DIVINE NATURE BY UNITING THEM IN A LIVING UNION WITH THE ONLY SON, THE SAVIOR."**

CATECHISM OF THE  
CATHOLIC CHURCH 1129

### CONTACT

If you have questions or would like more information, please contact us at  
[sacramentsforseniors@protonmail.com](mailto:sacramentsforseniors@protonmail.com)



**Sacraments  
FOR SENIORS**



**Because you care about the needs of your residents, you also care about their spiritual needs.**

Catholic Clergy and the reception of the Sacraments of the Church is critical to the temporal and spiritual well-being of all Catholics.

We hope that Catholic residents will have access to regular visits from their clergy and opportunities for Mass.



**Sacraments  
FOR SENIORS**





## Sacraments and Health<sup>1</sup>

**Religious practice decreases mortality rates** according to a comprehensive review of medical, public health, and social science literature studying the link between religion and mortality. Those who are religiously involved live an average of 7 years longer than those who are not!

**Reduced risk of depression** has been found in people who highly value their religious faith and are involved in frequent religious activities. Good mental health is highly correlated to religious participation.

**Greater longevity** is consistently and significantly correlated with higher levels of religious practice and involvement, regardless of the sex, race, education or health history of those studied.

**Happiness is greater and overall psychological health is better** among those who attend religious services regularly. 81% of 99 studies found some positive association between religious involvement and greater happiness, life satisfaction, morale, positive affect or some other measure of well-being.

**The vast and deadly effects of isolation** on residents of nursing care facilities have been documented by studies, articles and outcries from residents, families and senior advocacy groups across America.

1. "95 Social Service Reasons for Religious Worship and Practice". Marriage and Religion Research Institute, "95 Social Service Reasons for Religious Worship and Practice", October 16, 2012.



## **Below is a story which demonstrates the importance to our seniors of receiving the Sacraments**

*I work for a non-profit organization whose office is located in a Catholic church. In April, during the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic, I arrived at work early in the morning. As I was getting out of my car, a SUV with an older couple drove into the parking lot. As the car drew close, the driver, a woman, rolled down her window and asked if there was a way for her to receive Holy Communion. I explained that due to Covid, the church was not holding public Masses.*

*The woman started crying. She explained that she lived at a near-by assisted living facility that was under a strict Covid lockdown. Residents were only allowed to leave the facility to either go to a doctor's appointment or to pick up a prescription. Additionally, visitors were not allowed into the facility - all of which made her feel like she was a prisoner. It was then that she looked across the parking lot and saw one of our priests approaching the side door of the church. She begged me to ask the priest to give her Holy Communion. I cut across the grass and quickly explained the situation. The priest readily agreed to give her Holy Communion. He then went into the church to get his things and came back a few minutes later wearing a mask.*

*As the priest and I approached the couple in the car, the woman, using a walker, got out to meet us. Her joy in receiving Holy Communion was very apparent. It was beautiful to see and she touched my heart in a profound way. And while she knew she had received a special gift that day, she was unaware that she also had given me a gift.*

**IMPORTANT! Clergy and Pastoral Caregivers are authorized under the title Health Care Worker under the CDC/MDH guidelines to provide for the spiritual needs of residents.<sup>2</sup>**

Local Clergy and Pastoral Caregivers have personal and Church membership connections with residents.

Caregivers are trained in safety requirements and PPE.

## **SPIRITUAL PRACTICE AND PASTORAL VISITS CAN BE DONE SAFELY!**

### **How can YOU help?**

- **Open the door to safely allow clergy and pastoral care visitors.**
- **Restore or begin in-house Mass or religious services.**
- **Encourage group prayer among residents.**
- **Invite Church members for faith-based visits.**

2. Center for Disease Control/Minnesota Department of Health