

# The Faith Connection

~ News and Ideas for Your Health Ministry ~

October 7, 2009

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*The Mercy Parish Nurse and Health Ministry Program started this monthly e-newsletter to help us all stay connected. The responses we receive tell us that the news, articles and information are helpful in your ministry. We welcome news from your church and suggestions for our future newsletters. Please keep in touch.....our e-mail address is [ParishNurse@mercy.pmhs.org](mailto:ParishNurse@mercy.pmhs.org)*

## Upcoming Events

*Presented by Mercy Parish Nurse & Health Ministry Program*

Next  
up...

### Mercy Parish Nurse and Health Ministry

#### 17<sup>th</sup> Annual Symposium

November 7, 2009, 9 a.m. to 3:15 p.m.

*Parish Nurses and Health Ministers:*

*In the Forefront of Changing Health Care*

Keynote Speaker: Jean C. Kennedy, RN, MA

4.0 CE's for RNs

For the complete brochure, visit [www.pmhs.org](http://www.pmhs.org)  
and click on Parish Nurse

### ◆ COMING NEXT YEAR: Parish Nurse Basic Preparation Course

The International Parish Nurse Resource Center (IPNRC) recently revised their Parish Nurse Basic Preparation Course. The new course consists of 16 modules to be presented in four sections. Participants will earn 30 CE's. As an educational partner of IPNRC, we are planning to offer this

course twice in 2010: a winter session is scheduled for January 22 - 23 and February 26 - 27 and a summer session, June 7 - 10. The new materials look great. Contact Dorothy Mayernik by email [dmayernik@mercy.pmhs.org](mailto:dmayernik@mercy.pmhs.org) or call 412-232-7151 for more information.

# Parish Nurses Making a Difference

*If you've had an experience helping a member of your faith community that you could share with your parish nursing colleagues, please e-mail us at [ParishNurse@mercy.pmhs.org](mailto:ParishNurse@mercy.pmhs.org) or call us at 412-232-7151 to tell us about it so we can write it up. The confidentiality of the client and/or church will be maintained. Recently we heard from a parish who shared this story:*

I attended the excellent *Breast Cancer Awareness* presentation at the February 2009 Mercy Parish Nurse support meeting, not realizing the importance of what I just learned.

Soon after that meeting, I received a phone call from my 84-year-old neighbor...a dear lady that I check on daily. She told me she thought she felt a lump in her breast and asked if I would come over to check it. When I checked it, sure enough, I felt a lump. I told my neighbor she would have to see the doctor as soon as possible.

Her response was, 'I'm not going.....I'm too old.' I immediately replied, 'You're not too old. You have to do something about this. I'll go with you.'

Tests confirmed a breast mass and the doctor recommended surgery.

I was with the woman each step of the way, including breaking the news to the woman's son, because the elderly woman did not want to tell him she had breast cancer. I sat with the son as his mother was having surgery.

'She's doing great now,' the son says. 'Thanks so much for being there for her.'

## Focus on Health and Wellness: H1N1

The current concern for the H1N1 flu is on the minds of many people. As parish nurses and health ministers, we need to do our best to educate our people and empower them to take action to protect themselves and others. We have included two bulletin boards under **Parish**

**Nurse Resources** below. A handout is included answering such questions as "What can you do to keep from getting or spreading swine flu?" "When should I go to the doctor if I think I have swine flu?" and "Should I go to the emergency room?" In many articles, brochures,

and other educational materials we are reminded of our personal responsibility to wash our hands often, stay home when we are sick (remind your pastors that they are included), avoid close contact with people who are sick, avoid touching our eyes, nose or mouth, and coughing into our sleeve (elbow) to prevent the spread of germs. As a congregation we may want to think about collecting offerings in a large container at the entrance to the sanctuary, rather than by passing a plate or basket up and down the pews. Having everyone involved in preparation and distribution of Holy Communion cleanse their hands (20-second wash with soap and water, or 15 seconds of rubbing with 60% alcohol hand sanitizer) before touching trays, cups,

wine or wafers...no one who is sick should prepare or distribute the Holy Eucharist, the Lord's Supper. If snacks are served after church, a bottle of hand sanitizer could be placed at the start of the table. While we do not want to scare people, we need to take serious action to contain the spread of the flu.

Speaking of "scaring", why not talk to your young people about Trick-or-Treating safely and eating their treats in a responsible manner. One congregation collects the extra candy from their children and sends it to our military stationed overseas. Most church bodies have ministries to the armed forces where names of chaplains can be obtained.

## For more information about H1N1 and seasonal flu go to:



[www.cdc.gov/flu/weekly/fluactivity](http://www.cdc.gov/flu/weekly/fluactivity)  
[www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/vaccination](http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/vaccination)  
[www.cdc.gov/flu/swine/index](http://www.cdc.gov/flu/swine/index)  
[www.medscape.com/viewarticle/707843](http://www.medscape.com/viewarticle/707843)

**"Seasonal Flu Checklist"** from  
[www.redcross.org/www-files/Documents](http://www.redcross.org/www-files/Documents)  
[www.immunize.org/express/issue821.asp](http://www.immunize.org/express/issue821.asp)

## Bulletin Articles for November



*The American Diabetes Month is part of a long list of November awareness ideas available at <http://www.healthfinder.gov/nho/nho.asp>. Because of the rapid increase in diabetes in our country, we want to emphasize it at this time and hope that people will seek more information and testing.*

*Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, he shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are. - 1 Corinthians 3:16, 17*

## **Diabetes**

It is established that about 20 million Americans have diabetes and that number is growing. Few realize that there is now an unexpected epidemic of Type 2 diabetes among our children. Type 2 diabetes is a lifestyle disease once unheard of in children. The epidemic is associated with the fact that kids as well as adults are overweight and inactive.

The likelihood of developing Type 2 diabetes is largely a function of what one eats, how much one exercises, and most importantly, how much one weighs. By taking control of these three factors, we can be assured that we are taking the right steps in prevent this disease, which is primarily one of lifestyle.

Consider these simple ways to possibly prevent becoming Type 2 diabetes:

- Select activities which keep one active for at least 30 minutes a day.
- Allow only an hour of TV/computer activity per day.
- Stop buying soda, juice drinks and junk food.

Adapted from "Wellness Tip of The Week" written by JoAnn C. Kauss, RN, MSN, St. Malachy Church, 2003

For more information contact [www.diabetes.org](http://www.diabetes.org) or you local American Diabetes Association

Call 1-800-DIABETES (342-2383) for general information on diabetes; Call 1-800-ADA-ORDER (232-6733) to order books or a catalog

*Dear Lord Father,  
Watch over me on my journey through life  
and help me to have the strength  
and self-discipline  
to keep my body healthy. Amen.*

**Congratulations to the International Parish Nurse Resource Center (IPNRC) for a great symposium last month. Our manager, Dorothy Mayernik, came back excited about not only her presentation, but also about getting together with so many wonderful parish nurses and health ministers.**

# Parish Nurse Resources

Due to the great concern of the flu this fall, we are giving you two ideas for bulletin boards this month:

[www.gha.org/pha/bulletinboards/FluSwineFlu2009/index.asp](http://www.gha.org/pha/bulletinboards/FluSwineFlu2009/index.asp)

[www.gha.org/pha/bulletinboards/SwineFlu/index.asp](http://www.gha.org/pha/bulletinboards/SwineFlu/index.asp)

**A(H1N1) FLU and YOU!**

**Symptoms?**

- Fever
- Cough
- Sore throat
- Body aches
- Headaches
- Chills
- Fatigue
- Nausea
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea

**WASH YOUR HANDS!**

**When do I call the doctor?**

If you have the symptoms of swine flu, you need to check with your doctor.

**What can you do?**

Wash your hands often with soap and water – especially right after you cough or sneeze. Drink lots of fluids and eat food that is good for you. Avoid being around people who are sick. Try to stay calm.

**What will the doctor do?**

The doctor will do tests to be sure you have swine flu. You can get special medicines called “anti-virals” to help you get better faster.

**Is this an emergency?**

If you are sick and have any of the following symptoms, call your doctor right away. If you cannot reach your doctor, call 911.

- Fast breathing or trouble breathing
- Bluish skin color
- Not waking up or not responding to you
- Being so irritable that a child does not want to be held
- Flu-like symptoms improve but then return with fever and worse cough
- Fever with a rash
- Severe or persistent throwing up or diarrhea
- Trouble breathing or shortness of breath
- Pain or pressure in the chest or abdomen
- Sudden dizziness
- Confusion

You can make other people sick from one day before you have any symptoms to 7 or more days after you feel sick.

*These bulletin boards offer “low literacy” handouts, giving information about the flu and the signs that immediate attention is needed.*

**Seasonal**

**In FLU enza**

**H1N1 (Swine)**

**SYMPTOMS**

The symptoms for H1N1 (Swine) flu include “regular” seasonal flu symptoms everyone can easily be sure:

- Fever and Chills
- Body Aches
- Change in Cough
- Loss of Voice
- Nausea
- Fatigue
- Sore Throat

**KNOW THE SIGNS OF THE FLU!**

**GET THE H1N1 BY RISK**

Get the H1N1 by risk

Get the H1N1 by risk

Get the H1N1 by risk

**Think you have the flu? Stay home!**

**Think you have the flu? Stay home!**

# Parish Nurse Store



Mercy Parish Nurse and Health Ministry Program offers products that are designed to help you in your health ministry and parish nurse program. **Recipes for Caring: An Expression of Parish Nursing and Health Ministry** is a collection of stories about parish nursing, program ideas, poems, and favorite recipes contributed by our staff and compiled into a 184 page, 6 x 8 ½ inch binder. These varied ways of caring will warm your heart, encourage you in your ministry, and fill you with good food.

Suggested donation is \$10.



***Thank you for reading *The Faith Connection!*  
We pray for God's blessings on your ministry.***