An Easter Prayer

Good and gracious God,
Our most glorious Creator,
As we greet the signs in nature around us:
Of Spring once again regaling us in bloom,
In the songs of returning birds and fields soon to be planted,
We give you praise for an even greater sign of new life:
the resurrection of your Son,
Our Lord Jesus Christ, that we especially celebrate at this time.
The sadness and despair of his death has given way to the bright
promise of immortality.
For the Resurrection is our guarantee that justice will triumph over treason,
Light will overcome darkness, and love will conquer death.
As we celebrate, we also dare to ask for your grace
that we may live the promise given to us,
By imitating the life of Jesus in reaching out to the poor,
the marginalized, the least among us,
As we strive to be neighbor to all those we meet,
We ask your special blessings each and every day on our President.
Working with him may we strive to make this great country of ours
a beacon of hope and justice in a world hungry for peace
and so in need of your love.
We praise you in this Easter season.
Change our lives, change our hearts to be
messengers of Easter joy and hope.
We make our prayer through Jesus Christ, our risen Lord forever.
Amen.

-By Fr. Larry Snyder
https://bit.ly/3qBtNAb
The Pittsburgh Mercy Parish Nurse and Health Ministry Program is offering a Virtual Day Retreat on **Saturday, April 17, 2021.**

This year’s retreat, will be facilitated by **Dr. Carolyn (Carrie) Nickerson** who provides ongoing spiritual and retreat direction including the Spiritual Exercises in Everyday Life (SEEL), and serves on the Leadership Team of the Pneuma Spiritual Direction & Leadership Program at Pneuma Institute in Pittsburgh, providing instruction and supervision. She is a member of Spiritual Directors International and was very well received at the 2017 Pittsburgh Mercy Parish Nurse & Health Ministry Retreat, “Listening and Becoming Free.”

Carrie resides in Cresson, PA and is a married Roman Catholic lay woman, mother of three adult daughters, grandmother, and music minister in her parish with experience in nursing, midwifery, and nursing education. She completed a Master of Arts in spiritual and pastoral care at Loyola University in Baltimore MD; requirements for certificates in spiritual direction & leadership, and direction of the Ignatian Spiritual Exercises at the Pneuma Spiritual Direction & Leadership Program, Pittsburgh, PA; the Retreat Directors Workshop at Loyola House, Ignatian Jesuit Centre in Guelph, Ontario, Canada; and a certificate of advanced studies and supervision at West Virginia Institute for Spirituality. She also has a Master of Science Degree in Maternal Child Nursing and Midwifery, and a Doctor of Education in Higher Education Program Planning & Evaluation.

This retreat is based on the spiritual exercises in *Putting on the Heart of Christ* by G. Fagin SJ and will explore what it is like to wait on God, the experience of loving service, and the fruit of prayer. The day will consist of Scripture, prayer, music, videos, guided contemplation, and group discussions led by the retreat facilitator.

This year’s virtual retreat is provided via Zoom Web Conferencing. The opening session begins at 10:00 a.m. ET and the retreat ends by 3:00 pm ET. A lunch break is included in the agenda. This retreat serves as a time away from personal and professional responsibilities as we contemplate our spiritual life and relationship to God. **The cost of the retreat is $45.00 per person.** Limited, partial scholarships are available upon request by contacting the office at 412-232-5815 or ParishNurse@pittsburghmercy.org. **For more retreat details, visit at [https://bit.ly/3l17C4D](https://bit.ly/3l17C4D)**

**Scripture Theme for Retreat:** **Proverbs 16:3 NLT**

*Commit to the Lord whatever you do, and your plans will succeed.*
Blessings to Sr. Judith Wuerl on Her Retirement Journey!

Time goes by so quickly especially as we age and see family & friends’ lives change with every passing season. One of those special friends to us is Sister Judith Wuerl, RSM, BS, M.Ed., RN who is a Faith Community Nurse and a Health Ministry Specialist Volunteer for the Pittsburgh Mercy Parish Nurse & Health Ministry Program, a legacy program of Pittsburgh Mercy and the Sisters of Mercy. Sr. Judy has been a mainstay at our Pittsburgh Mercy Parish Nurse Ministry and has blessed many people who have been in touch with our Program throughout the years. Sr. Judy has been a volunteer in our Program since August 2010, except from January 2014 to December 2017 when she was the Pittsburgh local leader for the Sisters of Mercy. Sr. Judy has worked on several facets of the Faith Community Nurse Preparation Course, symposiums and dinner gatherings, educational workshops, annual spiritual retreats, the E-Newsletter “The Faith Connection” as well as answering phone calls and emails with consultations. She is a ‘wiz’ with the computer for typing documents and client data entry. But most of all, it’s her friendly face and smile that puts our guests at ease when they walk in the door at our events. Her organizational skills are superb… matchless to none. She is considered a full member of our Pittsburgh Mercy Parish Nurse Team and always will be even though she is retiring from her volunteer ministry with us.

In the words of Sr. Judy of why she chose to volunteer at our Pittsburgh Mercy Parish Nurse Ministry, “The reason I volunteer is that I believe it truly is the embodiment of all that our beloved Venerable Catherine McAuley believed in and worked toward as the founder of our Community (Sisters of Mercy). I assist the staff with whatever they need to have done that I can assist them with.”

We wish God’s blessings to Sr. Judy on her retirement journey. Her plan is to continue with her ministry by visiting more with the Sisters of Mercy in the infirmary. As we often say, “once a nurse, always a nurse.” May God in His perfect mercy bless Sr. Judy and keep us close in her heart and daily prayers as she serves her Lord. We love you, Sr. Judy!

One of Sr. Judith’s favorite quotes from the author, Henri Nouwen…

“God is always in the moment, be that moment hard or easy, joyful or painful.”

Health Ministry… so important now more than ever!

ZOOM Consultation for those locally & out of state

Every faith community has been impacted by the COVID-19 Pandemic. This is a challenging time for all but there is hope as people focus on physical distancing, wearing masks, receiving vaccinations when available, and limit large gatherings. Many faith communities are limiting the number of people who attend services at one time as well as scheduling committee meetings virtually. This requires that spiritual leaders be creative via social media opportunities. Meeting the needs of parishioners in all age groups requires time and energy, but it can be done as ministry teams work together.

We encourage all faith community nurses and lay ministers to be open to innovative forms of ministry as they meet the needs in their faith community. We would be happy to work with you, your clergy, and/or faith community team. If interested, contact us at the Pittsburgh Mercy Parish Nurse & Health Ministry Program at 412.232.5815 or email us at ParishNurse@pittsburghmercy.org. We are only a phone call, email or ZOOM meeting away!
Pittsburgh Mercy Parish Nurse & Health Ministry Program Offering

Health Ministry Virtual Meetings . . . Peer Support, Learning & Conversation

(3rd Tuesday evening of every month at 7:00 pm ET)

Goal: To emphasize the importance of networking, fellowship, learning and peer support for faith community nurses and health ministers as they assist their congregations and local community to better health and well-being.

Target Audience: Faith Community Nurses, Health Minsters, Registered Nurses, Licensed Practical Nurses, Clergy/Laity, and anyone interested in learning about wholistic care approach (whole-person health) as we commit to health advocacy and education of others.

2021 Dates: March 16, April 20, May 18, and June 15. A Saturday session on March 20th at 11:00 am ET will be offered (same presentation as March 16th; registration deadline is also on March 16th at 3:00 pm ET). Each session lasts one hour. These virtual offerings are at no cost. No preparation is needed by participants.

Focus for March Topic: COVID Vaccines... Recommendations, FAQs, Myths and Misconceptions.

Participant Comments: Very informative. Excellent presentation — information was new to me.

Content Discussion: Focusing on the intentional care of the spirit, the promotion of whole-person health, the prevention of disease, creative ministry programming, and current challenges in ministry. Each monthly session will invite participants to a specific topic of interest. One of our Health Ministry Specialists from the Pittsburgh Mercy Parish Nurse Team will facilitate and present a brief learning activity such as a PowerPoint presentation, a video clip, short article, or a case study. There will be time for Q&A by using peer discussion and brainstorming. Depending upon the number of participants, the facilitator will use virtual break-out rooms for small group discussion to occur. Each participant will receive educational tools and resources to be added to their health ministry “toolbox” for future use with clients and healthcare consumers. Each participant will be asked to complete an evaluation within 10 days after the session. Participants can suggest topics of interest for future virtual sessions. Each participant is welcome to contact the Pittsburgh Mercy Parish Nurse Ministry Team for a follow-up virtual mentoring session as needed.

Registration must include:
1) First & last name
2) Date & time of desired session
3) Email address
4) Phone number
5) Role/title and name of faith community and/or organization

Registration is required in order for each participant to receive the Zoom link, meeting ID, passcode, and agenda. Dial-in option is available. Registration deadline is by 3:00 p.m. ET (Eastern Time in US and Canada) on the date of your choice. Space is limited, so early registration is suggested. For questions or to register send email to ParishNurse@pittsburghmercy.org or call 412.232.5815 and leave a clear and detailed message.

1 Thessalonians 5:11 NIV

“Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing.”
The Health Ministries Association (HMA) News

The Pittsburgh Mercy Parish Nurse & Health Ministry Program is pleased to congratulate our own Health Ministry Specialist, Amy Armanious, DNP, MSOL, RN, Faith Community Nurse for being elected to the Board of Directors with the Health Ministries Association (HMA).

Amy’s nursing experience includes working in a variety of clinical specialty units including post-op cardiothoracic care, staff development, home health nursing, and hospice care.

Amy completed the Pittsburgh Mercy Parish Nurse Preparation Course in 2007. She has practiced as a faith community nurse in both salaried and unsalaried positions. She currently coordinates the Visitation Ministry and Bereavement Support Ministry at her family church. These positions have prepared Amy to serve as a Health Ministry Specialist at Pittsburgh Mercy and as an elected volunteer HMA Director for Practice and Education.

Amy’s passion for nursing, education, and health ministry is evident to all who interact with her along with her gifts of faith, compassion and service to others. She has been a blessing to many people interested in becoming a Faith Community Nurse or Health Minister as well as those striving to expand their personal ministries and professional work.

Lenten Practices

Lent is a season of turning—Turning from what is hurtful and toward what is healing. Turning from what is shattered and toward what is whole – Returning to the Lord. https://bit.ly/3l0X4CA

The first thing that many people associate Lent with is the giving up of a favorite food. The Disciplines of Lent are much broader and include self-examination and repentance, prayer, fasting and self-denial, reading and meditating on God’s Holy Word and works of love. Examples of how some people put the disciplines into action include using a Lenten devotional to guide them in drawing closer to God through reading, prayer and reflections; striving to develop habits that support and nurture our environment or communities, deliberately practicing daily acts of kindness; and volunteering at church, community food banks, vaccine clinics or other charities. How do you plan to observe Lent? May we all have a holy and blessed Lenten Season. To learn more, visit http://bit.ly/3rAwLW7

The Health Minister Role: Guidelines and Foundational Curriculum Elements 2nd Edition, 2018

If you are a health minister or are considering becoming a health minister, The Health Minister Role: Guidelines and Foundational Curriculum Elements, 2nd Edition, 2018 is an excellent resource. Key topics that are addressed in this book include but are not limited to:

- Educational Preparation for Health Ministers
- Role Identification & Guidelines for the Health Minister
- Code of Ethics & Conduct
- Authority & Responsibilities of Health Minister
- Accountability, Professional Responsibility, & Legal Considerations of a Health Minister
- Areas of Health Promotion and Wholeness Activities for Health Ministers
- Settings for Whole Person Health Outreach
- Sample Job Description for a Health Minister

To learn more, visit the Health Ministries Association (HMA) website at http://bit.ly/3bULMjC
READ OF THE MONTH

Just Like Jesus Devotional: A Thirty Day Walk with the Savior by Max Lucado.
Reprinted 2012 by Thomas Nelson, Inc.
ISBN: 978-0-8499-4400-0

The Just like Jesus devotional leads readers to examine the heart of Jesus so that we can become more like Him. In addition to scripture and devotional readings, each day’s devotion includes four activities:
- **Thinking** which requires stepping away from daily demands to ponder the scripture and think about your response to it;
- **Hearing** or being still and listening;
- **Reflecting** on the readings to focus on how you can become more like Jesus and
- **Speaking** to God via prayer, questions and praise.

As with most of Max Lucado’s publications, there are many “quotable quotes” along with thought-provoking and inspirational words. A favorite quote from this book is

“God loves you just the way you are, but He refuses to leave you that way. He wants you to be just like Jesus.”

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Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus.
Philippians 2:5-11 NKJV

Please email your suggestions for the “Read of the Month” to ParishNurse@pittsburghmercy.org

March is National Nutrition Month

Originally created by the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, National Nutrition Month can be used as a good time to promote healthy eating and physical activity habits. The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has led to a deterioration of many people’s dietary habits and an undesired weight gain.

The good weather of Spring can provide a jump start for good dietary habits and outdoor physical activities. It’s important for faith community nurses and health ministers to encourage parishioners to eat right and get fit!

Explore the wide range of health promotion resources including individual toolkits with downloadable resources by visiting at [http://bit.ly/3spVnlo](http://bit.ly/3spVnlo)

Our Email Address:
ParishNurse@pittsburghmercy.org

We enjoy hearing from our E-Newsletter readers about your faith community ministries. Send an email with a short description of your recent church activity and we will include it in our section “News from You!” If you like, include a photo of yourself too.

If you should no longer wish to receive communications from the Pittsburgh Mercy Parish Nurse & Health Ministry Program, please unsubscribe by contacting us at 412.232.5815 or email us at ParishNurse@pittsburghmercy.org Thank you.

Pittsburgh Mercy invites you to “like” us!
Do you need a sacred space and time set-aside for peace and quiet reflection during this challenging time in our world? Do you desire to give to your family and others, but could use some extra encouragement and support? Do you want to learn more about self-compassion? Do you have a need to connect with others in prayer and contemplation? Do you want to experience spiritual awareness and spiritual care in a virtual setting?

Please attend our Virtual Candle Meditation which is a brief prayer gathering. It is a wonderful opportunity to experience spiritual awareness and group faith sharing through a virtual learning setting. We invite all to this quiet place and time as we allow ourselves to prayerfully reflect on our own whole-person health.... balancing body, mind, and spirit. The emphasis is on the importance of self-care and connection with our Creator. In our busy lives, we sometimes feel overwhelmed to the point of neglecting our spiritual needs. We risk little to pour out and then burn out. We invite all to safe, better health and well-being.

These virtual offerings are at no cost. It is intended for faith community nurses, health ministers, church volunteers, clergy, registered nurses, health care professionals, licensed professional counselors, social workers, Pittsburgh Mercy employees, and anyone interested as we continue our commitment to advocating for and serving others in need.

Each offering begins at 7:00 p.m. ET. Below are the 2021 dates and topics:

1) *Spring into Action*, March 11 Thursday
2) *Summer Solstice*, June 10 Thursday

Registration is required in order for each participant to receive the Zoom link, meeting ID, passcode, and agenda. Dial-in option is available. Registration deadline is by 3:00 p.m. ET on the date of your choice. To register send email to ParishNurse@pittsburghmercy.org or call 412.232.5815 and leave a clear and detailed message with the following information:

1) First and last name
2) Date and time of desired session
3) Email address
4) Your phone number
5) Your role or title and the name of your faith community or organization.

Noteworthy Secular Events in March & April

March – Women’s History Month – see http://bit.ly/3e74aUl
March 14 – Daylight Saving Time - Begins at 2:00 a.m. (Spring Forward)
March 17 – St. Patrick’s Day
March 20 – First Day of Spring

As a new COVID-19 vaccine becomes available, it is vital for nurses to help educate and promote vaccines as well as dispel myths and misconceptions about COVID and vaccines. Asking “What questions or concerns do you have?” when talking to others can help to identify gaps or confusion regarding vaccines and decrease people's anxiety.


COVID-19 Vaccines Are One of the Tools We Have to Fight the COVID-19 Pandemic https://bit.ly/3r3E4p3


Myths and Facts http://bit.ly/3b7NMkN


Updated Resources


Pittsburgh Mercy Parish Nurse & Health Ministry Program

part of the Planning Team for

The 20th Annual Pittsburgh Pastoral Care Conference

“for shepherds and other caregivers of the flock”

Friday, May 7, 2021

Virtual format

For details and online registration, visit at https://www.pghpcc.org/

Staying Connected with Peers in Faith Community Nursing

The Westberg Institute Knowledge Sharing Platform

How do Faith Community Nurses stay connected after they are commissioned and begin their journey in health ministry? One such avenue is by connecting via an online community such as the Westberg Institute Knowledge Sharing Platform. Currently there are over 1,600 nurses and 90 groups focusing on different health topics such as diabetes, heart disease, etc. The platform is a great way to be encouraged and supported. This is an excellent resource that one can receive quick, virtual assistance for questions regarding topics of interest and locating experts in health ministry and spiritual care. There are different groups that one can join such as “nursing educators” as well as regional and denominational groups. If interested, request an invitation to the platform by visiting at https://westberginstitute.org/fcn-knowledge-sharing-platform/

Join us and enroll in the Fall Course today!

- Hybrid course: Virtual format via Zoom meetings and online modules.
- Class size is limited to 20 participants.
- Open to registered nurses and anyone interested in whole-person health… balancing body, mind, and spirit.
- Early registration discount is available with course application.
- Variety of course instructors.
- Limited, partial scholarships available upon request.
- For course application and more details, visit this link at https://bit.ly/3dZEXLw

Course Cohort 2020
**Upcoming Religious Observances**

**March 2021**
- March 15 Great Lent begins – Orthodox Christian
- March 17 St. Patrick’s Day – Christian
- March 25 Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary
- March 28 Palm Sunday – Christians recall Jesus’ entry into Jerusalem. Also known as Passion Sunday which begins Holy Week culminating in the Crucifixion of Christ.
- March 28 Passover begins – Jewish eight day “Feast of Unleavened Bread” celebrates Israel’s deliverance from Egyptian bondage.

**April 2021**
- April 1, 2021 Holy (Maundy) Thursday – Christian observance of the first Lord’s Last Supper
- April 2, 2021 Good Friday – The Christian remembrance of the crucifixion of Jesus and related events
- April 4, 2021 Easter – Holiest day of Christianity celebrating the resurrection of Jesus Christ
- April 13, 2021 Ramadan – The holiest period for Muslims who pray and fast in honor of the first revelation of the Qur’an to Muhammad.
- April 25 Palm Sunday – Orthodox Christian
- April 30th Holy Friday – Orthodox Christian

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**National Prescription Drug Take Back Day – April 24**

Do you know that a study showed that a majority of abused prescription drugs are obtained from family and friends—usually their home medicine cabinets? Unused or expired prescription medications are a public safety issue, leading to potential accidental poisoning, misuse, and overdose. Proper disposal of unused drugs saves lives and protects the environment. Locations for the take back will be added to the National Takeback website at [http://bit.ly/3qbh8mZ](http://bit.ly/3qbh8mZ) leading up to April’s event.

Note that the DEA also sponsors a fall Take Back Day (date to be announced.) See [http://bit.ly/3qbh8mZ](http://bit.ly/3qbh8mZ) for more information about a Partnership Toolbox, locations for April 24 and year-round drug disposal sites.
**Electronic Documentation System** for Faith Community Nurses

This user-friendly electronic program was designed by FCNs, rigorously tested by FCNs, and is currently used by FCNs nationally. This documentation system offers the following:

*Documents client problems easily* by using a concise list built-in to the system with drop-down boxes (physical, mental, spiritual, social, financial and relational areas)

*Rates the problem* initially and at follow-up assessments using a 1-5 scale

*Demonstrates the outcomes* of your FCN interventions

⇒ See YouTube Video of the Pittsburgh Mercy Parish Nurse Documentation System at [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XNKGJx1Fex8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XNKGJx1Fex8)

⇒ See our NEW COVID-19 SCREEN for easy documentation of temperature, added check-boxes for symptoms and pertinent information. Plus updated REPORTS to allow for sharing with others as needed. See this brief YouTube link at on our website at [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e1u5WzIXWmM](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e1u5WzIXWmM)

Contact us! ParishNurse@pittsburghmercy.org 412-232-5815


Email us, if interested in our upgrade Version 7.1 and our NEW COVID-19 SCREEN.

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**Faith Community Nursing: Scope and Standards of Practice**

3rd Edition

Co-published by the American Nurses Association (ANA) and the Health Ministries Association (HMA)

The Scope and Standards of Practice for Faith Community Nursing provides a definitive resource for the Faith Community Nurse (FCN) to use in decision-making when validating, or analyzing professional practice. It guides the FCN in practice within:

* Preparation and educational programs
* Role description and performance evaluations
* Policies and procedures
* Quality improvement endeavors
* Competencies and compliances

With the nursing process to assess *wholistic care* – balance of body, mind, and spirit — the FCN uses evidence-based practice for the intentional focus on spiritual well-being through education, counseling, prayer, presence, active listening, and advocacy. As health care delivery expands more into the community setting, multiple venues are available for FCNs to provide hope, healing, peace, purpose, trust and contentment – even when apart from cure.

With informed attention to ethics, cultural competence, care within life transitions, behavioral health, and addiction, the 3rd Edition of the Scope and Standards speaks to the demanding challenges of current practice. The six standards of practice and ten standards of professional performance are the criteria by which all FCNs are held accountable.

To learn more, click on this HMA link: [https://bit.ly/2BaiGXc](https://bit.ly/2BaiGXc)

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**The Faith Connection**

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Health Observances
To encourage others in balancing body, mind, and spirit. Please note: This is not an inclusive list of all health observances.

*National Sleep Awareness Week (March 14-20) http://bit.ly/3niDOEN
*National Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month http://bit.ly/2XufH6C
*National Multiple Sclerosis Education & Awareness Month https://bit.ly/2OgueSz

American Stroke Awareness Month https://bit.ly/2XYbSYW
National Asthma and Allergy Awareness Month https://bit.ly/34WUbdQ
Skin Cancer Awareness Month https://bit.ly/2S09ZXX

The next edition of “The Faith Connection” is May/ June 2021. If you have news to share, please email us by April 15th for the section “News From You!”
REGISTRATION FORM : Virtual Day Retreat 2021

Pittsburgh Mercy Parish Nurse & Health Ministry Program

A part of Pittsburgh Mercy and Trinity Health, serving in the tradition of the Sisters of Mercy.

From Darkness into Light: Encountering the Heart of Christ
Saturday, April 17, 2021  10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Virtual Format (Zoom)

Please send completed registration form along with a check of $45.00 made payable to the Pittsburgh Mercy Parish Nurse & Health Ministry Program by April 12th to: Pittsburgh Mercy Parish Nurse & Health Ministry Program, Mercy Health Center, 1515 Locust Street, Suite 705, Pittsburgh, PA 15219-5154. For more information, call 412.232.5815 or email ParishNurse@pittsburghmercy.org Or visit https://www.pittsburghmercy.org

Name__________________________________________________________________________________________

First Name       Middle Initial       Last Name

Address________________________________________________________________________________________

City __________________________  State ______   ZIP __________________________  Telephone _________________________________

Email Address__________________________________________________________________________________

Name of Church or Organization_____________________________________________________________________

Address_______________________________________________________________________________________

City __________________________  State ______   ZIP __________________________

Denomination __________________________________________________________________________________

Your role within your church/organization (please check all that apply):

__ Clergy          __ Social minister
__ Member/attendee __ Social worker
__ Health ministry coordinator RN __ Nursing student
__ Coordinator health minister __ Volunteer
__ Faith community nurse (volunteer) __ Pittsburgh Mercy employee
__ Faith community nurse (salaried) __ Seminarian
__ Health Minister __ Registered nurse
__ Other __________________________ __ Other __________________________

☐ I permit my name & church/organization to be published in this retreat participant listing handout.

☐ I would like to receive information about continuing education opportunities from Pittsburgh Mercy Parish Nurse & Health Ministry Program and Pittsburgh Mercy i.e. our free monthly E-Newsletter, The Faith Connection.

☐ I prefer not to be contacted.

NOTE: The Pittsburgh Mercy Parish Nurse & Health Ministry Program and Pittsburgh Mercy do not sell or otherwise share information with third-party vendors. You reserve the right to revoke your permission at any time. For more information, contact the Pittsburgh Mercy Parish Nurse & Health Ministry Program at 412.232.5815 or email ParishNurse@pittsburghmercy.org