



# Among Friends

Newsletter of the Friends of St. John the Caregiver

Spring-Summer 2012

## Health Update on Monica Dodds

In 2010 FSJC president Monica Dodds was diagnosed with uterine cancer (carcinosarcoma) and underwent surgery, chemotherapy and radiation treatment.

In late February of this year the family learned that the cancer has metastasized to her lungs. At that time her oncologist estimated she has, at most, a year to live. She is now in a hospice program.

Monica and Bill and all the family thank you so much for your concern and your prayers. You remain in theirs.

## 'You're Being Prayed For'

One of the items we always try to mention when caregivers call or write us is that they're not alone even though, at times, caregiving can be so lonely.

Thanks to the members of the Friends of St. John the Caregiver—thanks to you!—we can tell them that they and their care-receivers are being prayed for by FSJC members around the world.

As you know, that's the only request we make of members. (No meetings, no dues!)

Since its beginning in 2005, FSJC now has close to 500 members. If you're not a member we invite you, we encourage you, to join.

If you're already a member, please consider asking a family member, friend, or fellow parishioner to join. (Go to [www.FSJC.org](http://www.FSJC.org) or call 1-800-392-JOHN (5646).)

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

Please just send us an e-mail ([monicadodds@youragingparent.com](mailto:monicadodds@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!)

## Thank You, Donors!

Please see page 2 for a list of those who made donations to the Friends of St. John the Caregiver between October 2011 and April 2012.

## 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.

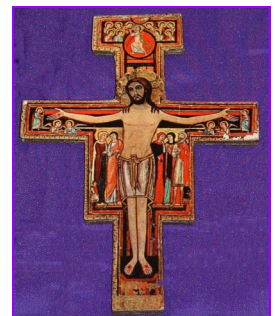
How did that happen? Grace. Amazing grace.

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, is 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 annual 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,

*(Continued on page 2)*



## In Loving Memory

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

Vera Browne  
Esperanza C. Canisguin  
Genevieve "Jean" Layo  
Linda's mother  
Walter Regeski Sr.

*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 **October 2011 through April 2012**, including those who took part in the 2011-2012 Annual Appeal.

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 staff and volunteers at FSJC: Thank you and God bless you!

Anonymous 14  
Susan Anderson  
Mike and Terri Aquilina  
Father Patrick Beck  
Kent Brown  
Gary and Diane Buckley  
Louise Bussieres  
James Calahan  
Kelly Carney  
Connie Connole  
Barbara Costello  
Floyd Covey  
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Gilberte Desrosiers  
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Margo Funaro  
Anne and Bob Funkhouser  
Peggy Gloth and Jeff Klein  
Alice and Leonard Green  
Mary Ann Green  
Deborah Grenquist  
Barabra Hannan  
Mary and Don Heyrman  
Holy Cross Hospital, Silver Springs, Md.  
Anthony Hoying  
Mary Keen  
Honey-Jo and John Kelly  
Miles and Shirlee Kessler  
Eileen Kornberger  
Janice Kotara  
Janice Lange  
Marianne LeGerfo  
Sue LoJacono  
Josefina Lopez  
Betty Loucks  
Marian Malonson  
Dolores Martinez  
Charlotte McCrory  
Betty McDonald  
Mary Merkel  
Mary Milas

Michael and Mary Mitchell  
Estela Moreno  
Sally and Karl Naseman  
Joan Noonan  
Peace Lutheran Church, Saginaw, Mich.  
Gwen Perreira  
Sister Susan Perri, O.P.  
Alan and Claudia Peters  
Lillian Pfeifer  
Ben and Carol Pritchett  
Kathleen Rein  
Carolyn Rinker-Russick  
John and Melanie Ruhl  
Edelmira Santiesteban  
Rita and Tom Schneider  
Jennifer Sokol  
Barbara Steinberg  
John Sweeney  
Krisann Thompson  
Marci and John Thomsen  
Susan Tikalsky  
Audrey Toohey  
Patricia Tracey  
Carmela Vigil Brown  
Barbara Werschkul  
Cheryl and Jim Whalen  
Carrie Wilczynski  
Marcia and George Wines  
John and Roberta Wolcott  
Debbie Zito

*(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)*

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 a Eucharistic minister 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 are 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 as she knows her parent is rejoicing. And one will rejoice,

even as she knows that—for a time—her child 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 loved one have taught you to love. And love is the essence of caregiving.



## 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 on-line at [YourAgingParent.com](http://YourAgingParent.com) under "Topics" and/or 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:

MonicaDodds@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

(Continued on page 2)

(Continued from page 1)

- \_\_\_\_\_ 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 Disagree — *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"); Guidelines for Making Decisions; Stages of Caregiving; Principles of Catholic Caregiving

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*\*Brochures, Checklists and Topics are also available on-line at [YourAgingParent.com](http://YourAgingParent.com) under "Topics" and/or at [CatholicCaregivers.com](http://CatholicCaregivers.com) under "Fliers." Videos can also be viewed at our YouTube channel: [JohnTheCaregiver](http://JohnTheCaregiver).*

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

February-May 2012

Please keep these intentions in your prayers. The list can be found on-line at: [www.youragingparent.com/prayer\\_requests.htm](http://www.youragingparent.com/prayer_requests.htm). To request prayers, write: FSJC, P.O. Box 320, Mountlake Terrace, WA 98043; call 1-800-392-JOHN (5646); or go on-line at: [www.YourAgingParent.com](http://www.YourAgingParent.com).

For my husband, Harold, who has heart problems.

That my good health may continue so I may care for my husband who suffered a ruptured brain aneurysm 13 years ago and needs my care every day. He has no short-term memory and other problems. I'm weary and need prayers.

Please pray for my dad and for me and my brother who are taking care of him. He's almost 90 and we're exhausted and so stressed. We can't put him in a nursing home due to finances. Please pray we can continue to care for him without killing ourselves. Thank you.

For Jerrie J.

For my mom who is on dialysis and is unable to walk because of a failed knee replacement.

For Lynne H.

My mother-in-law, Elaine, has recently been diagnosed with ALS -- "Lou Gehrig's disease." My husband, David, and I will be her main caregivers for the next 2-4 years. Please pray for her to come back to the Church (I've been praying for this for years now) and also for my husband and my patience and love to grow for her as we care for her in her last years.

For the repose of the soul of Rosemary. May she rest in peace.

For my father, Bill, who is failing so much especially during the last six months.

Please pray for my mother, Sarah, who just turned 97 years old. That she has peace and comfort in her life.

For my husband, Jim, and myself as we continue to adjust to our "new" lives.

For Thomas who will have surgery this week.

For the repose of the soul of my mother-in law, Genevieve "Jean" L. who passed away on February 1. May

she rest in peace.

For the repose of the soul of my dad, Walter R. who passed away on April 12th. May he rest in peace.

Pray that God quiets my mother's mind and that I find peace through his Holy Name.

For Joy B.

For the caregivers with whom I work through our local County Aging Office, and for the caregivers who come to our Caregiver Ministry meetings and those who are not able to attend.

For the success of an upcoming caregiver retreat being led by parish nurses in St. Louis, Mo.

For my elderly parents and for my daughter who is expecting her third child and is not well.

For me, a caregiver, so I can stay healthy and have the necessary graces to do God's will.

For Pearl M., an Alzheimer's patient

For the repose of the soul of Linda's mother. May she rest in peace. And for Linda and all her mother's family and friends.

For Carly, my daughter, who needs understanding of the world around her.

For Gary and Diane.

For Robin B. and her caregiver.

For Alice Ann, Len, and all the family.

For Patsy P.

For my precious, angelic mother who is in the final stages of Alzheimer's. Please pray for her and for me that God will not let her suffer, and that He will give me the strength I need.

For my wife whose cancer has returned, and for all who love her so dearly.

Please pray for the soul of Vera B., age 90, who has just died. Please pray for her and for all those good people who cared for her in her last days. I was the sole carer for my beautiful mother and friend. I am now alone in my grief and very distressed. Please pray for me to be helped, protected, and guided from above and that Mum's loving care will never cease. For healing, peace, laughter, and support.

For my 98-year-old grandmother and her three devoted daughters as they lay down their lives to make her life meaningful and full of love. For my husband and me as we continue taking care of his mother in our home. And for me, as I struggle with past relationship issues with my mother-in-law, that I have patience, love, and understanding, and that I can see Christ in her.

For my mother, Eileen D. who was just diagnosed with normal pressure hydrocephalous.

For my father, Juan L., whom I care for, and for my husband, Leroy H., as he goes through surgery for his hip.

For Margaret S.

Please pray for me, Lorie W. and my brothers, sisters, nieces, nephews, grandnieces/grandnephews, cousins, and relatives. May God give us the strength, courage, and hope to receive the ultimate plan of our Lord, Jesus Christ, and this we pray in Jesus' name.

For the repose of the soul of Esperanza C. May she rest in peace. And for her daughter, Lorie.

I feel like I am losing my mind. Please pray for me. My children are miserable and I am caring for someone who is mean. I knew this before moving her in but had hoped that since I was removing her from an awful situation that she may have been nice.