



Being a Servant of God, Creatively



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**Catholic Diocese of Columbus (Ohio)
Office for Social Concerns**

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Looking for a way to feed your love of knitting or crocheting, sewing or quilting (etc.) that will benefit a worthy cause? Consider starting a prayer shawl ministry or connecting with one that is close to you.

Prayer Shawl Ministry Compassion and the love of knitting/crocheting have been combined into a prayerful ministry and spiritual practice which reaches out to those in need of comfort and solace, as well as in celebration and joy. Many blessings are prayed into every shawl.

HOW TO ORGANIZE A KNITTING/CROCHETING MINISTRY

Got some time? Do some good with a knitting/crocheting ministry. If you love knitting or crocheting, being around other people, and helping those in need, you're the perfect candidate to organize a knitting/crocheting ministry! Don't be intimidated and don't sit back and wait for others to do it. With a few simple steps, getting started with your knitting/crocheting skills and helping others at the same time is a breeze.

First, make some decisions. For instance, how big do you want this ministry to be? Thinking of just a few good friends meeting once a week and working on a few projects a year? Or thinking big...as many people as possible, knitting and crocheting as much as possible and donating as much as possible? Either way, it isn't too difficult.

Step #1 - Decide on a project or projects to meet the desires of the group

Search charity knitting/crocheting sites and choose a charity or a number of charities. Knit or crochet for kids, knit or crochet bandages for leprosy patients, knit or crochet dolls for children who have lost their parents to AIDS, knit or crochet blankets, knit or crochet chemo caps, knit or crochet baby blankets for preemies. The list is seemingly endless. Look over all of the great charities. Choose one(s) whose projects are "doable;" In other words, easy enough for knitters or crocheters of all skill levels and easy enough that knitters/crocheters won't get discouraged before they finish their project.

- Does the charity have clear details on what they need?
- Does the charity include free charity knitting/crochet patterns?
- Does the charity explain what materials are acceptable?
- Does the charity have clear instructions as to where to send the finished project?
- Does the charity explain how to ship the donations?

These are all questions you need answered before choosing a knitting/crocheting ministry.

Step #2 - Choose a location

Decided on having just a small group of friends knit/crochet for a charity, this is easy. You can offer your home once per week or suggest rotating homes on a weekly basis. The person who opens his/her home to the group each week can also provide simple snacks to make it more fun.

If you've decided on a large group, handle it one of two ways. Find a building that is big enough for your group to meet together or have the group work independently and bring their finished projects to a set location for collection.

Step #3 - Recruit knitters and crocheters

When recruiting knitters you have three options:

1. Knitting & crocheting with a small group of friends. Simply call your creative buddies, explain what you want to do, and set a date and time.
2. If you've decided to have a big group meet together, find a location where you can meet weekly, bi-weekly, or monthly. Setting up a schedule where several people bring snacks to share with the group each meeting would also be a good idea. Write up some flyers describing what your organization is about, what project is being knitted, and when and where you'll be meeting. Post these flyers around town, at craft shops, at knitting shops, churches, and libraries.
3. If you've decided on a large group working independently, even more simple. You can skip finding the location and skip scheduling snacks. Simply distribute flyers but include information telling where the knitters and crocheters need to drop off their finished projects. Once the projects are dropped off, send them to the knitting/crocheting ministry.
4. Many groups pray over the completed and "in-works" projects every time they meet. See prayer below.

See....with a little planning and thought, it's simple to get a creative ministry of your own off the ground. For more information contact Erin Cordle, 614-241-2540 or ecordle@colsdio.org.

Step #4 - Finishing and distributing projects

As projects are completed, many prayer shawl groups add crosses or medals to a corner and have the shawls (or other creations) blessed. A simple note or card (like the one on page 5) can be given with the shawls or written to reflect your specific project.

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May God's grace be upon this shawl...

warming, comforting, enfolding and embracing.

**May this mantle be a safe haven... a sacred place of
security and well-being...**

**sustaining and embracing in good times as well as difficult
ones.**

**May the one who receives this shawl be cradled in hope, kept
in joy, graced with peace,
and wrapped in love.**

Blessed Be!