

Life to the Fullest

Health and Wellness Newsletter for Seniors

Winter 2024 Issue



“Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid.” — John 14:27

Warm December Greetings to You!

As colder airs swoops in with plans to stay for a while, let's remember what the warmth a smile, a hug, kind words or deeds can bring to one another - especially this time of year. Grab a cup of hot cocoa and read on for health and well-being information to support healthy aging in mind, body and spirit for you this winter.

This *Life to the Fullest* issue includes:

- Senior Ministry News
- Feature article - Protect Yourself from Social Isolation this Winter
- New **VITALity Calls of Joy Program**
- Stephen Ministry Outreach
- Upcoming events & more

At **VITALity Catholic Healthcare Services**, we are here to help YOU live your *Life to the Fullest!*

On behalf of the VITALity Catholic Healthcare Services staff, we wish
YOU a Merry Christmas and a Blessed New Year!

Senior Ministry News



Deacon Joseph Janocha, Director of Hospital Chaplaincy, visited all four Senior Social Day Centers in the Camden Diocese in September.

Deacon Joe offered a blessing and prayer for our seniors in honor of *World Day for Grandparents and the Elderly*. Center members shared stories about their first jobs, how faith impacted their life, advice for their "younger self" - with plenty of humor. [Read more about our visits here in the Catholic Star Herald.](#)



Halloween was certainly a treat for our senior center members. Parties were complete with a haunted house, costume contest, themed games including "*Guess the Pumpkin's Weight*" and a special lunch.



Each Senior Social Day Center hosted delicious Thanksgiving Feasts for members to share together. Heartfelt expressions of gratitude for family, friendships, overcoming trials and a supportive community were shared.

Planned programs continue this winter to include:

- Line dancing
- Health and wellness presentations
- Chair yoga
- Spiritual development
- Bus trips
- Themed parties
- Entertainment & more

Senior Social Day Center Listing ~ Call Today to Join

Golden Slippers

Director: Barbara Hanson
Saint Simon Stock Parish, Berlin
Tues., Wed. & Thurs. 9 a.m. - 1 p.m.
(856) 767-2563

Prime Timers

Director: Flo Curly
Church of the Incarnation Parish, Mantua
Tues. & Thurs. 9 a.m. - 1 p.m.
(856) 468-1314

The Renaissance Center

Director - Tese Hemschoot
Saint Andrew the Apostle Parish, Gibbsboro
Tues. & Thurs. 9:30a.m. - 1p.m.
(856) 784-3878

Young at Heart Club

Director: Kathy Benton
Christ the Redeemer Parish, Atco
Wed. & Fri. 9 a.m. - 1 p.m.
(856) 767-0719

[Learn More](#)

In addition, parishes in the Diocese of Camden have formed vibrant senior ministry

groups that meet monthly providing wonderful social and spiritual experiences. Each ministry sets its own meeting time and program schedule.

[Click here for a full list with contact information.](#)

Mind, Body and Spiritual Health

Protect Yourself from Social Isolation this Winter



The winter season brings colder weather and less sunlight. This can lead to many, especially older adults, spending more time in the home which results in less opportunities for meaningful, social interactions. As humans, we are social creatures and need social connections for survival. Research has found that those engaging in meaningful activities with others tend to live longer, boost their mood, and have a sense of purpose.

Knowing the risks of social isolation and how you can prevent it, especially in the winter months, is important for healthy aging in mind, body and spirit.

How Does Social Isolation Impact Older Adults?

Social isolation is now being recognized as a public health problem since research shows that approximately 1 in 4 people aged 65 years and over may be experiencing feelings of isolation. Additionally, research has linked social isolation and loneliness to an increased risk of diseases such as high blood pressure, heart disease, obesity, weakened immune, anxiety or depression and cognitive decline. Unfortunately, all of these can lead to an increased risk of death. Too little social activity and being alone too often can also impact daily activities such as driving, paying bills, taking medications and cooking.

Why are Older Adults at Risk?

As we age, there are changes in overall health that can impact our social connections. Changes in vision, hearing, memory, mobility as well as the ability to access transportation can all lead to increased risk of isolation. Additionally, seniors living alone may be at even further risk for social isolation and loneliness.

Additional Risk Factors for Social Isolation could be:

- Separation from friends or family, such as retirement or moving to a new area
- Feelings of a lack of purpose
- Financial struggles
- Inability to leave the home without help
- Loss of a spouse
- Caring for a loved one
- Living in rural or hard-to-reach neighborhoods
- Challenges with language barriers



10 Ways to Prevent Social Isolation:

1. **Be open and honest with your provider** about how you feel physically, emotionally and mentally. Let them know about any major changes or stresses in your life, such as the death of a loved one or a move.
2. **Schedule time each day to stay in touch** with family, friends, and neighbors in person, by email, text, voice or video call.
3. **Nurture friendships** by sending letters or cards, planning an outing or sharing a meal together.
4. Find a faith-based organization where you can **deepen your spirituality** and engage with others.
5. **Research senior social programs** and activities in your community.
6. **Practice good self-care.** Exercise, eat healthy meals, get a good night's sleep (7 to 9 hours) and do more of what brings you joy.
7. **Exercise** (as recommended by your provider) with others such as joining a walking club or walking with a friend. In the winter months, consider taking an extra lap around the grocery store since it is cold outside.
8. **Engage in activities that give you a sense of purpose.** For example, research has shown that volunteering may help you feel less lonely and allows you to help others.
9. **Consider restarting an old hobby or taking a class** to learn something new. You might have fun and meet people with similar interests.
10. **If able, consider adopting a pet.** Animals can be a source of comfort and may also lower stress and blood pressure.

VITALity is Here to Help Prevent Social Isolation and Loneliness

- Start your week with a **VITALity Call of Joy** Register today!
- Join a **Senior Center Day Center** near you that meets 2-3 times per week.
- Join a **parish senior ministry** that meets monthly.
- Locate a local senior group or outreach ministry in your area with help from one of our **Care Coordinators** by calling 1-888-268-4825..

This winter, there are several steps you can take to help protect yourself or a loved one from the negative effects of social isolation and feelings of loneliness this season. Please reach out to VITALity Catholic Healthcare Services for support at 1-888-268-4825.

VITALity Calls of Joy!



Why start your week with a VITALity Call of Joy?

- Uplifting conversations
- Social interaction
- Easily connect from home
- Free program

▶ This Life to the Fullest Member benefit includes:

- Meaningful phone conversations
- Compassionate listening
- Full confidentiality

▶ To sign up for **Calls of Joy**, go to:

- <https://vitality.camdendiocese.org/calls-of-joy-program/>
- Scan QR code to the right
- Or call 856-583-6123



Not a Life to the Fullest Member? Join for free at: www.vitality.camdendiocese.org

VITALity Catholic Healthcare Services
631 Market Street, Camden, NJ 08102
www.vitality.camdendiocese.org



In This Holy Season

Lord, in this holy season of prayer and song and laughter, we praise you for the great wonders you have sent us: for shining star and angel's song, for infant's cry in lowly manger. We praise you for the Word made flesh in a little Child. We behold his glory, and are bathed in its radiance.

Be with us as we sing the ironies of Christmas, the incomprehensible comprehended, the poetry made hard fact, the helpless Babe who cracks the world asunder. We kneel before you shepherds, innkeepers, wise men. Help us to rise bigger than we are. Amen.

- Author Unknown



Can you Solve these Holiday Riddles?

I can travel all around the world just like Santa Claus without ever leaving my corner. What am I?

What do you call a snowman with a six-pack?

Which is heavier? A pound of candy canes or a pound of coal?

December and January both have 31 days. How many months have 28?

Why does Santa bring an extra pair of pants when he golfs?

Answer key below.

Calendar of Events

December 6 @ 6:30 p.m. - [Mark Forrest Advent celebration St Clare of Assisi Parish](#)

December 8 @ 3 p.m. - [Light of the World Christmas Concert at Mother of Mercy Parish 12.08.24](#)

December 8 @ 4 p.m. - [Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish Shrine Concert](#)

December 9 @ 12:05 p.m. - [Bishop Sullivan & Coadjutor Bishop Williams celebrate Immaculate Conception Mass at Cathedral](#)

December 14 & 15 - [All Saints Parish Nativity Display](#)

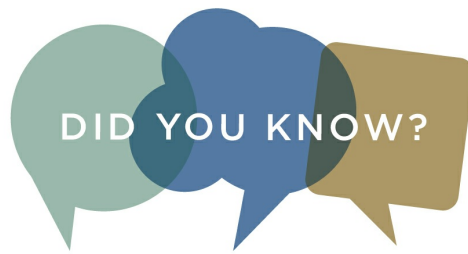
December 14 @ 6 p.m. - [Advent Concert Divine Mercy Parish Spanish Advent Concert Divine Mercy Parish 12.14.24 flyer](#)

December 15 @ 1:30 p.m. - [Lessons and Carols - St. Bridget University Parish](#)

December 22 @ 11 a.m. - [Ministry of Deaf & Persons with Disabilities Mass & Christmas Social -St. John's Church, Collingswood](#)

December 22 @ 3 p.m. - [Lessons and Carols - Holy Trinity Parish](#)

Please refer to the Diocese of Camden website for event details.
www.camendiocese.org



Life to the Fullest Member Discounts

We thank the business partners below for offering a discount to our members. Present your membership card for special discounts and services.

- **South Jersey Catholic Cemeteries** -Receive 5% discount off preplanning costs. Contact: Debra Moore - 856-583-2829
- **Hearing Hut** - Receive 20-50% off standard discount or up to 50% off network discounts. Contact: Steve Mulranian - 856-468-1966
- **Karr Barth Associates** - Receive complimentary comprehensive financial analysis. Contact: John Napolitano - 856-685-6372 or John.Napolitano@equitable.com
- **Nicholas "Nick" Nowak, eXp Realty** - Save 20% on real estate fees when buying or selling. Contact: Nick Nowak - (cell) 856-430-0240, (office) 866-201-6210 x1339 or Nick@NickNowakTeam.com.

Membership is free to all seniors age 65 and over living in the South Jersey area. Join the many seniors already enrolled in our [Life to the Fullest Membership Program](#).

Contact Christine Willard, Manager, Parish-based Senior Programs at 856-583-6121 or christine.willard@camdendiocese.org to request information.

[Enroll Online Here](#)

Brain Game Answer Key

1. Stamp
2. An abdominal snowman
3. They're exactly the same. A pound is a pound.
4. All of them
5. In case he gets a hole in one

[VITALity Catholic Healthcare Services](#)

1-888-268-4825

[Send Us A Message](#)

Stay in Touch!

