Caring for Caregivers
“You will have heard from Léonie’s aunt in LeMans that my poor child has left the school. As you can imagine this has vexed me terribly; more than that, the pain it has caused me is with me constantly. My sister was the only person whom I had hoped could reform the child, and I was sure that they would keep her; but in spite of all their good will it was impossible....

I doubt anything except a miracle can change her nature.

I know I do not deserve a miracle, yet I am still hoping against hope. The more difficult she becomes the more I become convinced that the good Lord will not leave her like this. I will pray so hard that I know He will relent. When she was only eighteen months old, Léonie was cured of an illness that should have killed her; why did God save her if he did not intend to be merciful to her?”

St. Zélie Martin
The Face of Caregiving

In 2017, there were a reported 65 million family caregivers in the U.S.
November is Caregiver Awareness Month
This is a good time to offer particular prayers and perks!

• Particular Intentions and Blessings
• Manicures/pedicures
• Housecleaning
• Meals
• Gift Cards
Caring for Caregivers: Most Helpful

• Offering to do something specific.

• Offer Holy Hours, spiritual bouquets, send handwritten notes of encouragement, and/or care packages.

• Continue to invite them to Baptisms/parties/holidays.

• Above all else, be a friend who's willing to sit and listen without judgment or offering unsolicited advice.
Caring for Caregivers

Most Helpful

• "checking in" on a regular basis from either the priest or (for example) someone who volunteers for a grief or bereavement ministry would be helpful.

• Having on hand particular resources, such as books, that pertain to different aspects of caregiving.

• On a parish website, including links to articles about self-care, inspirational books, or organizations/non-profits that might assist a caregiver with something specific (e.g., Alzheimer's resources).
Caring for Caregivers

Least Helpful

- Assumptions: that everything is going well, or that he or she is too busy, that he or she is taking care of him or herself, etc.

- “The look”, or related gestures, words.

- Offering cliched responses (like "everything happens for a reason" or "God gives special children to special parents like you").

- Isolating and ignoring.
Caring for Caregivers: Dreaming Big!

• Mother’s Helpers
  • Opportunity for young adults, or youth in Confirmation class.
  • House cleaning, cooking, babysitting.

• Particular opportunity for the parish office, or parishioners who own businesses...
  • Volunteer or paid opportunities for your parishioners who have disabilities.
Caring for Caregivers: Resources
Sabbath: Self-Care, Support and Balance

• A work/life balance is the enemy of burn-out and negativity.

• Opportunities to interact with peers offer support and encouragement, ideas, networking- and fights isolation.

• Many caregivers neglect self-care. They need to be encouraged to do the things they need to do to take care of themselves spiritually, physically, mentally, emotionally.
Resources for Caregivers:
Respite Care training

http://restprogram.org/about-rest/rest-online-education/
Resources for Caregivers:
Personal courses for Caregivers

• “The Heart of the Caregiver” (Mary Tutterow)
  • (online or book version- 10 Lessons)
  • https://marys-school-a263.thinkific.com/courses/the-heart-of-the-caregiver
Resources for Caregivers:
Support Groups:

http://nourishforcaregivers.com/
“Nourishment for Caregivers Community: Soul2Soul”
Books and other resources for Caregivers...

Special Children, Blessed Fathers
Encouragement for fathers of children with special needs
by RANDY HAIN
Foreword by
Archbishop Charles J. Chaput, O.F.M. Cap.

NAVIGATING DEEP WATERS
Meditations for Caregivers
Jeannie Ewing & Eileen Beathal

RAISING a CHILD with AUTISM
How to Cultivate Strength and Encouragement as a Parent
TIMOTHY FOUNTAIN
Pamphlets

(Order At: https://caregiveraction.org/ )
Blogs and Websites:

• [http://marytutterow.com/](http://marytutterow.com/)

• [https://caregivingstinks.com/](https://caregivingstinks.com/)

• [https://jeannieewing.com/blog/](https://jeannieewing.com/blog/)

• [https://caregiveraction.org/](https://caregiveraction.org/)

• [https://www.catholiccharitiesusa.org/find-help/](https://www.catholiccharitiesusa.org/find-help/)