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NEWS MINISTRY GO**

Senior Visitation Field Guide

FOR INDIVIDUALS, FAMILIES & SMALL GROUPS

**We EXIST to bring the HOPE and ENCOURAGEMENT
of God to the sick, aged and infirm.**

www.goodnewsministry.net

Individual, Family and Small Group Field Guide

If you are reviewing this page you are at least curious about senior ministry in one way or another, whether it is to be involved in a ministry or find some help for a loved one. May I commend you for caring enough to search out information.

It is easier than you may imagine to make a difference in someone's life. A caring touch, a phone call, a card or a letter, or an investment of your time visiting someone; the opportunities for involvement are wide open. One simple way to get your mind opened to the prospects may be to paint you a short scenario . . .

This is just how simple it can work.

A Cookie For Clark

Lets say you decide to bite the bullet one day and stretch-out of your comfort zone, just to see what God may be leading you to do. You look up in your area phone book, or on the Internet, and you find a local care center, a nursing home or assisted living home. You call up and ask to speak with the Activity Director. You explain to them your possible interest in visiting someone who might need a friend. You ask them if there is anyone you can call on to encourage. They may ask a few questions, but probably nothing too pressing. They tell you about one resident, old Clark, who never has any visitors; *"Maybe he's a possibility"* they say. You discuss a promising time to come visit.

When you arrive the Activity Director introduces you to Clark. He may or may not be very talkative since he is not very trusting these days. But you sit a begin talking with him, in the middle of your conversation you interject a simple question, You say, *"My wife makes great chocolate cookies. Do you like chocolate chip cookies?"* He says, *"No, not particularly."*

"What kind of cookies do you like?"

"Oh, I guess oatmeal raisin."

You may change the subject and go in another direction but you log that little tid bit away in your memory bank. After the first conversation you leave Clark all alone again.

That next week you stop by a cookie shop or you may even bake a few cookies yourself and you wrap up a couple of oatmeal raisin cookies. You then stop by the nursing home on your way home from work and you drop by Clark's room. You knock on the door and say, *"Hey Clark, its me _____. I was just on my way home and I thought I'd drop you off a couple of cookies. I had some for lunch and I thought about you."*

Now Clark is a little shocked but appreciative. You hand him the cookies and before he knows what hit him you say a quick prayer . . . *"Dear Father, Bless my new friend, Clark, and I hope he enjoys these cookies. Bless him Lord. In Jesus name. Amen. See ya later Clark, I have to hurry home."*

For you that cookie thing was pretty simple, no big deal, but for Clark it was major!!! You let him know he is cared about and thought about. Someone knows he's alive. It will probably be the highlight of his week, maybe even his month. Simple huh?

That is how easy it can be, but you must remember a visitation ministry, should you be interested, is a '*give to give*' ministry, not a '*give to get*'. Oh, you will get plenty but your motivation has always got to be to give, not expecting anything for all your effort. We have been visiting people in nursing homes and hospitals for almost 20 years now and we have received many times over what we have given. Yet we have come to truly understand it is about **giving**, not getting.

You may, personally, individually, start with just a once a month visit, just to stop by and say, "*hello*". Or you may decide to make it a weekly visit, dropping by with a few cookies or a bunch of flowers, perhaps with a candy cane at Christmas, or a spring bouquet on Mother's Day. Some people have enlisted their friendly, lovable, family pet and signed up for canine training. (Locally, in our area, there is an organization called Canine Companion that offers opportunity and training). You may decide to make it an annual Christmas Day tradition (see our Christmas Day Tradition section on www.goodnewsministry.net) with your whole family and a group of friends. You could make it a small group once a month affair or even start to teach a Bible Study or an art class or a cooking class. Check with the nursing homes Activity Dept. to find out what they may need. But in event, seek God's direction for the best use of your gifts and time.

*"Pure religion which is pleasing to God
is to visit the orphans and the widows, and keep oneself from being defiled
by the world."*

James 1:27

Service that pleases our Father, and it teaches us how to be more Christ like. It is a win win scenario.

We at Good News Ministry have seen life changes occur when brothers and sisters step up to the plate with love and simply start serving others.

When people are faced with the challenging life changes of losing their health, their spouse, or their mobility, when the familiarity of surroundings loss of home and they are cut off from children or friends a crisis of belief hits them like a hurricane. People who have been in church for years, knowing a lot about Jesus find they truly don't know Him personally. They need to be reassured, encouraged and brought into a loving relationship with Jesus Christ.

Easy Steps to Take:

- #1. Pray and see if God is moving your heart to serve in Senior Visitation Ministry. Ask Him in what capacity. However, you may have to step out in faith first and let Him lead you.
- #2. Look up in your phone book, or on the internet, to find a senior care facility in your area
- #3. Call and ask to speak with the Activity Director to find out what needs they may have regarding their residents.
- #4. Set up a time to come by the facility and simply walk the halls, praying as you go.
- #5. Pray again about your area of involvement. It could be as simple as, writing notes, cards or letters of encouragement to people who don't receive visitors, cards or letters. Perhaps its one on one visits, special events days with your family, like at Christmas, Mother's Day, or Father's day. You may be a good teacher and you could volunteer to teach a class, a Bible Study or a simply volunteer to a reading time or a movie time.

The possibilities are endless.

Just a thought:

(Most facilities have a *resident's birthday party* each month.

This would be a wonderful opportunity to minister in Jesus name, by supplying the Birthday cake, decorations and perhaps even special gifts for the residents.)

Don't be afraid to try.

"When the crisis come and courage is required, God expects His people to have such confidence in Him that they will be the reliable dependable ones."

Oswald Chambers

For more ideas, review our extensive Senior Visitation Ministry section on our web page.
Thanks for caring!

"All things are possible through Christ who strengthens us."

Yours in Christ service,



Sam and Colleen Parsons