



SENIOR CHATTER

A PUBLICATION OF THE OFFICE OF AGING
ARCHDIOCESE OF GALVESTON-HOUSTON

Winter, 2024,
Volume 47 Issue 4

A Condensed History Commemorating the **50th** Anniversary of The Office of Aging Ministry (1974-2024)

1974

SISTER TERESITA PARTIN, CV.I AND SISTER DOROTHY SACHNIK, CV.I. BEGIN THE OFFICE OF AGING MINISTRY, A DIOCESAN SERVICE FUND OFFICE. SISTER PARTIN SERVES AS THE FIRST DIRECTOR. THEIR VISION ADAPTS UP-TO-DATE RESEARCH AND PRACTICES ON AGING TO THE PASTORAL AND PERSONAL NEEDS OF OLDER ADULTS. CONSULTATIONS AND WORKSHOPS HELP PARISH LEADERS MAXIMIZE THEIR EFFORTS TO MINISTEREFFECTIVELY TO THE NEEDS OF THE AGING.

1976

THE SENIOR SENATE STRUCTURE IS FORMED TO PROVIDE AN ADVISORY BRIDGE BETWEEN PARISH SENIOR GROUPS AND THE OFFICE. 21 ACTIVE SENIOR PARISH GROUPS ARE IDENTIFIED. THE OFFICE PROVIDES ADULT ENRICHMENT CLASSES, A SPIRITUAL DAY OF REFLECTION, AND SEVERAL SOCIAL CELEBRATIONS. RECOGNITION DAYS IS INITIATED AS AN ANNUAL EVENT TO HONOR OUTSTANDING SERVICE EFFORTS FROM PARISH SENIORS.

1995

SISTER PARTIN RETIRES AND SISTER SACHNIK BECOMES THE DIRECTOR. SHE CONTINUES THE MANY ACTIVITIES OF THE OFFICE'S MINISTRY.

2001

SISTER SACHNIK RETIRES; KATHERINE BINGHAM IS HIRED AS THE DIRECTOR. THE OFFICE INCREASES FOCUS ON DEVELOPING PARTNERSHIPS WITH COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS SERVING SENIORS. THE OFFICE PROVIDES LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT AND SUPPORT IN AGING MINISTRY TO PARISHES AND PASTORS.

2017

THE OFFICE OF AGING IDENTIFIES 104 ARCHDIOCESAN PARISH SENIOR GROUPS. THE OFFICE OFFERS REGIONAL SEMINARS TO ADDRESS CRITICAL AREAS OF AGING: CAREGIVING, AGING IN PLACE, AND END OF-LIFE PLANNING. THE OFFICE OF AGING WEBPAGE (WWW.ARCHGH.ORG/AGING) ADDS WRITTEN, AUDIO, AND VIDEO RESOURCES WHICH ADDRESS THESE AREAS OF AGING.

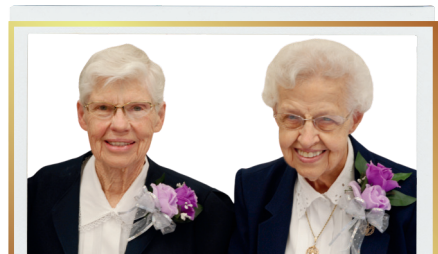
2021

KATHERINE BINGHAM RETIRES.

2023

PASTORAL MINISTRY FORMATION FOR PARISH LEADERS IS OFFERED AT ST. MARY'S SEMINARY. THE OFFICE OF AGING RESUMES ITS ANNUAL IN-PERSON DAY OF PRAYER AND THREE SENIOR SENATE RECOGNITION DAYS.

THE OFFICE OF AGING HOSTS AN ARCHDIOCESAN CATHOLIC CONFERENCE ON AGING FOR PARISH LEADERS AND OLDER ADULTS WITH TRACKS IN ENGLISH AND SPANISH.



SR. DOROTHY SACHNIK, CVI

SR. TERESITA PARTIN, CVI

1978

THE OFFICE OF AGING EXPANDS TO PROVIDE OUTREACH SERVICES. SERVICES ENTAIL A FRIENDLY VISITOR PROGRAM TO PROVIDE AGING ADULTS WITH A VARIETY OF PASTORAL AND PRACTICAL IN-HOME SERVICES. THE OUTREACH PROGRAM TRANSFERS IN THE 1980S TO CATHOLIC CHARITIES' SERVICES TO THE ALONE AND FRAIL ELDERLY.

1986

THE THIRD AGE CENTER IS ESTABLISHED USING SENIOR VOLUNTEERS TO TEACH A VARIETY OF CLASSES TO OTHER SENIORS. THE OFFICE OF AGING CONTINUES TO PROVIDE OUTREACH SERVICES TO NEW PARISH SENIOR GROUPS,

THE SENIOR SENATE STRUCTURE EXPANDS TO INCLUDE THE CENTRAL, SOUTHWEST, AND NORTHERN AREAS OF THE ARCHDIOCESE. EACH SENATE CONSISTS OF REPRESENTATIVES FROM PARISH SENIOR CLUBS WHO MEET MONTHLY OR QUARTERLY. THEY CONVENE TO PRAY, EXCHANGE CLUB ACTIVITIES, ADVOCATE FOR AGING SUPPORT RESOURCES, AND CELEBRATE SERVICE RECOGNITION, WEDDING ANNIVERSARIES, AND SPIRITUAL DAYS OF REFLECTION.

2020

THE OFFICE OF AGING HELPS SENIORS NAVIGATE THROUGH THE MONTHS OF COVID WHEN IN PERSON PARISH MEETINGS ARE VIRTUALLY NON-EXISTENT. THE OFFICE HOSTS ZOOM MEETINGS WITH COMMUNITY EDUCATORS OR DAYS OF PRAYER, MAINTAINS PHONE OUTREACH TO SENIOR CLUB LEADERS, UPDATES WEBPAGE RESOURCES, AND SENDS WEEKLY PARISH CLUB EMAIL MEMOS WITH COMMUNITY AND SPIRITUAL RESOURCES.

2022

MARK CIESIELSKI, ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR FOR SIX YEARS, IS NAMED DIRECTOR. MANY PARISH SENIOR GROUPS AND SENIOR SENATES RESUME IN PERSON MEETINGS AND ACTIVITIES.

TO REGISTER,
SCAN QR CODE OR VISIT:

ARCHGH.SWOOGO.COM/AGING



SENIOR SENATES

ARCHDIOCESE OF GALVESTON-HOUSTON

CENTRAL SENIOR SENATE-2023

PRESIDENT - BARBARA MURRAY

MEETING: 1ST MONDAY OF EACH MONTH

ST. DOMINIC AUDITORIUM - 10 A.M.

2403 HOLCOMBE BLVD. - HOUSTON, TX 77021

NORTHERN SENIOR SENATE-2023

PRESIDENT - MARY JO BUTLER

MEETING: 2ND MONDAY OF EACH MONTH

ST. MATTHEW THE EVANGELIST CHURCH - 10 A.M.

9915 HOLLISTER STREET, HOUSTON, TX. 77040

SOUTHWEST SENIOR SENATE-2023

PRESIDENT - JOHN JOHNSON

MEETING: QUARTERLY MEETINGS-10 A.M.

ST. CYRIL OF ALEXANDRIA CHURCH

10503 WESTHEIMER RD. - HOUSTON, TX 77042

OFFICE OF AGING



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2403 Holcombe Boulevard

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Office Hours (M-F): 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

DAY OF PRAYER

MARCH 5, 2024

We Are One

CALLING ALL SENATES



LOCATION: ST. HELEN CATHOLIC CHURCH
2209 OLD ALVIN RD, PEARLAND, TX 77581

OVER THE YEARS

WHERE WE ARE TODAY

2024 "We Are One"

2023 "Refreshed and Renewed to Serve"

2022 "Love in the Midst of the Storm"

2021 "Hope in the Midst of the Storm"

2020 "Faith in the Midst of the Storm"

DURING COVID



TRYING TO STAY SAFE AND HEALTHY
AND BE SPIRITUALLY CONNECTED

BEFORE COVID

2019 "Gaudete et Exsultate - Rejoice and be Glad."

2018 "*For I know well the Plans I have in Mind for You,*" says the Lord.

2017 "Pray without Ceasing"

OUR SPIRITUAL LIGHT
WERE SHINING BRIGHT



AS WE PRAY AND JOIN TOGETHER

Over the years the Lord has brought us together to praise Him, to be spiritually in communion with Him, ourselves and each other. And to give Him thanks for all he has done for us and our ministries.

We Are One

ST. LAURENCE PARISH - J.O.Y. CLUB (JUST OLDER YOUTH)

It has been an active fall for the Joy Club seniors. We opened the year with a talk from our new Director of Faith Formation, Dr. Christine Hernandez, who spoke on Pope Francis's encyclicals on the value of seniors in the Church. We assisted our Social Concerns Department by helping bag beans and rice for the needy as a service project. We had a game day complete with champions and prizes. Our most exciting event was attending the Southwest Senior Senate Recognition, where we honored members Bill and Lesley Smith. In addition, our seniors enjoyed a Christmas gathering with a potluck dinner of various sides and desserts, along with a provided ham and turkey as a nice treat. Everyone brought a gift to exchange for the annual White Elephant game. Lots of steals and squeals, but everyone went home happy. Was fun to toss name tags in a drawing to win the table centerpieces. We end the year full of gratitude for all the blessings we have received, excitement for "floating" into the year with root beer floats, and a year full of games, activities, and travels.

Leslye Henderson

PRINCE OF PEACE - KEENAGERS

Winter fun started in October with a Halloween contest. Keenagers costume entries included pumpkins, flappers, Darth Vader, pirate, cat, and vintage prison attire. Halloween cat centerpieces made by Rose and Carlis Miller prizes were awarded for best costumes. The group also enjoyed door prizes donated by our speaker, Jackie Bachmeier from Evolution Fitness.

Keenagers stayed active in November and December. Officer elections were held in November at our traditional Thanksgiving luncheon served by the Knights of Columbus. We elected a new Treasurer, Dennis Jasek. Our thanks to Jean Cone and Rose Miller for their wonderful service to the group as Treasurer and Secretary.

Our Tuesday movie fun continued with our members enjoying many new releases in November and December.

Service projects in December including the parish adopt a family (AAF) program and annual gift collection for retired priests and sisters. The Keenagers also kept their hands busy helping to stuff stockings for the parish AAF program. We also enjoyed time together at the Christmas Spectacular musical at Champion Forest Baptist church with a group dinner after.

Members Joe Cotrone and Rose and Carlis Miller were recognized at the Northern Senior Senate recognition luncheon for their outstanding contributions to our group. Keenagers "wrapped" up December with a Christmas lunch from Rudy's BBQ.

Have a Blessed Day!

Gloria Sequeira

HOLY FAMILY CHURCH - GOLDEN FRIENDSHIP GROUP

Our October meeting mainly focused on choosing someone to receive the Person of the Year award. We chose John and Gwen Johnson as the most deserving. They attended St Cyril on Nov 4 to receive that award. Our November meeting was canceled due to water problems; water was shut off for plumbers to do their jobs. Members came by to pick up their catered Thanksgiving meal and took them home. Our December meeting was nice, festive tablecloths with candles on the tables. John provided tamales, and members provided sides and desserts. Also, those who participated enjoyed a white elephant. Merry Christmas to all.



Clara Lyons

ST. CYRIL OF ALEXANDRIA - SAVVY SENIORS

Savvy Seniors has enjoyed a wonderful year in 2023.

In September, one of our members, Stanley Sramek, presented his trip to the UK and the pictures he had taken.

In October, we had Liz McNeel give a presentation on Decluttering and Downsizing.

In November, we celebrated Thanksgiving with a Thanksgiving potluck.

We attended our Recognition Banquet 2023, our honorees was Anthony and Mary Beth Pigneri. It was so nice to see all who attended. We celebrated Christmas with a Pot Lunch.

Gayle Naar

ST MAXMINLAN KOLBE - KOLBE SENIORS

We were off on October 19 for a bus trip to the BlueBonnet Opry in Brenham. It was a night of polka music with Mark Halata, Tim, Alicia Kulhanek, and the amazing band. So much fun for only \$8.00

Our October 20, 2023, meeting was a games day with one of our favorite games: Right Left Senter. As a service project to help our Food Pantry, we collected donations to help fill the shelves. Our lunch was another great meal from Luby's.

In November, thirteen members of Kolbe Seniors attended the Northern Senior Senate Mass to honor our deceased members. Saint Monica Church hosted the Mass. November 17 was our monthly meeting and also the first showing of a video to commemorate the 40th Anniversary of our church. This amazing history was created by a very talented member of our Senior Group, Noemi Lopez, and the stars were all founding members of our church and senior group. Our church will feature this on our web page.

December 3, we are off on another bus trip to see the Magical Winter Lights at Katy Mills Mall. A highlight was the beautiful castle of lights. We also attended the Northern Senior Senate Christmas Party on December 5 where our nominee for recognition was our amazing Noemi Lopez who is also the force behind our Court Directory. Our Christmas meeting on December 15 featured Gary House with Acoustic Music from the '60s and '70s. Merry Christmas to all.

Mary Ann Harvey

CHRIST THE GOOD SHEPHERD 55+

Our October Bake Sale kept us extremely busy this month. Prep day included the usual cutting, packaging, etc.; however, this year, an added bonus - labeling each individual item. It truly "Took a village" to pull this off! Kudos to all who helped, especially to our chair, Cathy Baratti, and Andrew Singer. It was an awesome success.

The bus trip for Oct. was to Royalty Pecan Farms - just in time for the holiday baking. A side stop was to the Texas Bucket List Store in College Station. An adventure for sure.

Getting ready for Thanksgiving, our general meeting included a Thanksgiving potluck as an early celebration. Celebrating community at its best - being together. We did manage a bus trip this month to the Printing Museum and to Christ Cathedral. An enjoyable lunch followed at Treebeards!

As always, December is a busy time. The Northern Senior Senate held its Christmas Party/Recognition Day. From our parish, our President - Andrew Singer, was honored for his contribution to our 55+ community and to the parish.

This past week, we celebrated our Advent Party at Shirley Acres. Micheal Gee provided beautiful music on the keyboard. Our chosen charity this year was - Special Angels of The Woodlands - which provides a fun-filled Day Activity Center with individualized skills and socialization services for adults with disabilities. We were able to support them with \$1900. We are truly Blessed.

Our last trip of 2023 was to Pecan Grove to see the Christmas Lights. What better way to enjoy the holidays. From our parish to yours -

Blessings to All! Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Helen Moorman

SENIOR FRIENDS OF ST IGNATIUS OF LOYOLA

At our meeting in September, we had our County Commissioner, Tom Ramsey, speak on the repairs of streets and drainage to prevent flooding. Commissioner Ramsey is a dynamic speaker and we enjoy his visits. We also got to cheer on the Astros against the Orioles when we took a day trip to the game. We had an incredible experience thanks to Brandon Caporale from the Astros, who escorted us from our drop off, through the stadium and ran to our bus to say goodbye. Ending the night with an Astros' win was the cherry on top! September was a busy month, we also visited the King Tut exhibit at the Houston Museum of Natural Science. A truly remarkable display followed by lunch at a Senior Friends favorite, Cleburne Cafeteria.

In October, Marcia Burt from the Conservatory educated us about the three living styles of Seniors, starting with independent, assisted, and memory care. Marcia provided a delicious lunch. Our day trip in October was to the Majek Winery in Schulenberg. We had a scenic drive out to the country topped off with beautiful tasting wine and lunch.

November our speaker was Elder Law Attorney Ruth Ann Touns, who spoke about Elder Care laws. It was a very interesting talk, and Seniors everywhere would benefit from learning more about it. Our day trip went well into the night as we took a ride to see the Christmas Lights in Pecan Grove. We had an unexpected side trip to the Gallery Furniture in Katy where a Christmas Wonderland was on display. There was a majestic nativity scene at the end that left us in awe.

Finally December brought our annual Christmas Party and sing-along. The "Banjo Band" entertained us and it definitely brought out the Christmas Spirit! We feasted on ham, side dishes and plenty of desserts. Our day trip this month was to see "Christmas Belles" at the Creighton Theatre in Conroe. This musical was very funny and is recommended for all to see.

Pray for all our Seniors, Service Members of the Military and Peace in Ukraine and Israel.
Merry Christmas & Happy New Year!

Sarah Doyle, Senior Friends of St. Ignatius of Loyola

ST MICHAEL SOCIABLE SENIORS

Our seniors have been adding new activities, expanding our opportunities to be "social". In October, we had our first wine-tasting event at a local restaurant. It was a big success. This was in addition to our regular monthly trip. The bus took a load of our members to the Renaissance Festival for the first time.

In November, we went on a very interesting close-by trip to the Katy Heritage Museum, MKT train museum, and next door to the VFW museum. All included wonderful docents with lots of information for our questions. At our regular meeting, one of our parishioners who works in the election office spoke to us just before the election.

December began getting us all in the holiday spirit with a great catered Christmas luncheon. Then, singing Carols accompanied by our own Helen Horn on piano. The next Sunday, a full bus load went to Conroe's Owens Theater for a great performance of "Holiday Inn".

We are all looking forward to a Merry Christmas and a New Year of fun and interesting activities.

Margaret Fuller, treasurer

SOUTHWEST SENIOR SENATE

We had a great time in our last two meetings this year! In October, it was wonderful to hear what each member shared about "legacy items" they want to pass on to the younger generation! In November, we had our annual Recognition event whereby outstanding seniors from each of our seven participating parishes (Holy Family in Missouri City, St. Bartholomew, St. Catherine of Sienna, St. Cyril of Alexandria, St. Justin Martyr, St. Laurence, and St. Michael the Archangel) were recognized for their outstanding service to their parish, fellow seniors, and their community. We especially recognized Gayle Naar for her many faithful years as president of the SW Senior Senate and Mark Ciesielski, retiring director of the Office of Aging, for many years of his wisdom imparted to our Senate. We welcome Gina Pasket, our new Associate Director, and enjoy her enormous help! Together, we look forward to 2024!

-John Johnson and Gwen Reinke

HEALTHY HABITS FOR THE YEAR 2024!

*Anyone who is joined to Christ is a new being; the old is gone, the new has come
(2 Corinthians 5:17)*

It's common to start a new year with new resolutions. We often forget about them or become discouraged when we don't see immediate positive results. Consider trying a more realistic planning approach which should gradually produce results. Here are some suggestions:

- 1. Eating:** Instead of counting calories or going on a restricted diet, eat more slowly, being mindful of the taste of the food. This simple action can transform your relationship with food and help you tune in to your body's signals when your body feels satisfied.
 - 2. Being active** and enjoying what you do. Whether hiking, walking, dancing, singing while cooking, or any other activity you love.
 - 3. Sleeping** is crucial for physical and mental well-being. For persons 65+ years old, 7-8 hours is recommended. Avoid day naps when possible to help maximize a sound night's sleep.
 - 4. Reducing stress** can be achieved through simple activities such as meditating, praying, walking, and volunteering.
 - 5. Hydration:** Water is one of the best ways to stay hydrated and maintain good health. For older adults, the recommendation is to consume at least 57.5 fluid ounces. Try soups or other healthy fruit beverages.
- **Small steps can make a difference.** God's mercy is infinite, and every new day is a fresh start. Let us ask the Holy Spirit to grant us strength and wisdom in this new year of 2024.
 - **For assistance with community educators on aging** issues, please contact Olga Najar, associate director, via email at onajar@archgh.org or by phone at 713-391-2615.

I WISH YOU AND YOUR FAMILY A HAPPY AND BLESSED NEW YEAR 2024!

Article by Olga Najar



¡HÁBITOS SALUDABLES PARA EL AÑO 2024!

*Todo aquel que se une a Cristo es un ser nuevo; lo viejo se fue, lo nuevo ha llegado
(2 Corintios 5:17)*

Es común comenzar un nuevo año con nuevos propósitos. A menudo nos olvidamos pronto de ellos o nos desanimamos cuando no vemos resultados positivos inmediatos. Considere la posibilidad de probar un enfoque de planificación más realista que debería producir resultados gradualmente. Aquí hay algunas sugerencias:

- 1. Comer:** en lugar de contar calorías o seguir una dieta restringida, come más lentamente y presta atención al sabor de la comida. Esta simple acción puede transformar su relación con la comida y ayudarlo a sintonizar las señales de su cuerpo cuando se siente satisfecho.
 - 2. Estar activo** y disfrutar de lo que haces. Ya sea hacer senderismo, caminar, bailar, cantar mientras cocinas o cualquier otra actividad que te guste.
 - 3. Dormir** es crucial para el bienestar físico y mental. Para personas mayores de 65 años, se recomiendan entre 7 y 8 horas. Evite las siestas diurnas cuando sea posible para ayudar a maximizar un sueño reparador por la noche.
 - 4. Reducir el estrés** mediante actividades sencillas como meditar, orar, caminar y ofrecerse como voluntario.
 - 5. Hidratación:** El agua es una de las mejores formas de mantenerse hidratado y mantener una buena salud. Para los adultos mayores, la recomendación es consumir al menos 57,5 onzas líquidas. La mayoría de las botellas de agua contienen 16,9 onzas (es decir, 3,5 botellas al día). Pruebe sopas u otras bebidas de frutas saludables.
- **Pequeños pasos pueden marcar la diferencia.** La misericordia de Dios es infinita y cada nuevo día es un nuevo comienzo. Pidamos al Espíritu Santo que nos conceda fuerza y sabiduría en este nuevo año 2024.
 - **Para obtener ayuda con educadores comunitarios** sobre cuestiones de envejecimiento, comuníquese con Olga Najar, directora asociada, por correo electrónico a onajar@archgh.org o por teléfono al 713-391-2615.

¡DESEÁNDOLES UN FELIZ Y BENDECIDO AÑO 2024!

Escrito por Olga Najar