



WELCOME!

"When I stand before God at the end of my life, I would hope that I would have not a single bit of talent left and could say, 'I used everything you gave me.'" – Erma Bombeck

We're excited to hear of your interest in the Shawl Ministry of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton. We are always looking for new members! The concept and development for a Shawl Ministry at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, was inspired through Renew 2003 and established at Seton in February 2004. This is a worldwide ecumenical ministry developed by Janet Bristow and Victoria Galo in 1998 as an outgrowth of the Women's Leadership Institute at Hartford Seminary in Hartford, Connecticut.

The Seton Shawl Ministry encourages those who knit or crochet to work with intention and to infuse their work with blessings and prayers for the recipient. The shawls are given for various reasons...grief...illness...transition or to mark happy occasions...births, baptisms, graduations, etc. There are times when there are no words for a situation and these shawls help wrap an individual in love and prayers.

How can I get involved...There are many ways to be involved, such as knitting or crocheting, tying on and knotting fringe, sewing on labels, composing prayers for use with our shawls, financial contributions, donating yarn, praying, etc.

The pattern...This is a specific pattern and is worked in a modified three-stitch seed stitch for knitters; crocheters work in multiples of three as well. This pattern of three's is powerfully symbolic for representing the Trinity as well as planting, love, hope, peace, comfort and healing. It is said that the number three is used 523 times in scripture!

As for the type of yarn...We try to stick with the yarns listed in the packet...some yarns vary in pliability, which will affect your outcome, as will your knitting tension. We suggest that you use yarn that is soft, fairly thick, lightweight, (no wool or wool blends...Texas temperatures!) and has some texture to it. When you knit with this type of yarn, on size "13" needles, or crochet with a size "N" hook, the shawl has an airy, open look. The reason that we look for yarn with texture is because thinner, smoother yarns create shawls with gaping holes when knit with these size needles or hooks. Shawls knit with thicker, textured yarn will be warm but not heavy, comfortable but not overbearing. We are recommending Lion's Brand **HOMESPUN**.

As for the colors...We like to suggest that you let the Spirit guide you in your selection--then let our imagination soar with the Spirit! The only color limitation is on the baby shawls...we are a bit more specific on the color of these due to the possibility of use for Baptisms in the future. We are asking that the color white be used to represent purity and innocence. This will also allow them to be used in a more universal way. We are recommending the suggested yarns mentioned earlier or you'll find the info in the packet.

Thoughts on this ministry...This is a ministry that allows you to knit or crochet according to your own schedule, and/or come and join us each month as we gather to pray, knit, share, laugh and reflect with each other. The organized monthly meetings will be from **6:30 to 8:30 pm on the second Tuesday of the month in the Seton Faith Formation Center, room 108**. Anyone needing help can get assistance during this meeting time. For those unable to attend these meetings, we try to keep you informed through emails, updating you on the shawls that have gone out and the responses received from the recipients. We do use our meeting time to gather the shawls once they are completed; sew on woven labels, identifying our Parish with our ministry logo; they are then taken to one of our Priests to receive a final blessing before they are sent on their way. Each February we celebrate our anniversary with a Blessing of the Hands prayer service, followed by a reception. We suggest that if you can only make one meeting...this is the ONE to experience. It is our way of thanking you for all the work that you do for this ministry of compassion.

We've been invited to share our shawls with the pastoral care offices of several area hospitals such as, **Texas Health Presbyterian Hospital of Plano as well as, Denton and UT Southwestern Medical Center**. Many of our shawls have traveled to bring healing to communities hit by natural disasters as well as other tragedies. We've assisted parish communities across the Metroplex and cities, states, and countries across the globe, in establishing their own shawl groups.

We've had the privilege of aligning ourselves with **Rachel's Vineyard** retreats in Dallas. These retreats provide a safe place to renew, rebuild and redeem hearts broken by abortion. We have been told over and over again by those who facilitate these retreats that the Seton Shawl Ministry is greatly appreciated. Our shawl group is considered active facilitators through the gift of a shawl to a wounded soul. Rachel's Vineyard often refers to our shawls as...Shawls of Mercy...Shawls of Comfort...Shawls of Grace. We've also translated some of our material into Spanish to aid in their Hispanic retreats. We have assisted and encouraged the **Ft. Worth side of Rachel's Vineyard** in establishing their own shawl network.

We provide shawls for the new **SANE (Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner) program in the Emergency Department at Texas Health Presbyterian Hospital of Plano**. Judy Common, RN, is the nurse manager of this program and

has a passion to see it develop and grow. Under her guidance, the **Serenity Suite** was built and decorated to be one of the most beautiful SANE centers in the Metroplex. This safe and healing environment is home to nurses specially trained to collect forensic evidence should a case go to trial. Judy tells us that our Seton shawls are a wonderful comfort to those going through such a difficult journey.

We provide shawls to the residents of **HERITAGE HOUSE of Plano**, on an as needed basis. It is a beautiful 100-year old historic home transformed into a unique assisted living facility.

Staying in touch...We try to keep you updated with our monthly email-newsletter as well as, through the St. Elizabeth Ann Seton website. To view some of the things that have been going on with the Shawl Ministry, log onto www.setonparish.org

Thousands of Seton shawls have been distributed within our parish community and beyond...encircling the globe since 2004. We think you will find this is a wonderful ministry to embrace and many blessings will return to you. We'd like to take this time to welcome you to the ever-expanding circle of shawl-makers! There are millions of knitters or individuals crocheting across the world in one of these ministries!

"What you leave behind is not what is engraved in stone monuments, but what is woven into the lives of others." --Pericles