

Ministry Highlight: Matthew 25:40 Helping Hands

My name is Linda Schneider. My husband, daughter, and I have been Saint Joseph parishioners for almost 30 years. I am the coordinator for the Matthew 25:40 Helping Hands Ministry.

Our ministry provides Saint Joseph parishioners with:

- Transportation to weekend Mass, medical appointments, and other essential errands
- Visits for those that are homebound
- Meals for those that are ill or that have recently been released from the hospital

This ministry exists because of the words of our Lord in Matthew 25:40:

“And the King will say to them in reply, ‘Amen...Amen...I say to you: whatsoever you did for these least sisters and brothers of mine, you did for Me!’”

The most encouraging aspect of this ministry for me is to see the faith and love of Christ in the hearts of the parishioners we are helping AND the volunteers working with our ministry. In spite of trials, tribulations, loss, and loneliness, I see strong and undeniable faith in our Saint Joseph parishioners. Happy faces, smiles, and gratitude in the midst of adversity. With each and every encounter, I see God’s light in these parishioners at times when faith can be challenged. And, with each and every encounter, I find my own faith undeniably renewed.

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One of our dedicated Matthew 25:40 Helping Hands Ministry volunteers says “I really appreciate getting to know the people I have helped by driving them to church, a doctor’s appointment, or just visiting with them. They have enriched my life! It is my belief that service to others is service to our Heavenly Father.”

It is heartwarming and powerful to see how the Matthew 25:40 Helping Hands Ministry is impacting the lives of our parishioners. Rose who has been a parishioner since 2013 says, “You have no idea what a wonderful experience Helping Hands has been for me. I love talking with the wonderful parishioners that help me, and I am eternally grateful for all they have done.”

Another parishioner feels that “aging plays tricks on you!” In the past, she was a caretaker, but now she is “a receiver of help from God through the caring, kind, compassionate, responsible volunteers that have come to the rescue.”

The Matthew 25:40 Helping Hands Ministry is a very easy program in which to become involved. All you need to do is provide your contact information. When a request comes in from one of our parishioners for a ride, a meal, or a visit, I will simply reach out to you via e-mail or phone. If you are available, then I will provide additional information and we will set up arrangements. If you are not available at that particular time, then we will catch you the next time around. It is as simple as that—no pressure.

Pre-pandemic, our loyal and kind Matthew 25:40 Helping Hands Ministry volunteers provided over 150 visits, rides, or meals to our parishioners on an annual basis. We are hoping to continue to grow this ministry moving forward.

If you take the words of Matthew 25:40 to heart and are interested in living out your faith through this ministry, we can use your help. **Please contact me at lschneider@stjoesmech.org or 717-580-7697.**

Lastly, PLEASE, if you have a family member or friend who is a parishioner or know of a parishioner that could benefit from any of our Matthew 25:40 Helping Hands Ministry’s services—meals, transportation, visits—PLEASE reach out so we can assist your loved ones.