Our Parish Times

2026 Senior Services Guide

The Rise of Longevity Clinics: Promise, Risk, and the Future of Aging

*An editorial was published in **Aging-US** in October titled "Longevity clinics: between promise and peril." In this article, Marco Demaria, Editor-in-Chief of **Aging-US**, from the European Research Institute for the Biology of Ageing (ERIBA), reviews the rapid rise of longevity clinics worldwide.*

Photo: Fountain Life

Longevity clinics have emerged globally in response to increasing demand for personalized, preventive healthcare. Located in countries such as the United States, Switzerland, and the United Arab Emirates, these centers offer advanced diagnostic services, including genomic testing,

Continued on page 5

Age-Friendly Community Needs Assessment

November marked 10 years since Montgomery County joined the Age-Friendly Communities Network sponsored by the World Health Organization and AARP. Since 2015, Montgomery County and its partners have inspired investments that enhance livability and quality of life.

To better understand their current and future needs, residents are invited to complete the **Age-Friendly Community Needs Assessment Survey**. Resident input is crucial for guiding positive changes to public spaces, policies, and programs.

For the online survey, visit: www.montgomerycountymd.gov/senior/

The survey takes approximately 20 minutes to complete, and the submission deadline is Sunday, December 14.

Hard copies of the survey are also available by calling 240-777-3000.

In addition to the Survey,

Continued on page 3

We promise to love and care for your family as we do our own

Kensington Senior Living is a partnership of bighearted leaders who made **"a promise to love and care for your family as they do their own."** With deep understanding of older adults and their families, they designed, developed and staffed beautiful residences that reflect decades of expertise and unwavering commitment to uphold their promise.

In every community, best-in-class professionals deliver more comprehensive care and support than what other senior living providers offer. Assisted living and memory care staff-to-resident ratios are excellent. Specialized levels of memory care address the challenges unique to each phase of loss. Couples are welcome and can reside together in the same suite, even if their care needs differ.

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MHP Adds Bethany House to Affordable Housing Portfolio Preserves 250 Senior Apartments in Rockville

Nonprofit developer Montgomery Housing Partnership (MHP) announced in August that it has acquired Bethany House apartment building, preserving 250 affordable homes for seniors near the Twinbrook Metro station in Rockville

Bethany House

Located at 199 Rollins Avenue, Bethany House is roughly a third of a mile west of the Twinbrook Metro station on the Red Line, connecting residents to medical services, retail, community centers, and regional destinations without needing a car. For seniors, that walkable, transit-oriented location translates to autonomy, lower transportation costs, and easier access to critical services.

The acquisition was a transfer of control of the property from its owner, Christian Church Facilities for the Aging Inc. The nonprofit's board – affiliated with the Disciples of Christ – amended its bylaws to make MHP the sole member. From there, MHP appointed a new board and senior management and engaged Habitat America LLC as the new property manager.

The Disciples of Christ founded Bethany Beach Delaware in 1901, envisioning a Christian meeting place analogous to the Chautauqua adult-education summer camp movement popular in the late 19th and early 20th century. The Disciples of Christ still operate the Bethany Beach Christian Church and the Christian Church Conference Center in Bethany Beach.

Bethany House is MHP's third property in Montgomery County. This year, MHP broke ground on The Chimes at North Bethesda, completed construction of The Residences at Forest Glen, and held a ribbon cutting for the Gardens of Gaithersburg.

OPT

Photo: Mission First Housing Group

1910 University Senior Housing

Construction Milestone for New 90-Unit Affordable Senior Housing Project in Wheaton

Although it won't welcome its first residents until the fall of 2026, a beam signing ceremony was held November 20 celebrating the "topping off" of **1910 University** senior housing, a 90-unit affordable housing development for older adults in Wheaton. A representative of Philadelphia-based developer Mission First said the project is estimated to be completed by next fall. The ceremony marked the placement of the final beam – or topping off – of the building project.

The 1910 University senior housing development will bring 90 new apartments specifically designed for older adults who need affordable options without losing access to the amenities and services of an established urban corridor. Located along University Boulevard, the site places residents within reach of transit routes, convenience retail, healthcare providers, and community gathering spaces that are essential to aging with dignity and independence.

The Montgomery County Department of Housing and Community Affairs (DHCA) provided a total of $7.95 million in financing to support the acquisition and construction of the new development, which is being built on the former parking lot of the Congregation Har Tzeon – Agudath Achim synagogue.

OPT

Villages – Age-in-Place Supported Communities

What is a Village?

The Village concept is a growing grassroots movement that aims to provide the support that older adults may require when choosing to age-in-place. The idea is simple: neighbors helping neighbors. Villages help older adults stay in their communities by helping to coordinate and deliver services and support within their communities.

Villages are membership-driven, grassroots organizations run by volunteers and paid staff to coordinate villagers' access to affordable services, including transportation, health and wellness programs, home repairs, social and educational activities and trips.

Villages provide critical neighbor-to-neighbor connections to combat social isolation, improve mobility and access to services, and provide knowledge and support necessary to empower seniors and others to be healthy and secure. The Village Coordinator provides guidance, support and resources to support the creation and sustainability of villages in communities across the County.

Montgomery County is committed to support local initiatives. Resources for active and developing villages are available at: www.montgomerycountymd.gov/HHS-Program/ADS/Villages/resources.html

For a complete list of Villages in Montgomery County scan this QR Code:

OPT

Strengthening Communities through the Village Support Network

Aging is a journey we all face, but how we navigate it depends largely on the resources and support around us. For many adults, staying connected to their communities while maintaining independence can be a challenge. This is where Villages come in – a grassroots nonprofit model that brings neighbors together to create networks of support for older adults. Maryland has embraced this model, with 23 Villages open or developing according to the Village-to-Village network. They also calculate nearly 300 Villages across the nation, with 49 of those in our DC, Maryland and Virginia region. Villages are fostering vibrant, connected communities.

"At the heart of this effort is the Village Support Network (VSN), an organization dedicated to empowering Villages with the tools, resources, and guidance they need to grow and thrive," says Kerri Donnelly, VSN board member. VSN's mission is to empower developing and vulnerable Villages by offering tailored operational support to ensure sustainable growth and success. According to Donnelly, VSN has supported over 20 Villages in MOCO, helping them navigate their individualized challenges, providing resources, tools and operational support to better enable them to connect with their neighbors and amplify their voices ensuring their needs are understood and addressed.

With the population of older adults rapidly increasing, the need for Villages continues to grow. VSN is committed to fostering even more Villages, ensuring that communities across MOCO and beyond are equipped to support their neighbors with purpose. If you believe in the power of community and the importance of supporting older adults, now is the time to get involved.

Whether it's volunteering, donating or simply learning more, you can help ensure Villages continue to thrive and expand. Visit the Village Support Network at www.villagesupportnetwork.org or email them at info@villagesupportnetwork.org to discover how you can make a difference.

The strength of a community lies in how it cares for its members, and Villages are a shining example of what's possible when neighbors come together. With the support of organizations like VSN, Villages are transforming lives. Together we can ensure The Village Movement continues to grow and inspire.

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Health Care Decision Making for Maryland Catholics

Continual advances in medical technology bring many blessings but also pose complex ethical questions. While many of us avoid thinking about illness and death, they are a reality. It is wise take time now, before a crisis, to prayerfully consider your health care and end-of-life wishes with your Catholic faith in mind, to talk with family members, and to put your wishes in writing.

The Maryland Catholic Conference has made available a 12-page document – which can be downloaded at mdcatholic.org/healthdirective – to encourage Catholics to take time to reflect now before facing a crisis. Then when illness and death inevitably come, we can face them with the comfort and peace of understanding our faith, and knowing our Church is there to embrace us in our hour of need.

This free resource covers three areas:

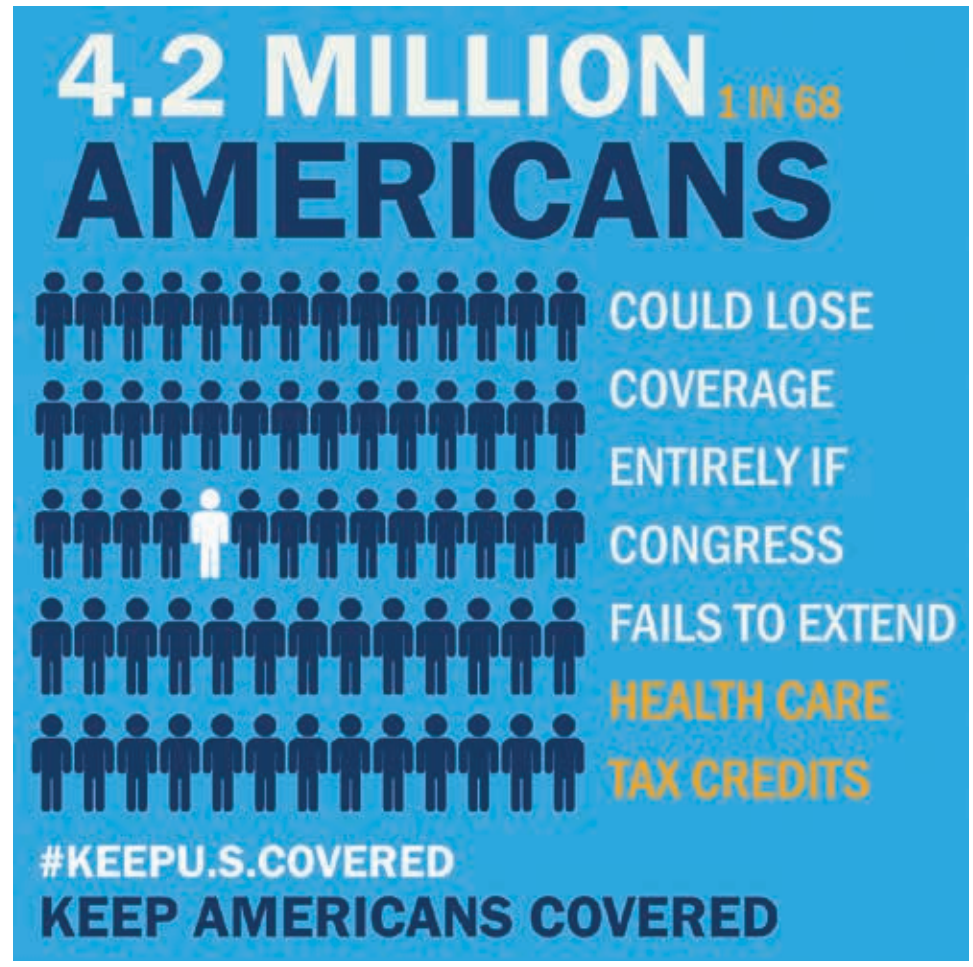
- Principles of Catholic teaching on end-of-life care
- Frequently asked questions
- Maryland Catholic Declaration for Health Care Decision Making, a customizable advance directive – consistent with our Catholic faith and reviewed for compliance with Maryland law – through which you can appoint a health care agent and express your wishes for spiritual support, medical care and treatment, pain-relieving medication and, should you be unable to take food or drink orally, medically assisted nutrition and hydration.

The Declaration has been prepared in light of the pastoral letter by the bishops serving Maryland, *Comfort and Consolation*, and in light of Maryland law, the Maryland Health Care Decisions Act.

Principles of health care and end-of-life decision making, FAQs, and an advanced care directive that is Catholic, was developed in light of Maryland law, and can be used in Maryland

The Maryland Catholic Conference addresses issues that affect the inherent value and dignity of human life at all stages because, as Pope Francis has said, "All life has inestimable value; even the weakest and most vulnerable, the sick, the old, the unborn, and the poor are masterpieces of God's creation, made in his own image, destined to live forever, and deserving of the utmost reverence and respect." Visit www.mdcatholic.org/issues/life/.

OPT



AGE FRIENDLY

Continued from page 1

residents are encouraged to attend a virtual listening session or one of three in-person listening sessions. The listening sessions will be facilitated by Age-Friendly Montgomery and its contractor, Ascendient. In-person listening sessions are co-sponsored by the Recreation Department.

Visit www.montgomerycountymd.gov/senior to view the dates and sign-up links.

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Source: Senior News, *Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services*

Discover What *Moves* You

Life at Ingleside at King Farm means freedom to live boldly in a walkable, vibrant neighborhood. Whether pursuing new interests, exploring creativity, or connecting with others—you are surrounded by opportunities. Every choice is a chance to live fully and on your terms.

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"I DON'T KNOW WHETHER I STAY HEALTHY BECAUSE I'M ACTIVE, OR I STAY ACTIVE BECAUSE I'M HEALTHY—BUT AT 91, I KNOW I DON'T WANT TO STOP!"

Joan, Ingleside at King Farm Resident

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VETERAN & LOCALLY OWNED FRANCHISE

Your Local Guide to Compassionate Senior Care

Assisted Living Primer

How are you doing with your ADLs? The term "activities of daily living," or ADLs, became widely used by gerontologists starting in the 1980s to refer to the basic tasks of everyday life, such as eating, bathing, dressing, toileting, and transferring (e.g. from a bed to a chair). Helping seniors with their ADLs is the purpose of assisted living.

When people are unable to perform these activities, in order to cope they need help, either from other human beings

Continued on page 6

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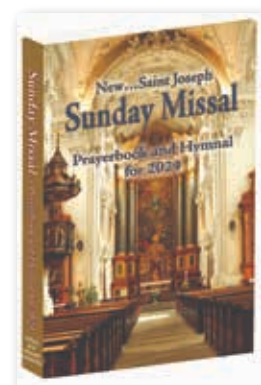
Do you know someone who cannot get to Mass?

The Archdiocese of Washington produces a weekly Sunday TV Mass filmed in the Crypt Church of the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception. It is a wonderful ministry for those members of our Catholic family who are unable to be physically present with a local worshipping community for the Sunday Eucharistic Liturgy.

The Mass airs every Sunday at 10:30 a.m. on WDCW-50

- Dish or Direct TV subscribers: Ch. 50; no cable.
- Comcast: Ch. 23 in Washington, DC and Montgomery County;
- Ch. 3 in Prince George's County and Southern Maryland
- RCN: Ch. 15
- Verizon: Ch. 3

The Sunday TV Mass is available to watch anytime on the National Shrine's YouTube channel: www.youtube.com/user/marysshrine



Celebrate! A Newsletter for Viewers and Friends of the Sunday TV Mass

Keep up with the latest news and information about the Sunday TV Mass through ***Celebrate!***, the newsletter for viewers and friends.

Download the most recent issue at: https://adw.org/parishes-masses/sunday-tv-mass/ or email communications@adw.org.

The Saint Joseph Sunday Missal is Available to order

This pocket-sized missal is a wonderful tool to help TV Mass viewers to understand the Mass and actively participate in it. The missal provides each Sunday's prayers, readings and responses so viewers can unite with the prayers of the priest and recite or sing their parts with understanding and devotion. It includes the Order of Mass in two colors and large type with the People's Parts in bold type for quick identification and an updated hymnal section with over 90 popular hymns, as well as many prayers.

Order your copy by calling Claudia Cheek at 301-853-4516 or cheekc@adw.org.

Suggested donation: $7.00 per copy (includes shipping)

OPT

St. Ann DC Mental Health Ministry Course Starts January 6

The St. Dymphna Ministry of Ann provides spiritual accompaniment for people experiencing mental health challenges and mental illness, as well as those who care for them. Members of the Ministry see Christ in those who live with a mental illness and seek to make the parish a place where individuals living with mental health challenges feel safe, supported and have a sense of belonging.

The Ministry is offering an eight-session educational course on mental health and the Church beginning January 7, 2026. Titled the "Sanctuary Course for Catholics," the course is open to anyone who wants to learn more about faith and mental health. It requires no previous training or expertise – just a willingness to engage in dialogue with other believers.

The sessions are accompanied by compelling films that feature the stories of Catholics living with mental health challenges, along with the insights of archbishops, theologians, and psychologists. St. Ann's does not provide diagnosis, counseling, treatment, medical assistance of behavioral health support, but seeks to accompany individuals living with a mental illness by listening compassionately to their stories and sharing their own.

Developed in consultation with mental health professionals, theologians, and people with lived experience, this eight-session study guide explores key mental health topics and examines meaningful ways to offer companionship, support recovery, and promote wellbeing. Topics that will be covered in the course include:

- Mental Health
- Mental Illness
- Stigma
- Recovery
- Companionship
- Self-Care
- The Church

The Sanctuary Course for Catholics will meet once a week at St. Ann's in Northwest Washington.

When: Wednesdays, 6:30pm, starting January 7, 2026

Where: St. Ann DC Malta Library

Enter the tan, iron gate (situated on your left as you're facing the facade of the Church) at the intersection of Yuma St and Wisconsin Ave NW. Continue walking straight through the door directly in front of you.

For more information about St. Dymphna Ministry and The Sanctuary Course for Catholics visit: https://stanndc.org/dymphna

OPT

LONGEVITY

Continued from page 1

advanced imaging, and multi-omics profiling. Their goal is to extend healthspan – the number of years a person lives in good health – through customized lifestyle interventions, nutritional guidance, and, in some cases, experimental therapies.

"Longevity clinics embody an important vision:

health care is personalized, preventive, and engaged."

Although the concept of proactive aging care is attractive, the editorial raises serious concerns about the scientific and ethical foundations of these clinics. Many operate outside conventional medical systems and lack connections to academic geroscience. This disconnection allows them to market expensive interventions without sufficient clinical validation. Program costs can range from €10,000 to over €100,000 per year, limiting access to wealthy individuals while leaving out populations most at risk for premature aging.

Despite these challenges, Dr. Demaria notes that longevity clinics may contribute meaningfully to innovation. By collecting extensive, long-term health data from clients, these clinics have the potential to identify early biomarkers of aging and detect signs of age-related diseases. Unlike traditional clinical trials, which are limited in scope and duration, longevity clinics track a wide range of health data over time. When paired with artificial intelligence tools, this information could help advance the science of healthy aging.

However, several risks remain. Many clinics lack standardized protocols, and the tools they use, such as biological age calculators or hormone therapies, often lack accuracy or clear clinical value. Without proper guidelines, clients may receive advice that is confusing or not scientifically supported. This can reduce public trust in the broader field of longevity research.

To ensure these clinics contribute positively to health innovation, the editorial outlines different key steps: greater collaboration with academic researchers, the adoption of standardized protocols, increased transparency, and work toward regulatory clarity. Broader access must also be considered by developing scalable and more affordable models, possibly through partnerships with public health systems.

Ultimately, longevity clinics represent both a major opportunity and a serious concern. If integrated responsibly with science, policy, and public health, they could support a shift toward personalized, preventive healthcare. Without this alignment, however, they risk reinforcing inequality and weakening the credibility of the science behind aging.

Source: *Aging-US*

See Parish Times Online
www.parishtimes.com

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EQUAL HOUSING OPPORTUNITY

The Continuum of Care

Selling the house and moving to a retirement community can create enough stress for the entire extended family. To have to then pick up and move to an assisted living facility when you need help with an ADL or two, and then move again to a nursing home when your clinical acuity level continues to increase is too much for many seniors to even contemplate. Enter the CCRC – Continuing Care Retirement Community. CCRCs offer the full range of senior housing options – independent living, assisted living, and skilled nursing – all on one campus or in one building.

Most CCRCs are at the upper end of the cost spectrum of retirement communities. Continuing Care Retirement Communities, also known as Life Care Communities, offer a secure, stimulating and protected environment for seniors, with access to medical and nursing services, should the need arise. There are a range of contract agreements, terms, entrance fees and monthly service fees which are set by the individual CCRC and regulated by the Maryland Department of Aging.

For a complete list of licensed CCRCs in Montgomery County scan this QR Code:

OPT

MARYLAND
AGAINST PHYSICIAN ASSISTED SUICIDE

Sign-Up to Help

Physicians, mental health professionals, lawyers, elder care organizations, disability rights advocates and hospice providers are invited to join the MAPAS Coalition today. The only way we can defeat physician-assisted suicide bills before the Maryland General Assembly is with your help.

Sign-up to help. Visit: https://stopassistedsuicidemd.org/take-action/sign-up-to-help/

Grand Opening of Park Montgomery West in Silver Spring

Project Highlights the Preservation and Development of 217 Affordable Apartments along the Purple Line

Mid-October marked the grand reopening of Park Montgomery and the opening of Park Montgomery West. Park Montgomery is a multifamily affordable housing development located on Piney Branch Road in the Long Branch neighborhood of Silver Spring, along the Purple Line corridor. Supported by financing from the Montgomery County Department of Housing and Community Affairs (DHCA) and the federal Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) program administered by the State, the project features the preservation of 141 existing affordable housing units (Park Montgomery) and a new development featuring an additional 76 affordable units (Park Montgomery West).

Located just minutes outside of the nation's capitol, the community provides numerous sought-after amenities including controlled access, high speed Internet and access to local public transportation. Residents can enjoy a playground, a free after-school program and convenient onsite laundry facilities. A gorgeous, beautifully vibrant mural painted by a local artist Joel Bergner named "Our Dreams in Flight" adorns the side of Park Montgomery West, representing unity, imagination, and hopes and dreams of the residents of the Piney Branch community.

Conveniently located along the developing Purple Line Corridor, the Park Montgomery development will help preserve and meet the increasing demand for transit-oriented affordable housing in the County. The project is located just a quarter mile from the Purple Line's future Piney Branch station. All units at Park Montgomery and Park Montgomery West will be affordable to households earning between 30% and 60% of Area Median Income (AMI). The development includes a range of apartment layouts to accommodate multiple household sizes, including: 73 one-bedroom units, 71 two-bedroom units, and 73 three-bedroom units.

Park Montgomery West was also supported by financing from the Maryland Community Development Administration and will use 28 housing assistance payment vouchers through the Montgomery County Housing Opportunities Commission for both Park Montgomery and Park Montgomery West.

Applications and additional information for prospective residents are available online for Park Montgomery and Park Montgomery West. Both Park Montgomery and Park Montgomery West are owned by Enterprise Community Development and managed by Enterprise Residential.

OPT

PRIMER

Continued from page 4

or mechanical devices or both. Although persons of all ages may have problems performing the ADLs, prevalence rates are much higher for the elderly than for the non-elderly. Measurement of the activities of daily living is critical because they have been found to be significant predictors of the use of paid home care, alternative living arrangements, nursing homes, physicians and hospital services.

In the late 1980s and early 1990s the assisted living industry – blending aspects of both the hospitality (hotel) and the healthcare industries – evolved to provide assistance with ADLs in private-pay, congregate-living settings. Sunrise Senior Living in McLean (Va.) was the industry pioneer and is one of the largest providers of assisted living in the United States with more than 400 communities in 37 states. In addition to help with ADLs and assistance with medication, most assisted living communities provide three meals a day in restaurant settings, leisure activity programs, and limited transportation services.

It's important to know what assisted living is not. It is not skilled nursing, and it is not regulated by the Federal government. Residents of assisted living communities who develop needs beyond help with ADLs and medications – who need the constant care and supervision of healthcare professionals – may have to be discharged to nursing homes.

Maryland has developed a three-tiered approach to licensing and regulating assisted living facilities. The major variable is the type and degree of assistance with medications that is authorized. Level I licensees (mostly smaller group home facilities) may only provide "assistance with taking medication or coordinating access to necessary medication and treatment." Level II licensees are permitted to "administer necessary medication and treatment, including monitoring the effects of the medication and treatment by staff." Level III licensee responsibilities may include "monitoring or arranging for monitoring of the effects of complex medication and treatment regimens, ongoing therapeutic intervention or intensive supervision to manage chronic behaviors."

In practice, this means that only Level III facilities are qualified to provide care for Alzheimer's sufferers. Because assisted living communities frequently charge extra fees for their various services, comparing per diem rates can be misleading. Many facilities have cafeteria plans based on levels of service.

Each Assisted Living residence is required to complete a Uniform Disclosure Form describing its services and policies. Fee structures for assisted living vary, with some facilities charging a single fee based on the resident level of care while others provide an "à la carte" menu of services. It is important to understand what is included in the base monthly rate, what services require an additional charge, and circumstances under which fees may increase. The Uniform Disclosure Form includes fee information and is required to be filed with the Office of Health Care Quality as part of an application for licensure. The Uniform Disclosure Form must be made available upon request or be part of the Assisted Living marketing materials.

The Maryland Health Care Commission maintains an excellent web-based Consumer Guide to Long Term Care (http://mhcc.maryland.gov/consumerinfo/longtermcare/), which includes helpful facility Search and Compare features and links to several consumer checklists.

Assisted living facilities in Montgomery County with three or fewer residents and those with 18 or more are inspected every year. Facilities with more than three but fewer than 18 are inspected at least once every three years. Inspections (called 'surveys' in the health care industry) are performed by Montgomery County's Public Health Services acting as agent for the state's Office of Health Care Quality (OHCQ). The most recent survey will be made available to a prospective resident by facility's administrator upon request.

For a complete list of licensed Level II and Level III (capacity >20) Assisted Living Facilities in Montgomery County scan this QR Code:

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Adult Day Service – Helping the Middle Hold

Commentators now refer to the 'the sandwich generation' – adults caught between the conflicting demands of raising their children and caring for their aging parents.

Elder care has replaced childcare as the number one dependent care need in the United States. And the situation intensified dramatically when the members of the babyboom generation – 76 million Americans born between 1946 and 1965 – began to retire in droves in 2010. The boomers are living longer, and their children are having fewer children of their own.

What are the care options for a parent who is frail or impaired? As two-income families have become the norm, has the three-generation family in one household gone the way of the horse and buggy? Home care and assisted living are getting a lot of attention these days. What else is there?

Adult day care developed in the 1970s to provide frail adults an opportunity for socialization and recreation therapy in a safe and supportive environment during the work week. It enables their primary caregivers to relax and go about their lives. Transportation is available to and from their homes for adult day participants.

There are now 22 licensed adult day centers in Montgomery County, up from 13 just a few years ago.

For a complete list of licensed Adult Day Care Centers in Montgomery County scan this QR Code:

OPT

File of Life Program

Imagine that you are injured or suffer from a medical condition that temporarily renders you unconscious or unable to communicate effectively with paramedics. Without important information about your medical history, how will first responders be able to quickly assess and treat your condition?

The Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service offers a free service entitled the File of Life program. The File of Life packet enables Montgomery County Fire and Rescue personnel to obtain a quick and accurate medical history when a patient or family member is unable to provide the information. The "File of Life" is a red, magnetic packet that contains important medical information about you. The "File of Life" also includes space to list contact information for your doctor, family members, insurance information and any other special circumstances that rescue personnel should know in caring for you. FREE File of Life packets are available to Montgomery County residents. Call 311 to request a File of Life packet be mailed to you.

DIY option! Visit www.mcfrs.org/mcsafe and print out a File of Life insert, fill it out and hang on your refrigerator. Since you cannot print out the red, magnetic pouch that holds it, consider putting it in a Ziploc/plastic bag. If you still would like one mailed out to you, contact 311 for assistance.

Who should fill one out a "File of Life"?

Senior adults. However, the File of Life is applicable for people of all ages, especially individuals with chronic or severe medical conditions and/or developmental disabilities.

OPT

SOAR

A Travel Program For Active Adults 55+

SOAR is Montgomery County Recreation's "Senior Outdoor Adventures in Recreation" program, designed for active adults, ages 55+. You'll rarely have a better time than on one of the SOAR excursions to the performing arts, regional festivals, historic sites, guided tours shopping venues and ballgames, among other activities.

Each activity or trip requires a substantial amount of walking and/or physical exertion. Program participants should be in good physical condition and consult with their physician if they have any concerns before registering or participating in an activity.

Every effort will be made to accommodate individuals with disabilities on each trip. However, due to the historic nature and outdoor adventure components of many trips, this might not always be possible. Please call the SOAR trip coordinator at 240-777-4926 to discuss your individual needs and concerns.

All trips depart from the Olney Manor Park, located at 16605 Georgia Avenue, Olney. Olney Manor Park is accessible by both automobile and public bus. From Georgia Avenue, turn into Emory Lane and take the second left and follow signs for Skate Park and Ballfield #1.

Registration for SOAR Winter 2025-2026 activities began November 18. You may register for a SOAR trip in any of three ways. The fastest and easiest way is to use the internet. Go to: www.montgomerycountymd.gov/rec/activitiesandprograms/tripstours/soar.html. You may also mail your trip application or register in person: ActiveMONTGOMERY, 2425 Reedie Drive, Wheaton, MD 20902. Full payment is required with your registration. Non-County residents must pay an additional $15.00 per person per trip.

If you have questions about the registration process, please call 240-777-6840. If you have questions or require more information about a specific trip, call the SOAR Coordinator at 240-777-4926. Unless noted, all transportation is provided on restroom-equipped motor coaches. All trips depart from and return to the Olney Manor Recreational Park.

OPT

Senior Call Check Program

Maryland is the first state in the country to start a free, opt-in, telephonic service to check on Maryland's older residents, all across the state.

All Maryland seniors are urged to use the program as a resource. Senior Call Check phone lines are open M-F 8 am-5 pm and Saturday 9 am-3 pm. During these hours, seniors can call toll-free 1-866-50-CHECK (1-866-502-0560).

How Does It Work?

Every day a telephone call will be placed to a participant at a regularly scheduled time. These calls will take place between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m. as close as possible to the one-hour time block pre-selected by the participant. If the participant does not answer their first call, they will be tried two more times. If those calls go unanswered, additional calls will be made to notify an alternative person who is selected by the participant during program enrollment. This could be an adult child, a neighbor, or another loved one. The alternate will then be encouraged to check on the older adult program participant. The failure of the participant and alternate to answer may result in a Welfare Check by local law enforcement.

Who Can Participate?

Any Maryland resident who is 65 years of age or older who has a landline phone or cell phone (TTY is available). The participant and alternates should not have automated call blocking technology (or they should disable that phone feature for this program).

How to Apply?

Three options available to apply:
1. Online at: https://aging.maryland.gov/Pages/senior-call-check-sign-up.aspx OR
2. Download, print, and mail in the Maryland Senior Call Check Paper Application. Under RESOURCES, click on Paper Application at: https://aging.maryland.gov/Pages/senior-call-check.aspx OR
3. Call toll-free (866)-502-0560 and ask to have a paper application mailed to your home.

When Do Calls Begin?

Daily calls will not begin until the applicant / participant receives a call to verify all of their information. Verification will include a successful test automated call to both the participant and alternate where applicable. After all information is validated, a Welcome Packet will be mailed to your home address. The welcome letter will include your start date.

OPT

Hiring In Home Elder Care

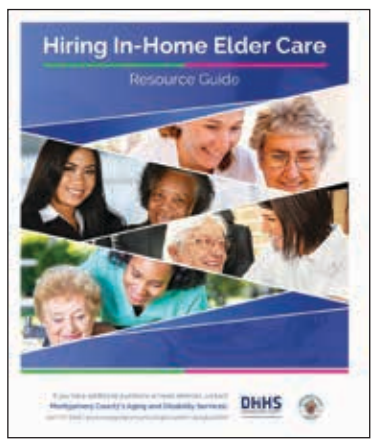
Home-based care is appropriate whenever a person prefers to stay at home but needs ongoing care that cannot easily be provided by family and friends. And sometimes ensuring the best for a loved one requires hiring an outside care provider.

A 20-page Resource Guide published by Montgomery County Aging and Disability Services describes various types of care providers and offers suggestions for managing in-home elder care.

There are many types of elder care and this Resource Guide lists advantages and disadvantages of working with agencies or with independent care providers.

- Should I hire an agency or hire someone on my own?
- How can I make sure that all care needs are attended to?
- How can I find someone I can trust?

Topics covered include: Selection of Elder Care Provider, The Recruitment Process, Employers Responsibilities, and Keeping Your Loved One Safe. In addition, The Resource Guide includes a sample Checklist of Elder Care Needs, a sample Job Application, a sample Position Description, a sample Contract, and a Checklist for Hiring in-home Elder Care.



Hiring In Home Elder Care is available for printing or downloaded at: www.montgomerycountymd.gov/senior/

Learning how to answer these and other questions will help you hire in-home elder care with confidence. This guide is designed to help you determine the most effective way to find, hire and supervise in-home care providers for your individual needs and preferences.

As you use this Resource Guide you may have queries or may need additional information (access to County supports and programs, a list of home care agencies, referrals for other services etc), we encourage you to call Montgomery County's Aging and Disability Services helpline: 240-777-3000.

OPT

Hospice: End of Life Comfort and Care

Hospice care places a high value on dignity, respect and the wishes of the person who is ill. It aims to look after their medical, emotional, social, practical, psychological, and spiritual needs, and the needs of the person's family and caregivers. Looking after all these aspects is often referred to as "holistic care." Care also extends to those who are close to the patient, as well as into the bereavement period after the patient has died.

Key characteristics of hospice include an interdisciplinary team providing care in the patient's home or other settings, a focus on managing symptoms, and comprehensive support for both the patient and their family. Benefits include improved comfort, dignity, and quality of life for the patient, and emotional support and bereavement care for the family.

Characteristics of hospice care

- Holistic, patient-centered care: Hospice prioritizes the comfort, dignity, and wishes of the patient by addressing their medical, emotional, spiritual, and social needs.
- Interdisciplinary team: A team of professionals, including doctors, nurses, social workers, and chaplains, works together to coordinate care.
- Focus on comfort, not cure: Hospice care stops curative treatments and focuses on pain management and symptom relief to improve quality of life.
- Care is provided anywhere: Hospice care is not a place, but a service that can be provided wherever the patient calls home, including their own home, a nursing home, or an assisted living facility.
- Family support: Hospice care extends to the patient's family and includes emotional and spiritual support, as well as grief counseling both during and after the patient's illness.

Benefits of hospice care

- Improved quality of life: By focusing on comfort and symptom management, hospice helps patients live as well as possible during their final months.
- Enhanced dignity: Hospice allows patients to remain in a

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Grandparents: A Sign of Hope!

Pope Leo XIV, in his address for the World Day for Grandparents and the Elderly, celebrated on July 27, highlighted the invaluable contribution that grandparents and the elderly play in the shared life of faith within the Church.

His reflection pointed to Biblical figures, "whom the Lord called late in life to play a part in his saving plan." God chose Abraham and Sarah, despite their old age, to play an essential role within salvation history. Later in the Book of Genesis, there is Jacob, an old man, who blesses his grandchildren. Within the Christian tradition, we learn of Joachim and Anne, the grandparents of Jesus who lovingly formed Mary, the Mother of God, in the faith.

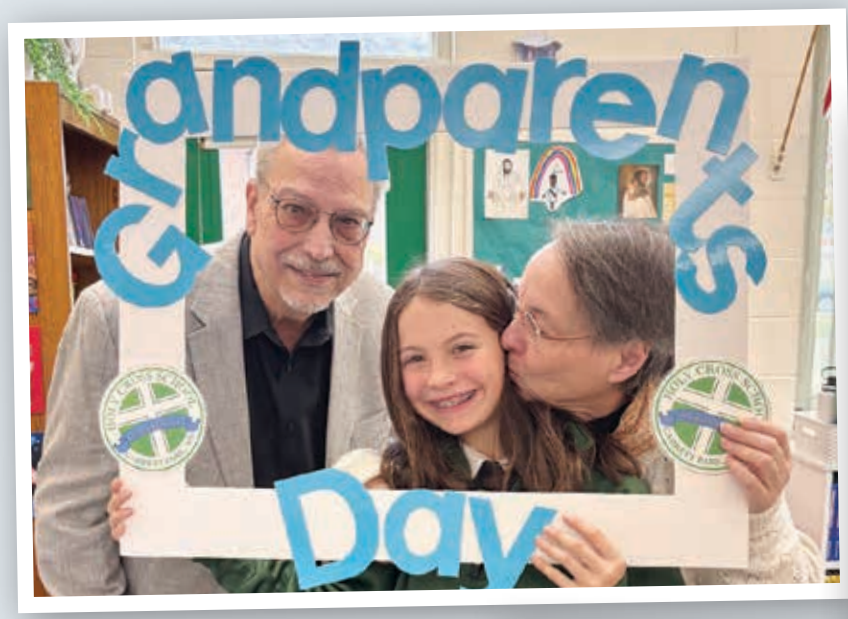
Indeed, as Pope Leo stated, "the life of the Church and the world can only be understood in light of the passage of generations. Embracing the elderly helps us to understand that life is more than just the present moment, and should not be wasted in superficial encounters and fleeting relationships. Instead, life is constantly pointing us toward the future."

Speaking more specifically of grandparents, the Pope reflected on, "How often our grandparents have been for us examples of faith and devotion, civic virtue and social commitment, memory and perseverance amid trials! The precious legacy that they have handed down to us with hope and love will always be a source of gratitude and a summons to perseverance."

For this reason, many of our Catholic schools celebrate Grandparent's Day as a special opportunity for the generations to spend time together, sharing moments of joy, imparting bits of wisdom, and journeying towards hope with one another. Grandparent's Day is often just before Thanksgiving, capitalizing on the possibility of grandparents who are visiting from out of town to be present. Many schools have moments of prayer, a special Mass, time in students' classrooms, and musical performances.

It is a time of gratitude for all who participate to both look to both reflect on the path and to look to the future, seeking accompaniment of Christ in every step.

OPT



CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE:
Grandparents are happy to be in the frame with their Holy Cross fifth grader.

Holy Redeemer student Poppy shares a classroom activity with grandparents Ann and Frank Cantrel and Kerry DuBrin.

Classrooms throughout Mary of Nazareth were packed with grandparent guests.

Compassionate care.
Not suicide.

Our friends and family matter to us. That's why it's so hard to understand how some lawmakers in Maryland are advocating our state legalize — even encourage — suicide for those we love.

Say NO to physician assisted suicide in Maryland.

Violates medical ethics to save lives and do no harm.

The **major medical associations oppose** physician assisted suicide. It's contrary to medical ethics codes.

No accountability for lethal, addictive drugs.

Lethal drugs are not monitored. A large number of prescriptions go unused[1], leaving cardiotoxic agents, analgesics, sedatives and hypnotics to fall into the hands of teens or prescription drug dealers.

Sends the wrong message that suicide is ok.

State leaders try to prevent suicide[2] — unless it is physician assisted suicide for the elderly or ill, including people who with a mental illness. **That's confusing and wrong**.

Lacks real safeguards to protect people.

Where it's legal, safeguards like **waiting periods are being shortened or waived**.[3] Reporting is limited and people are dying with no doctor present over hours or days via lethal drug cocktails.

Makes people feel like a burden.

About half of those dying by assisted suicide **didn't want to be a "burden"** on their families or caregivers.[4] Individuals report pressure to die via physician assisted suicide vs. getting treatment for cancer, mental health needs, dementia, or even because they were homeless or suicidal.

Leaves vulnerable people at risk.

Disability groups are fighting physician assisted suicide because it says their lives are not worth living. **Just 4%** of individuals who died from physician assisted suicide in Washington state **were referred for a mental health evaluation** before being prescribed lethal drugs. Now **no mental health evaluation is required**.[5] Drugs have even been prescribed for eating disorders.[6]

[1]Oregon Death with Dignity Act 2023 Data Summary; California End of Life Option Act 2022 Data Report; [2]health.maryland.gov/bha/suicideprevention; [3]Calif. Dept. of Public Health (https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CHSI/pages/end-of-life-option-act-.aspx; [4]Oregon Death with Dignity Act 2023 Data Summary; [5]Washington State Department of Health, Death with Dignity Act Report 2023; [6]https://bit.ly/coloradosun03142022

MARYLAND
AGAINST PHYSICIAN ASSISTED SUICIDE

The Maryland Catholic Conference (mdcatholic.org/pas) is a MAPAS member.

Financial Abuse of the Elderly

Financial abuse is a pervasive and devastating form of elder abuse that involves the illegal or improper use of an older adult's funds, property, or assets. It is the most common type of elder abuse and is frequently perpetrated by individuals whom the victim trusts, such as family members, friends, caregivers, or agents under a power of attorney.

The perpetrators exploit vulnerabilities, such as cognitive decline, social isolation, and physical ailments, to gain access to finances and manipulate the victim. This abuse can range from simple theft of cash to complex schemes involving title transfers, coercion into signing legal documents, or cutting off access to personal bank accounts.

Recognizing an Active Case

Recognizing the signs of financial abuse is crucial for intervention. Pointers often fall into two categories: red flags regarding the victim's behavior/situation and the actions of a potential abuser.

Signs a potential victim may display:

- Sudden changes in financial status: Unexplained inability to pay for essentials like food, rent, or utilities, despite adequate income or assets.
- Isolation: Withdrawal from friends and family, often orchestrated by the abuser to maintain control.
- Unusual banking activity: Abrupt changes in banking habits, such as large, unexplained withdrawals or new joint accounts.
- Missing possessions: Missing valuable items, property deeds, or financial statements.

Red flags regarding the actions of an abuser:

- Controlling behavior: A new "friend" or caregiver who suddenly has excessive control over the elder's life and finances, or who prevents the elder from speaking to others alone.
- Unusual legal documents: The appearance of new wills, power of attorney, or property deeds that the elder may not fully understand or remember signing.
- Lack of transparency: The person managing the elder's money is unwilling to provide details or show documentation of how funds are being spent.
- Conflicting accounts: The victim's description of their financial situation conflicts with the reality of their living conditions or bank records.

To report suspected elder abuse in Montgomery County, call 911 for emergencies, contact the Montgomery County Police Domestic Violence & Elder Abuse Unit (DV/EAU) at the Family Justice Center for local support, or report to the MD Department of Human Services (DHS) Adult Protective Services (APS) for investigation, using resources like 211 Maryland for guidance and reporting potential financial exploitation or abuse in long-term care.

OPT

HOSPICE

Continued from page 9

familiar setting and avoid invasive procedures, promoting dignity and autonomy.
- Family support: The support provided to families, including bereavement care after a loss, can reduce distress and grief.
- Comprehensive services: Hospice includes services like medical equipment and supplies, home health aide assistance, and short-term respite or inpatient care when needed.

Dame Cicely Saunders, founder of the hospice movement, wrote: "You matter because you are you, and you matter to the end of your life. We will do all we can not only to help you die peacefully, but also to live until you die." Recognizing the whole person is one of the most important values associated with the hospice movement.

There are four licensed hospice care providers in Montgomery County:

CaringMatters, Gaithersburg
Jewish Social Service Agency Hospice, Rockville
Montgomery Hospice, Rockville
Holy Cross Home Care and Hospice, Silver Spring

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See Parish Times Online | www.parishtimes.com

AGING WELL eldercare
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Please give to those who have given a lifetime.

Our senior sisters, brothers, and religious order priests need your help. They have spent decades caring for those in need, but years of service for little or no pay have left many religious communities without sufficient retirement savings. Today, over 20,500 elderly religious depend on the Retirement Fund for Religious to help cover rising health care and medication costs, as well as daily living expenses. Your gift can help ensure they receive the care they deserve. Please give back to those who have given a lifetime.

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retiredreligious.org

Visit **retiredreligious.org/2025photos** to meet the religious pictured.
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