Prayer Shawl Directions

**The recommended yarn is Lion Brand Homespun** - we have found that A.C. Moore has the best price per skein - $4.39. A.C. Moore, Michael's and JoAnn's Fabric do have this brand on sale from time to time. Walmart has a higher price - $4.96 and does not usually have this yarn on sale. Please make sure that you buy **three skeins** and that the dye lot numbers all match. Three skeins are ample for most shawls, certainly one more skein can be used for a wider/longer shawl.

**We recommend size 11 or 13 needles**, depending on whether you knit tightly or loosely, and also if the yarn is thin or thick. For a looser weave you can even select size 15 needles.

**Start with a prayer**. Once you are ready to begin, we suggest that you say a prayer for the individual for whom you are making the shawl. You may also use the *Beginning to Knit Dedication* prayer at the end of these directions. If you do not have an individual in mind, please pray for healing, good health and peace for the one who will receive the shawl. Please take time as you knit to repeat your prayer. Prayer is good for you as well as for the one who will wear the shawl.

**Cast on 57 stitches**. The pattern for the shawl is called a 3-stitch seed pattern. You will knit 3 stitches and then purl 3 stitches. If you use 57 stitches, when you start the next row, you will always start by knitting 3 stitches. If you choose to use either 54 or 60 stitches, you will have to pay attention to the beginning of each row. We ask that you always choose a multiple of 3 for the number of stitches in your shawl, as 3 is representative of the Trinity. As you create your shawl, you are knitting a purl stitch and purling a knit stitch. This pattern will give you a "popcorn" type effect. If you knit a stitch that looks like a knit stitch and purl into a purl stitch, you will be creating ribbing and this will make the shawl very narrow - more like a scarf.

If you are new to knitting, please feel free to use just a knit stitch.

As you finish the first skein, just tie a solid knot with the yarn of the second skein, the ends of the knot can be woven into the shawl stitching later to hide this yarn joining.

The normal length of the shawl measures from one wrist, up the arm, over the back, and down to the other wrist - without the fringe. So, when you finish the second skein, estimate whether you are over 2/3 of the way there – remember, the third skein will have the fringe taken from it, so it will not knit a full "third" of the shawl. For a tall individual, you may want to use 4 skeins, not three.
**Prayer Shawl Crocheting Instructions** - Using crochet hook size M or N, chain 54 stitches (add more or fewer stitches in multiples of 3 for wider or narrower shawls). Chain 1, turn and single crochet in each of the spaces. At end of row, chain 3, turn and double crochet in top of each single crochet. Repeat this row 2 more times, then chain 1 and do 1 row of single crochet. At end of that row, chain 3 & turn. Do 3 rows of double crochet. Repeat pattern to end (1 row single, 3 rows of double). End with 1 row of single chain stitches. Finish with fringe.

**Fringe is the fun part of the shawl!** Before you start to knit with the third skein of yarn, cut the fringe pieces that you will add on when the shawl is done. Generally speaking, there is one piece of fringe for each stitch that you cast on - for each end of the shawl. So, if you cast on 57 stitches, you will need at least 114 pieces of fringe - why not cut 10 extra to be safe. The quickest way to make fringe is to get a sturdy piece of cardboard and cut it to the width of the fringe that you want. You can then wind the yarn around the cardboard and cut along one end, and you have your pieces of fringe. Use sharp scissors so as not to fray or snag the yarn.

Once you have cut the desired fringe, tie on the third skein and continue your pattern allowing a few feet of yarn to cast off. Cast off by knitting two stitches and casting the first stitch on the needle over the second stitch. Knit the next stitch and cast the second stitch over it, etc. Be careful to cast off loosely, so that the end of the shawl does not pull tightly together.

To add the fringe, decide which side you consider "the back side." Using a crochet hook, take a piece of fringe, fold it in half, put the crochet hook through a stitch at the bottom of the shawl and pull through the "loop" at the mid point of the folded piece of fringe. Pull half way then catch the two cut ends of the fringe and pull them through the loop end and tighten. Make sure that the two cut ends are even when pulling them through the loop end. This will keep your fringe fairly even. Once you have put on all of your fringe, you will want to lay the shawl on a flat surface, straighten out the fringe and snip the ends that are too long.

If your yarn frays easily, you may knot the ends of the fringe, you may use a different type of yarn that is the same color as the shawl, or you may take several pieces of fringe and make them into a tassel by making a knot with several pieces of fringe. Charms, beads or buttons may be put on the fringe to personalize the shawl.

**The Giving of the Shawl.** Each shawl is blessed (see Prayer of Blessing on next page) by a gathering of at least three people before it is given by the Parish Care Team. We have created a card to go with the shawl. There is also a gold heart pin with a cross within the heart that goes with the card. You are welcome to use this if you make your shawl for a friend.
Beginning to Knit Dedication

Mantle of Love, Healer of Hearts,

I light this candle as a reminder of Your presence as I begin.
I ask a blessing from all who have come before me;
whose hands have been instruments of creation and beauty;
who have used humble tools and homespun wool in order to provide cover and
warmth for themselves and those they loved;
who have felt, as I will feel, the yarn in their fingers;
who have seen, as I will see, the growth of the fabric;
who have heard, as I will hear, the click of the needles.

Guide my attention to stay on course.
Hold me close and ground me.

Bless, also, this yarn and these knitting needles.
May any negative energy connected to them be cast away as I cast on;
and all positive energy bound in as I bind off.
In their simplicity, may I find comfort and solace.

Bless my hands....
Often appendages at the end of my arms....
workers doing their job without appreciation…looked at, yet not really seen.
These instruments of love have done mundane tasks, yet also create beauty;
They reach out, touch, stroke, scrub, lift, grasp, gesture and guide.
These hands, my hands, gifts of great importance,
Blessings be on them and in them as I begin.
May the fruits of their labor be good!

Prayer of Blessing - for the Shawl

May God's grace be upon this shawl....

warming, comforting, enfold ing and embracing.
May this mantle be a safe haven…a sacred place of security and well-being....
sustaining and embracing in good times as well as difficult ones.
May the one who receives this shawl be cradled in hope, kept in joy, graced with peace, and wrapped in love.
Blessed Be!

Janet Bristow - 2000