

Knitting and Crocheting Instructions for Prayer Shawls

Let me say up front that there is no "right" or "wrong" way to create a prayer shawl. They are meant to be a lasting gift to bring comfort and peace to the recipient.

Yarn: Lion Brand Homespun is suggested, but you can use any yarn that you think will make a nice shawl. When knitting, you will need about 550 yards. For crochet, about 700 yards (about 3-3 1/2 skeins, but check yardage on your yarn choice). You also should purchase enough yarn in the same dye lot.

Needles:

Knitting, use #13 or #15

Crochet, use M, N or P

Suggested Knitting Pattern*:

Casting on either 57 or 63 stitches is suggested.

The basic pattern is a simple one; knit 3, purl 3 until the end of the row.

On the next row you will knit the purl stitches and purl the knit stitches.

If you use either 57 or 63 stitches (cast on), you will always start every row with a K3. This is called the seed stitch. You just repeat this pattern until the shawl measures 57-60 inches.

Suggested Crochet Pattern*:

Chain 54 stitches, or the desired width of the shawl (24-30 inches).

Row 1: Ch1, turn, sc in each ch across.

Row 2: Ch 3 turn, dc in each sc across.

Rows 3 & 4: Repeat row 2. Repeat these four rows until the shawl measures 57-60 inches long. Finish off with one row of sc.

Finishing:

If desired, add tassel/fringe to the shawl.

Tassel fringe: You can use 1 yard of yarn per tassel and fold it in half three times. Pull the folded end through edge of shawl and, with a large crochet hook, put ends through the loop and pull snugly. Cut end loops for fringe.

Fringe method two: Cut 8-inch lengths of yarn. Hold 2 lengths together and fold in half. This creates four "ends." Pull these "ends" through the edge of the shawl and knot. Continue along the edge in this manner to the end of the shawl.

* **Note:** You may use any knit or crochet pattern you think would make a nice shawl. There are patterns for triangular shawls, as well. The main thing is to pray for the recipient (known or unknown) before, during and after your shawl is completed. Keep in mind that some of our recipients will be men, so you may want to choose subdued, neutral colors (brown, beige, gray, etc) for those projects.

These shawls are to provide comfort and peace to the recipients. Father Tim will be blessing them before they are distributed.

A card with St. Mary's logo and handwritten by the person who made it will be enclosed with each shawl. Include a brief personal message, a favorite scripture and the name of the person who crafted the shawl.

Example: *Please know that I have been praying for you while creating this shawl especially for you.*

Please wear this shawl when you need comfort, knowing that it was made with my sympathies for whatever you've been going through, as well as my hopes for a brighter tomorrow.

The shawl has been blessed by Fr. Tim

Handmade for you by: _____

Yarn sometimes goes on sale, and since prices are rising, keep an eye out for good deals. Perhaps you may even have someone donate yarn for the project.

You can be as creative as you'd like with your shawl. We want to have fun as well as the satisfaction of knowing you will be making something that will be lasting and hopefully, bring comfort to the recipient during their time of illness, loss or personal struggle.

For answers to your questions, please contact Nancy Abbott at 352.753.4502 or email me at abbyjra@comcast.net

Any suggestions, patterns or other ideas are encouraged and welcomed!

