

This Ministry started in America in the final years of the 20th century, though the making and wearing of shawls has been part of the history and culture of many countries for centuries.

The idea behind the prayerful knitting (or crocheting, weaving, sewing, quilting, machine knitting...) of a shawl or lap blanket is to express the care and concern that the knitter wishes to extend to the recipient.

Sometimes the shawl may be completed with a recipient in mind, sometimes it might be made to give away to someone in the Parish or beyond.

Always the knitting is begun and ended with prayer. Often the shawl is prayed over in a final blessing before it is passed on.

Some reasons to make a shawl...

- To offer as a sign of love to a family member or friend...
- At a rite of passage: baptism, confirmation, graduation...
- For a bride and groom...
- For a new baby...
- At a time of transition or change...
- As an aid to prayer or meditation...
- As a comfort to someone facing difficult times...
- For someone undergoing medical treatment...
- For someone who is ill or convalescing...
- As a comfort in loss or bereavement

The possibilities are endless!



PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY

in the churches of St Andrew, St James,
& St Peter Maghull and St Thomas Melling



*You it was who fashioned my inward parts;
you knitted me together in my mother's womb.
I praise you, for you fill me with awe;
Wonderful are you, and wonderful your works.*

Psalm 139: 13 - 14

There are lots of ways to knit a shawl: this is just one, using triple moss stitch: knit 3, purl 3, knit 3.

1. Decide which size needle to use

Size 8mm needles create a slightly denser shawl, while size 9mm make a slightly looser one.

Approximate finished sizes, not counting fringes, are 66cm x 152cm on size 8s and 76cm x 162cm on size 9s.

You can use smaller or larger needles depending on the yarn. The smaller the needle, the more stitches you will need, the larger the needle, the fewer.

2. Select your yarn

You might choose it for its colour, name or texture. You will be working with it for quite a while, so be sure to choose yarn that will keep your interest!

A standard shawl needs 400 – 500 grams of yarn, including fringes (about 500m in length)

Tip: Knits 'n' Kraft in Ormskirk opposite the Parish Church: Myra will lay wool by for you

3. Cast on

57 stitches on 9mm; 63 on 8mm.

Knit 3 purl 3 every row: you will always begin and end a row with knit 3.

Any odd multiple of 3 will work depending on the width required: 57,63, 69,75....

Sometimes garter stitch (knit every stitch) lends itself more to a textured yarn.

If the gift is for a man, a lap blanket is a good alternative to a shawl. Cast on 87 stitches on 9mm. Rather than a fringe, consider crocheting a border round the blanket.

4.. Fringe : if desired

Either make this at the start of your project if you are using a single big ball of wool or take it from the final ball before using it in your shawl.

Decide on the length of fringe required. Find a piece of cardboard double that width and fold in half. Secure the yarn with sellotape to the card and wrap the yarn round the cardboard. Cut along one side.

5 Attach the fringe

Double a strand of fringe and, using a small crochet hook, pull the strand through the cast on/off edge of your shawl. Insert the ends of the fringe through the loop and pull tight, creating a knot.

6. Give away your shawl

If you are making the shawl for a particular person you may want to include a brief history of the shawl-knitting ministry and a prayer. You could wrap the shawl in tissue and tie it with left-over yarn.

Help needed?

Call Claire on 526 5365

Websites:

www.knittingintothemystery.com

www.shawlministry.com