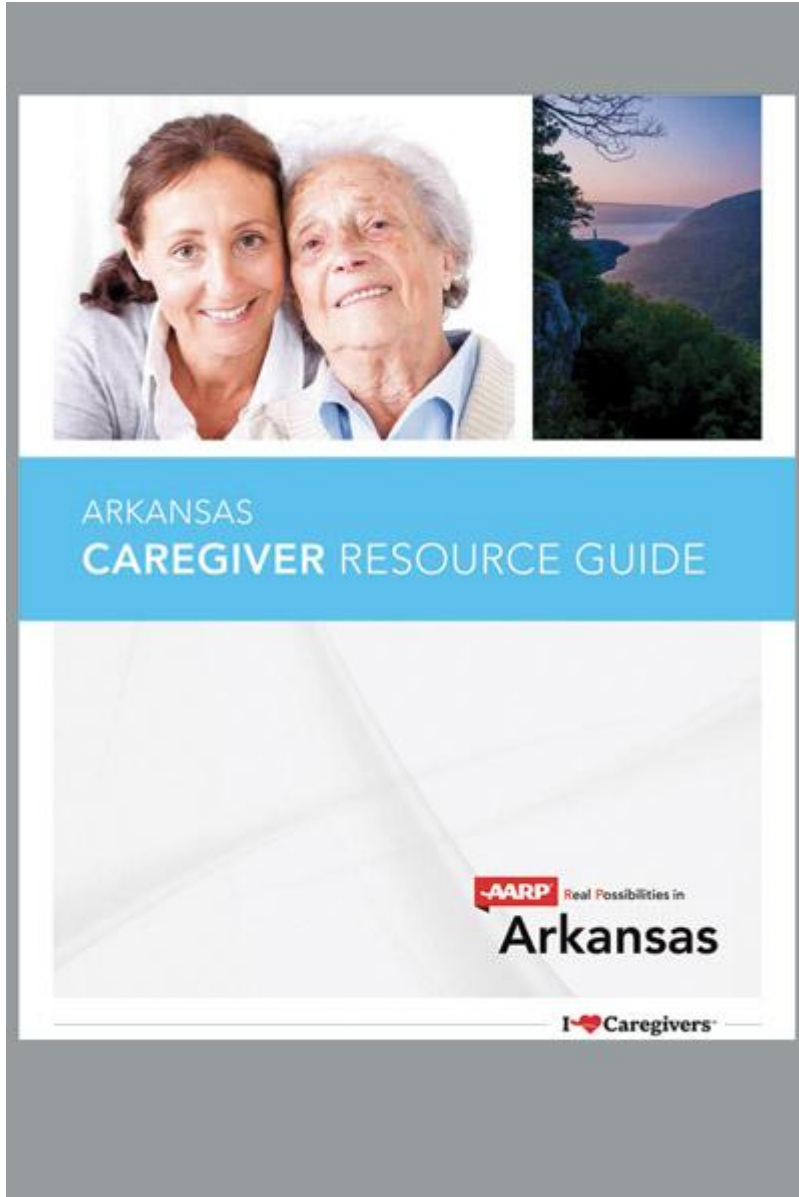


Help for the helpers: resources for caregivers

written by Special to Arkansas Catholic |



Each day 10,000 Baby Boomers are retiring, according to CNBC.com. Couple that with fewer people entering the workforce, it makes for the perfect storm of caregiving now and in the future.

While there are many businesses offering certified home care assistance, many families do not have that option because of lack of insurance coverage, where they live or financial constraints, said Mike Martin, director of Visiting Angels of Central Arkansas, which provides homecare. Even if money was not a problem, some caregiving businesses are already booked up and families prefer to give care on their own.

“Families are going to have to step up, that’s all there is to it,” Martin said.

"I think it takes off some of the stress. At least they have some tools to have more confidence to know what they're doing." Mike Martin, director of Visiting Angels of Central Arkansas

About three years ago, Visiting Angels launched the Family Learning Center, flc.ipced.com/VisitingAngelsLittleRock, which provides free articles, videos and training to help families care better for loved ones. Resources range from educational tools to help children and other relatives understand when a loved one is facing an illness that requires caregiving to advice on daily care which can include personal hygiene tips. The site also lists first aid tips regarding wound care, burns and poisons, choking and falling, etc. Families do not have to be clients of Visiting Angels, but a name and email address are required to register.

"I think it takes off some of the stress. At least they have some tools to have more confidence to know what they're doing ... like how to give them a bath and maintain their dignity," Martin said. "It enables them to provide better and safer care."

Martin said he, along with an elder attorney and financial planner, have given presentations at churches to make sure children and parents are prepared in a health crisis.

Here is a list of other caregiving resources:

- **Arkansas Area Agencies on Aging:** daas.ar.gov/aaamap.html
- **AARP Family Caregiving:** aarp.org/caregiving
Arkansas Caregiver Resource Guide: <http://bit.ly/caregiversguide2018>
- **Arkansas Lifespan Respite Coalition:** choicesinliving.ar.gov/alrc_resources.html
- **Alzheimer's Arkansas:** alzark.org