

This information is forwarded by the **Love Thy Neighbor Ministry** at Saint Rose of Lima Catholic Church, Milton FL.
Source of Information: The Catholic Foundation of Northwest Florida. Due to the many references, some may not be current but have many useful reference sources. Emails are sent using the Blind Carbon Copy (BCC) method.

This quality of life series focuses primarily on senior citizens plus other supplemental information. You do not have to be a Senior to make use of this information. If you know of a Senior, a parishioner or a neighbor who could use this information you are invited to give them a copy of this email. Fellowship through improved communications is guided by the second greatest commandment. Sometimes an act of kindness can be as simple as a phone call, a visit, or receipt of an email.

Suggestion: Create a separate folder of this information for ease of future reference.

For information about our Parish, click on the following link: <http://parishesonline.com/scripts/HostedSites/Org.asp?ID=14423>

Our parish spirit is rising, is rising.

Divvying Up the Family Belongings

http://www.legacygifts.org/savvy_senior.jsp?WebID=GL2004-0129&D=200824

Dear Savvy Senior,

Do you have any suggestions on the best way to divide up your parent's personal possessions after they're gone? My parents, both in their 70s, are still living but my two sisters and I got in a heated argument last month when Mom asked if any of us wanted her old sewing machine. It's not worth much but it got me thinking that if we're fussing over this one item, how will we handle a house full of stuff when they eventually pass away.

Splitting Heirs

Dear Splitting,

Divvying up a family's personal belongings - usually the small, simple items of little monetary value - has ignited many family feuds, even for those families who enter the process with the best of intentions. That's because the value we attach to the small personal possessions is usually sentimental or emotional, and because the simple items are the things that most families fail to talk about a head of time. Here are some tips that may help.

Divvying Solutions

The best solution for passing along family possessions is for your parents to take a stroll through their house with their adult heirs - either separately or all at once, depending on how well they get along and how far apart they live. Open up cabinets, drawers and closets, and go through boxes in the attic to find out which items they would like to inherit and why. (They may have some emotional attachment to something you're not aware of.) If more than one child wants the same thing, your parents can have the ultimate say. Then they need to sit down and make a list of who gets what on paper, signed, dated and referenced in their will. They may also want to consider writing an additional letter or creating a video that further explains their intentions.

If this isn't done - and for most families it isn't - here are some other tips that may help you avoid or resolve fights over possessions.

Use stickers:

Consider using colored stickers (or labels) to identify who gets what. Assign a different color to each person involved. If an item gets more than one sticker, you'll have to negotiate. But beware that stickers can fall off or can be moved by unscrupulous heirs.

Take turns choosing:

Use a round-robin process where family members take turns picking out items they would like to have. If "who goes first" becomes an issue, you can always flip a coin or draw straws. Also, to help simplify things, break down the dividing process room by room, versus tackling the entire house.

Have a family auction:

Give each person involved the same amount of "play money," or use "virtual points" to bid on the items you want.

Have items appraised:

Battles can erupt over whether things are being divided fairly by monetary value. Having an appraiser assess the value of items like jewelry, antiques and art can help assure a fair distribution.

Other considerations: Some families take into account care-giving contributions, economic status or family situations when determining how to distribute property.

Savvy Tip: Experts in Minnesota have created a great resource that addresses this very issue called "Who Gets Grandma's Yellow Pie

Plate?" It offers a discussion of property distribution and lists important factors to keep in mind that can help avoid conflict. You can order a copy by calling 800-876-8636.