

# **Catholic Mutual... "CARES"**

## **AUTOMOBILE SECURITY**

Auto theft is a serious crime that affects the whole community. Higher insurance rates, property damage, injuries, and loss of life from accidents are the results.

To help reduce this problem, you should follow these practical steps:

1. The majority of stolen cars were left unlocked, often with the keys in the ignition. Whether you leave your car for a moment or for several hours, always lock it and take the keys with you. NEVER LEAVE YOUR VEHICLE WITH THE ENGINE RUNNING. This is an open invitation to a carjacker.
2. Keep car keys and house keys on separate rings. Never have an identification tag on your key ring - thieves may use it to locate your car. Never hide an extra car key under the hood.
3. Never leave checkbooks, credit cards, or other such articles unattended in your car. Lock all valuables in the trunk. (This is important for both your personal safety and the protection of your car and its contents.)
4. Do not keep your vehicle registration inside your car. Carry it with you.
5. Criminals have also found it profitable to steal equipment and accessories. Engraving tools are available to mark equipment and accessories such as batteries, stereos, CB radios, and hubcaps.
6. Some thieves specialize in lifting the door-locking buttons with a coat hanger. Consider purchasing smooth non-flared locking buttons for your car doors.
7. Call the police immediately if you suspect a theft has occurred or is about to occur.

8. If your car or accessories are stolen, the police will need specific information to identify the car, parts, and accessories. You should record detailed information about your vehicle and this information should include the following:
  - a. Year, make, model, and color.
  - b. License number.
  - c. Vehicle identification (serial number).
  - d. Tires - size, brand, and serial number.
  - e. Special equipment – description, make and serial number for CB radios, tape player, air conditioner, etc.
  - f. Dents, scratches, or other accidental damage that make your car different from any other car of the same make and model.
  - g. Secret identification (i.e. initials scratched inside the trunk or under the hood; a small card with your name on it slipped alongside a window so that it will drop inside the door panel)

(Revised 11/2018)