

THE NINE PASTORAL CARE SESSIONS
to be held via Zoom
January 28 – April 1, 2023, 9:30 am – Noon
(No session on March 18 for Spring Break)

Session 1 – Basics to Pastoral Care – JANUARY 28

This Diocesan Pastoral Care training program is educational with a supportive component. We will provide you with basic visiting skills to tend to the concerns of those most vulnerable – in their rawness and vulnerability. We will offer you opportunities to join the conversations that will expose you to new ideas, and to appreciate and utilize the spiritual resources available in Jesus Christ for embodying pastoral care. You will learn more about Pastoral Care and how this act of love is an inroad to the hearts and lives of others.

Session 2 – The Healing Ministry of Christ – FEBRUARY 4

In the parable of the Good Samaritan is a reminder that practical compassion for those in need is at the heart of the Christian mission (Luke 10:30 – 37). When we visit the lonely, the sick, the elderly and the dying, in their homes, hospitals, and long-term care facilities, we are living out our baptismal identity nurtured by the love and healing ministry of Christ.

Session 3 – Listening and Communication – FEBRUARY 11 (World Day of the Sick)

Do you think that communication is about talking? Think again. Active listening is one of the most important skills we can have. Learn skills that help to build trust and respect. Whether you are already a parish visitor or just interested in this ministry, or caring for family members, you can help to create opportunities where compassion and care can flourish.

Session 4 – Elderly Isolation, Loneliness and the Journey with Dementia – FEBRUARY 18

Social isolation and loneliness are serious yet underappreciated public health risks that affect a significant portion of the older adult population. Dementia is one of the most important issues we face as our population ages. This session will also touch on not forgetting the person behind these risks and the illness.

Session 5 – Palliative Care and the Healing Ministry for the Dying – FEBRUARY 25

Death is a universal human experience. Participants will hear about the foundational teachings for the ministry of care in our parish communities that are rooted in the teachings and example of Jesus. They will understand the experience of dying & death, the unique aspects of palliative care, and the personal exchange of gifts at the end of life.

Session 6 – The Grieving Process – MARCH 4

Experiencing grief is a normal part of living – in our personal growth, and in the way we grow in our faith. This workshop will identify the stages of grief and explore personal experiences with grief and loss. Grief reactions vary depending on whether a loss was anticipated or unexpected. For example, parents do not expect to lose their children, whether or not it occurred suddenly or after a long illness, and whether or not the survivor feels responsible for the death.

Session 7 – Grief and Bereavement: Ministering to Families – MARCH 11

Participants will experience storytelling and knowledge from a former hospital Coordinator of Pastoral/Spiritual Care and learn ways to help others, such as children and teens, and how to connect and cope with their emotions. A focus is also on a forgotten area: loss of siblings. How people who genuinely want to support and comfort families that have experienced the death of a loved one is explained.

- No session on March 18 -

Session 8 – Who Am I as a Pastoral Care Outreach Visitor? – MARCH 25

Visiting the elderly, the homebound/shut-ins, the grieving, the sick and the dying reminds us that we have been called by God to be servants to those in need. In this session, we learn how to bring God’s healing love and compassion to people by journeying alongside them. We also learn about visiting tools and tips for those sacred moments spent when accompanying parishioners just as God is ‘with us’ in Jesus Christ (Immanuel — Matthew 1:23).

Session 9 – Spouse Caregiving, and Healthy Boundaries & Self-Care – APRIL 1

The sacrifices are significant in caring for a spouse. Participants learn how to step forward to not just survive but thrive. Healthy boundaries are covered as well and how our own needs can influence our understanding as we help the people we visit in their walk with Christ. Even Jesus “often withdrew to lonely places and prayed” (Luke 5:16). Are boundaries selfish? When we exercise and eat healthily, we act as good stewards of the gifts God has given us—our bodies and minds, “God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to good works” (Eph. 2:10).

Participants who attend all sessions will receive a Certificate of Completion.