

**THE NINE PASTORAL CARE SESSIONS**  
**to be held via Zoom**  
**September 27 – November 29, 2025, 9:30 am – noon**  
**(No session on October 11 for Thanksgiving)**

**Session 1 – Basics of Pastoral Care – September 27**

It is hoped that, with the help of the Holy Spirit, disciples of Christ will have a desire to learn basic contemporary tools that focus on a compassionate and relational approach to connect with those who are vulnerable and whose paths cross our own.

*“God calls us to touch the lives of our aging, lonely, ill, palliative and dying sisters and brothers with accompaniment, kindness and compassion as the hands and face of Christ. In these sessions, you learn basic tools necessary to more effectively accompany those who are in need of the healing ministry of Christ.”*

– Most Reverend Gary Gordon, Bishop of Victoria.

**Session 2 – The Healing Ministry of Christ – October 4**

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 ill, 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 the pastoral heart of Christ.

***NO SESSION OCTOBER 11 (THANKSGIVING WEEKEND)***

**Session 3 – Active and Compassionate Living – October 18**

Active and compassionate listening is one of the most important skills we can have. Learn skills that help to build trust, respect and a deeper connection– whether you are a parish visitor or interested in this ministry, caring for family members, or just considering these sessions as a personal undertaking. You can help to create opportunities where compassion and understanding can flourish.

**Session 4 – Elderly Isolation, Loneliness and the Journey with Dementia – October 25**

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 how important it is not to forget the person behind these risks and the illness.

**Session 5 – Palliative Care and the Healing Ministry for the Dying – November 1**

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 and death, the unique aspects of palliative

care, and hear about *Horizons of Hope – A toolkit for Catholic Parishes on Palliative Care* (CCCB), and the personal exchange of gifts at the end of life.

### **Session 6 – The Grieving Process – November 8**

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.

### **Session 7 – Bereavement: Ministering to Families – November 15**

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 somewhat forgotten area - loss of siblings, a deeply painful and often overlooked experience that can significantly impact a person's life

### **Session 8 – Ministry of God's Presence and Compassion – November 22**

Visiting the elderly, the homebound/shut-ins, the grieving, the sick, and the dying reminds us that we have been called to “love one another.” In this session, you will learn how to bring God's healing love and compassion to people by journeying alongside them. You will 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). Additionally, we learn how those we visit can become our teachers about the human heart.

### **Session 9 – Spouse Caregiving, and Healthy Boundaries & Self-Care – November 29**

Sacrifices are significant in caring for a spouse. You will learn how to step forward to not just survive but thrive. Healthy boundaries are covered as well and how your 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 complete all sessions will receive a Certificate of Completion.***  
*Missed sessions can be made up through at-home assignments or during future series*