

Leader's Guide for
PASTORAL CARE
An Overview of Pastoral Care

Opening Prayer: Read Luke 4:38-39 followed by a few moments of silence.

Discussion Questions

1. Why did you come to this group? What do you hope to learn?
2. What is your experience of pastoral care? Have you ever provided that for another? Have you ever been visited by someone while you were sick or in need? What was that experience like?
3. What did you learn from the history of medicine and spirituality presented here? Did any of that history surprise you?
4. What do you see as the connection between spirituality and healing?
5. Much emphasis was placed here on the difference between “doing” and “being.” Provide some examples from your own life when you were called “to be” and “not to do.” What were these experiences like? Is this difficult for you?
6. In this video we also contrasted “judging” with “reflecting.” Did you ever feel judged by someone? Has anyone ever “reflected” with you?
7. Prayer is crucial to pastoral care. But what does it mean to make prayer “their agenda” and not ours?

Closing Prayer: Read the story of the Road to Emmaus (Luke 24:13 -35). What does it mean to really listen to another's story (as Jesus did here)? When you think of pastoral care ministry, what Bible verses or stories “burn within you”?

Leader's Guide written by: Gaynell Cronin

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For use with:

Pastoral Care: An Overview of Pastoral Care on VHS (V3044) and DVD (D3050)

St. Anthony Messenger Press
28 W. Liberty St.
Cincinnati, OH 45202-6498
800-488-0488
www.AmericanCatholic.org

Leader's Guide for
PASTORAL CARE
Building Skills for Effective Pastoral Caregiving

Opening Prayer: Read Luke 10: 29-37 followed by silence.

Discussion Questions

1. How does the Good Samaritan story serve as a model for pastoral care? When have you fallen short of the effort of the Good Samaritan? When have you exceeded his efforts? And was that healthy for you and the person in need?
2. Much was said here about the meta-story. Give an example from your experience when you heard an underlying meta-story.
3. What have been your experiences of praying with a patient? Has there been a time when you chose not to pray? Why?
4. What does it mean to allow the patient to choose the agenda of a visit? Have you ever been tempted to choose that agenda yourself?
5. Do you know how to refer a person in need to another? Who are your contacts for such a referral?
6. This video emphasized the importance of self-care for people involved in this sometimes stressful ministry. What does self-care mean for you?

Closing Prayer: In this time together we have examined the skills we need to be effective pastoral caregivers. Let us spend some time now in silence reflecting on those skills we need. After a few moments of silence ask God for the particular gift you need God to develop within you.

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Pastoral Care: Building Skills for Effective Pastoral Caregiving on VHS (V3045) and DVD (D3050)

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Leader's Guide for
PASTORAL CARE
Assessing and Discerning

Opening Prayer: Read Luke 7: 1-10. This is the first time in the Gospel when Luke refers to Jesus as "Lord." It comes at a moment of compassion. Think of a time when compassion was shown to you. Jesus, we know you are the Lord because you express the compassion of God in this world. Help us to follow you on this way. Amen.

Discussion Questions

1. This video mentions a number of "signs" in a room that could indicate a patient's mood. Have you noticed these signs before? Are there any others which you have noticed which are not mentioned in the video?
2. The "agenda" of a visit belongs to the patient. Did you ever impose your agenda on a visit? What happened?
3. Do you feel comfortable praying with patients? What advice can people in this group offer one another regarding prayer?
4. As a pastoral care provider, you are called to be a "non-anxious presence." What does that mean to you? When has that been hard to do?
5. You go into each situation as a person of prayer. As you pray, what is your image of God?

Closing Prayer: You are invited to say aloud or silently in your heart the names of those in your community who need the healing, compassionate presence of Christ. (*Pause for names.*) Together we pray "Our Father..."

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For use with:

Pastoral Care: Assessing and Discerning on VHS (V3046) and DVD (D3050)

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Leader's Guide for
PASTORAL CARE
Pastoral Care for People With Cancer

Opening Prayer: Lord, our God, we have all known someone with cancer. As we discuss ways to care for those in our community with this disease, send to us the spirit of those who have passed on to the communion of saints. Help us to learn and to grow from what their lives have taught us. And help us to trust in the Great Mystery—in your life and your love and your presence for and with us. Amen.

Discussion Questions

1. When you hear the word *cancer* how do you feel?
2. What is your experience of cancer? Did anything in those experiences lead to a feeling of fear now? Looking back, where was grace in it all?
3. Much was discussed in this program about the varying moods of a person living with cancer. Does that resonate with your experience?
4. Some types of cancer provoke guilt in the patient. Have you ever witnessed that? Did you ever try to talk a person out of that guilt? Did you ever see a person experience forgiveness in such a state?
5. Has a person with cancer ever provided you with a new insight, with a wisdom summoned up from the depth of this experience?

Closing Prayer: The Spirit is present among us. The Spirit is present with all who have gone before us in faith. I invite you now to name those in your life who have died from cancer... Lord, we acknowledge these people who live with you now. May they inspire us in the ministry we do in your name and in theirs. I invite you now to name those people who now live with cancer. (*Pause for names.*) Lord, our God, we urge you to send these people your Spirit, your healing power, your strength, your hope. Lord, our God, you are the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and end. Be with all who suffer with cancer. Be with us. Bring us all closer to you. Amen.

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Pastoral Care: Pastoral Care for People With Cancer on VHS (V3047) and DVD (D3050)

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Leader's Guide for
PASTORAL CARE
Pastoral Care of the Dying

Opening Prayer: Read Mark 15:33-39. Jesus by embracing death you make it sacred. And through Resurrection you tell us death is not the last word, but the next to last word. Help us to stand with those who die and know your presence. Amen.

Discussion Questions

1. What are your feelings about death? What are your fears? Has your attitude about death changed over time?
2. What is your experience of death? Have you ever been present at the time of death? What is your experience of the varying approaches people have taken as they die?
3. There is much in this video about respecting the dying person's perspective. Has that ever been difficult? Have you ever avoided the topic or tried to "fix" the person's perspective?
4. Ministry to the dying requires we are in touch with our own death. If there is time in this group to spend alone writing, write your own obituary.
5. What does your faith tell you about death? How does this faith impact your ministry to the dying?
6. What is your experience of ministering to the bereaved? What have you learned from these experiences?

Closing Prayer: Read Psalm 23.

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Pastoral Care: Pastoral Care of the Dying on VHS (V3048) and DVD (D3050)

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Leader's Guide for
PASTORAL CARE
Pastoral Care for Those Living With HIV/AIDS

Opening Prayer: *Read Romans 8:31-39.* Jesus, you constantly went to the marginalized of society. You showed us with your very life that nothing can separate us from the love of God. Help us to be a sign of that love to those living with HIV/AIDS. Amen.

Discussion Questions

1. This video provided a brief history of HIV/AIDS. What did you learn from that history? Have there been further developments since this video was produced in the fall of 1999?
2. What is your experience of HIV/AIDS?
3. Do you have any fears concerning this ministry? If so, how can those fears be addressed?
4. What are the personal strengths you bring to this ministry? What are the weaknesses?
5. This video places an emphasis on life and hope. In what practical ways can you be a person of hope in this ministry?
6. How can this ministry enrich your life?

Closing Prayer: *Read Luke 24:1-8.* Invite the group to reflect on their experience of Resurrection. What does it mean in your life and in this ministry to look for the risen Jesus among the living? *End the discussion with a few moments of silence.*

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