

Pastoral Presence



ADDRESSING THE SPECIAL CONCERNS OF PASTORAL VISITORS, CAREGIVERS & CARE-RECEIVERS

Diocese of Trenton

Office of Pastoral Care

Volume 1, Issue 3; Spring 2008

“Pastoral Visitors know ‘The Way’...to be”

“If life experiences don’t get used they’ve been wasted.”

Anna S-Brudzynski
Associate Director

This powerful statement remains with me since attending a presentation on under-recognized grief given by Dr. Harold Ivan Smith, educator, author and counselor.

Smith shared life lessons learned from journeying with people through their grief and bereavement as a former funeral director to present day theologian and grief counselor. His statement was made within the context of a story about a woman whose teenage daughter had been killed by her boyfriend. The distraught mother, consoled by an attentive network of people, in time became a counselor to grieving parents in similar situations and also started a scholarship in memory of her daughter.

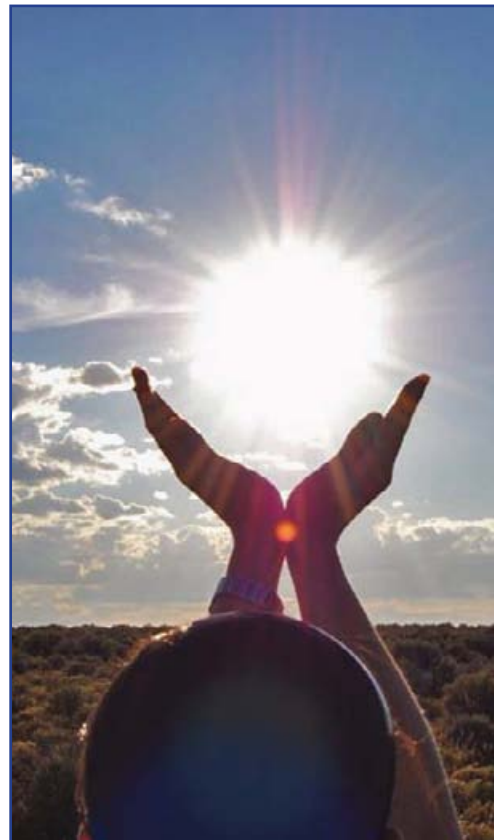
While suffering is never sought after, her faith and supportive community allowed her the sacred time to process just how she would have her daughter’s memory live on in a positive way. In essence she was given the permission to use her suffering well.

The connection between life experiences and the ministry of pastoral visitation while not at all on Smith’s agenda appeared quite evident to this lay minister. Our particular trials when faced courageously – instruct us, inform us and transform us into compassionate instruments – God’s tools. We serve as a conduit – channeling Jesus’ loving presence to our care-receivers in need of God’s hope, encouragement and inner peace.

To be sure, pastoral visitors don’t “dump”

their particular stories on another’s sacred journey through illness or grief. Rather it is from their experience that pastoral care ministers have been molded – shaped-sensitized- to know – almost intuitively to listen deeply, with the ears of the heart. Pastoral Visitors understand that their role is - to be with, not “to do” – the action is bringing Jesus’ comfort and love through their gentle presence.

Pastoral visitors know deep within their very souls that no matter the challenges that one must face that Jesus, Emmanuel is with us – crying with us, consoling us and believing in us even when we harbor doubt. Pastoral Visitors strengthened by their life experiences are able to provide hope when the griever cannot or isn’t able to hope for him/herself.



Providing for those in poor health



The Most Reverend Bishop John M. Smith celebrates the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick with staff and patients at St. Francis Medical Center, Trenton, commemorating World Day of Prayer for the Sick and the feast day of Our Lady of Lourdes. For more about the diocesan observance of the World Day of the Sick, turn to pages 4-5.



Sacred Stories...

We are all traveling together

*“For wherever you go. I will go.”
– Ruth 1:16*

Diane Currie
Diocese of Trenton
Finance Department

When I was in my early 20’s, I left my family home to pursue a dream/career that would take me over 300 miles from home. A vivid memory of that moment of departure was my mother running after my car, as I

pulled away, exclaiming “please don’t go, please don’t go!” Despite the heartache and pain of that moment, I did leave. Now almost 20 years later, having returned to a completely different world, I now deal with my mother’s departure due to Alzheimer’s disease. And it is I who now exclaims, “Mom, please don’t go, please don’t go.”

So many caregivers like me are dealing with enormous responsibility, heartache and many life-changing moments. We can liken our experience to chasing after that car, saying “please don’t go.” Life, as we know it, is different; the person we are caring for is different. Things will never quite be the same.

But, if we allow ourselves to be open to God’s healing presence, there can be grace and perhaps even joy and peace. This year my mother who is usually non-verbal has spoken four times! Each time she has communicated, it has been a gift and a graced moment. These experiences have filled my heart with gratitude and have given me hope.

For, at some point in care giving, we begin to realize that there is no longer a need for comings or goings. But rather, we find consolation in the knowledge that, at some level, we are traveling together...always!

Serving With a Heart Like Jesus...

Anita Nixon
Pastoral Care Volunteer
Church of St. Anselm

The Pines in Tinton Falls is an independent residence for active and semi-active seniors. The Christophers from the Church of Saint Anselm celebrate a weekly Communion Service for residents who have difficulty attending weekly liturgy at the church.

These residents have joyfully become part of St. Anselm’s Social Justice/ Human Concerns Committee. Many

of the residents prepare meals which are then frozen and brought to The Center for HIV/AIDS in Asbury Park. They also organize non-perishable food collections on a frequent basis.

As the weather changes, they donate items of clothing for the women and children at The Epiphany House in Asbury Park.

These folks are Prayer Warriors, always remembering special intentions and offering daily prayers for peace on behalf of one another, the local community and the world at large.



Prayer for Caregivers

God of all Creation, guardian and protector of all life,

our lives are in Your Holy Hands.

*Fashion our hearts for this work.
Instruct our hands in the service of healing.*

Teach us to listen with our whole being.

Grant us the grace to hear the stirring of Your guidance in the easing of fear and the alleviation of pain.

Bless our eyes that we might see the face of Jesus reflected in a stranger’s.

*Be present with us in days and nights that are long and trying,
in times of tragedy and grief.*

Create in each of us a space of consolation and of peace.

– Deborah D. Cooper
National Association of
Catholic Chaplains

Pastoral Care Ministers Embrace the Paschal Mystery

They Help to Bridge the Now and the Not Yet...

For I am certain of this: neither death nor life, no angel, no prince, nothing that exists, nothing still to come, not any power, or height of depth, nor any created thing, can ever come between us and the love of God made visible in Christ Jesus our Lord.
– Romans 9:4

Anna S-Brudzynski
Associate Director

Pastoral care ministers in our great Diocese of Trenton incarnate the confidence fervently described by St. Paul in his message to the Romans every time they set foot into the sacred space where our care-receivers dwell. Whether one's 'holy ground' is

located in a hospital, assisted living facility, skilled nursing home and/or a private residence, our pastoral visitors recognize that they are on a mission, a healing mission that offers hope and peace to our suffering sisters and brothers – in – Christ.

They recognize that our hope rests in the Paschal Mystery of our Lord and

Savior – that this ministry allows them to be present to the Suffering Christ found in the lives of those who lay before them.

They are humbled by the graces received from such service. Our pastoral visitors are shining examples of what “being redeemed” looks like and “acts like” – pastoral visitors walk the talk!

May these beacons of hope always recognize that the joy experienced with this ministry is the Lord's delight made real within their very beings encouraging them on to their next pastoral visit.

“Your DECISIONS matter...especially to YOU!”

April 16, 2008 was the first-ever National Healthcare Decisions Day

Deanna V. Sass
Director

Most of us prefer to think of ourselves as the caregiver at the bedside of a seriously ill person, rather than being the person in the bed, but we do know that it could go either way.

Each of us, fragile human beings that we are, could be one stroke away from being incapacitated, one car accident away from becoming brain-damaged or one spiking fever away from delirium. Should such an event render us unable to communicate our 'end-of-life' wishes, who will make those decisions for us; and do they know what you or I might have wanted to do or not do under the circumstances?

National Healthcare Decisions Day was established this year; specifically so more people would become aware of the importance of choosing a healthcare representative (also called an 'advocate' or a 'proxy') and of completing an advance directive.

Catholics, in particular, may want to be

sure that their Catholic beliefs are upheld through to the end of their natural life, and completing an advanced directive is one way to be sure that they will.

The forms are short, simple to complete and easy to understand. For residents of NJ, the NJ Catholic Conference of Bishops has prepared an approved-for-Catholics version which includes a “Naming My Healthcare Representative” form, the “Treatment Choice Instructions” form and a third section for witnessed signatures (notarization is not necessary for the document to be binding) all in one easy-to-use format with clear instructions.

One is also given the choice to indicate by initialing whether or not he or she wishes



to become an organ donor upon death, making the form thorough and complete, leaving no guess-work for those who may be standing at our bedsides when the time comes when we are on 'the other side' of the pastoral visit.

**NJCC Advanced Directive Forms
may be downloaded for free from
the Office of Pastoral Care website**

www.dioceseoftrenton.org/justice/pastoralcare.asp

*Go to 'Quick Jump' and click on
'NJ Catholic Bishops Advance Directive Form'*

Diocese Observes World Day of the Sick 2008

Deanna V. Sass
Director

The Diocese of Trenton experienced a particularly rich and meaningful World Day of the Sick on February 11, 2008. At the behest of Trenton's Bishop John M. Smith, he, along with the Office of Pastoral Care administrators (Deanna Sass, director and Anna Brudzynski, associate director), and St. Francis Medical Center administrators (President/CEO Gerard Jablonowski, VP for Mission/Ministry Carol Jaworski) as well as medical and nursing staff, spent World Day of the Sick as a day of learning and a day of pastoral presence.

Bishop Smith engaged some of the medical residents in a stimulating dialogue about modern medical education and training, learning about some of the cutting edge technologies. They also discussed spirituality, as part of the total care of a patient, especially pertinent in a Catholic hospital. The nursing students shared with Bishop Smith their individual reasons for entering the nursing profession. They expressed a strong sense of 'calling' to the healthcare ministry and a deep dedication to serving those in their care. Bishop shared with them about the role of the Bishop in a diocese, he expressed his deep gratitude for those who cared for him on any occasion when he has been hospitalized, and he gave those who so desired, his Episcopal blessing.

Clearly the highlight of the day for Bishop Smith was when he visited the patients in the Compassionate Care Hospice, housed at St. Francis, and celebrated the sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick with them. Just to see the love and compassion that



Bishop John M. Smith offered a communal Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick for those who came forward to receive during a Mass for staff, patients and family at St. Francis Medical Center. – photos provided by St. Francis Medical Center

The message for all who were a part of the day is that the church universal truly cares for her sick and dying, and in tandem with healthcare professionals are attending to the needs which they present to us as church.

Bishop brought to the sacrament he administered was inspiring. With the great support of Fr. Sam Sirianni and the Office of Worship, the day concluded with Bishop Smith and a number of other diocesan priests concelebrating Mass for hospital staff, patients and their families. Bishop Smith offered a communal Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick for a dozen people who came forward to receive. It was a joy-filled and grace-filled time of prayer and worship for all in attendance.

The message for all who were a part of the day is that the church universal truly cares for her sick and dying, and in tandem with healthcare professionals are attending to the

needs which they present to us as church. The blessings of the day continue to unfold, and none who were there will soon forget the many significant moments of grace and healing that comprised the day.

“God of Mercy, ease the sufferings and comfort the weakness of your servants whom the Church anoints with this holy oil.”

– from the Roman Ritual
“Pastoral Care of the Sick: Rites of Anointing and Viaticum



Providing compassionate care

Bishop John M. Smith spent Feb. 11, World Day of the Sick, at St. Francis Medical Center, providing comfort and hope to those who are ill and those who care for them. To those receiving treatment in the Compassionate Care Hospice, the bishop celebrated the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick. To those who provide care, especially those beginning their medical careers, he discussed spirituality and its importance as part of the total care of medical patients.



While visiting nursing students at St. Francis Medical Center, nursing students shared their individual reasons for entering the nursing profession with Bishop John M. Smith. They expressed a strong sense of 'calling' to the healthcare ministry and a deep dedication to serving those in their care.

Enrichment Opportunities

The American Academy of Bereavement presents:

Different Ways of Grieving, Different Ways of Healing:

Practical Counseling Tools & Techniques

Featuring:

Douglas C. Smith, MA, MS, MDiv.

An important seminar for all who provide care and support to the sick, dying and bereaved. Come be affirmed and enriched in your ministry as you benefit from Doug's many years of teaching and explaining practical techniques that address the social/spiritual/psychological needs of grieving people.

May 27, 2008

Holiday Inn, Princeton
100 Independence Way
Princeton, NJ
(609) 520-1200

8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Lunch on your own
12-1:00 p.m.

Four Ways to Register

Call: (800) 726-3888
Fax: (716) 332-0300
Online: cmieducation.com
Mail To: CMI Education
Institute, Inc.
Dept. #863
PO Box 8000
Buffalo, NY 14267

Caring For The Caregiver - Who Cares For You?

Presenter:

Anna S-Brudzynski, MSW, MA

Tuesday, May 6, 2008

St. Mark, Sea Girt
(Faith Enrichment Center)
7 - 9:00 p.m.

Thursday, May 22, 2008

Jesus the Lord, Keyport
(Faith Enrichment Center)
7 - 9:00 p.m.

Register through the Office of Catechesis at (609) 406-7400, ext. 5554

Health Economics Seminar For Caregivers

Caring for an elderly loved one suffering with Alzheimer's or dementia is a real challenge-one that often requires the help of qualified professionals. Hear from estate planning experts, elder lawyers and Alzheimer medical specialists on these important issues while also learning how to enjoy peace of mind and ensure financial security for your loved ones.

May 7, 2008

Georgian Court University
North Dining Room
2- 4:00 p.m.

Cost: FREE

Reservations required.

For information about additional, upcoming enrichment opportunities, visit our website, www.dioceseoftrenton.org/justice/pastoralcare.asp

2nd Annual Day of Reflection for Pastoral Care Ministers

Presenter:

Fr. Martin Padovani, SVD

May 16, 2008

9:00 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.
San Alfonso Retreat Center, Long Branch

SOLD OUT

The Office of Pastoral Care is delighted with the enthusiastic response to this event!

The 150 spaces have been filled thereby ending registration.

Please be sure to register early for the 3rd Annual Day of Reflection in 2009!

Pastoral Visitation: The Art of Holy Listening (Part 1)

Presenter:

Anna S-Brudzynski, MSW, MA

Tuesday, May 13, 2008

St. Anthony of Padua,
Hightstown
(Faith Enrichment Center)
7:30 - 9:30 p.m.

Register through the Office of Catechesis at (609) 406-7400, ext. 5554

Pastoral Visitation: The Art of Holy Listening (Part 2)

Tuesday, June 10, 2008

St. Anthony of Padua,
Hightstown
7:30 p.m. - 9:30 p.m.

Register through the Office of Catechesis at (609) 406-7400, ext. 5554

Academic and Professional Opportunities

George Washington Institute for Spirituality and Health, (GWish) presents the following opportunities for practicing health care professionals who already have a bachelor's degree- including physicians, chaplains, social workers, nurses, psychologists, and others involved in the care of the sick.

“Spirituality and Healthcare Graduate Certificate Program”

A fully online program. Consists of five courses: Foundations of Spirituality in Health Care, The Role of Spiritual Beliefs and Practices in Health Care, Human Development in Spirituality and Health, Practical Methods for Providing Spiritual Care, (elective) Spirituality and Health Professions Education, or (elective) Spiritual Care at the End of Life.

For certificate information contact: Program Director:

Beverly K. Lunsford, PhD, RN
Email: hcsbkl@gwumc.edu
Phone: 202-994-6220, ext. 6223
Web: www.gwish.org/GWCertificate.doc

“The Art of Presence”

3rd Annual Healthcare Renewal Retreat, in Assisi, Italy, August 22-28, 2008.

“Give yourself the gift of inner nourishment, deepening your understanding of spiritual care while learning practical tools for integrating spirituality into your daily work life.”

For Healthcare Renewal Retreat details, contact:

Inner Harmony
Phone: 415-884-4483
Web: www.innerharmony.com



Riverview Medical Center seeks Part-Time Chaplain

The position is offered online through Meridianhealth.com
Click “Careers”

Job: Chaplain 3P1
(Customer Relations), #169476
Shift: Day
Status: Part Time/20 hours
Location: Riverview Medical Center, Red Bank

Helpful Numbers and Websites for Caregivers

According to the Department of Health and Senior Services there are early one million adults in New Jersey who provide some form of unpaid caregiving service for an elderly or disabled friend or family member. The following agencies can provide information and assistance for seniors, persons with disabilities and caregivers. Some programs have eligibility requirements; the agencies you contact will provide you with the details.

National Alliance for Caregivers

www.caregiving.org

National Family Caregivers Association

www.nfcares.org

Family Caregiver Alliance

www.caregiver.org

NJ Ease for Caregivers

877-222-3737

www.caregovernj.nj.gov

609-396-6788, ext. 241

Barbara Stender, Caregiver Support Specialist Workshops, Counseling, Support Groups

Ocean County: Community Care Program for the Elderly and Disabled (CCPED)

732-349-1500

Monmouth County Division of Social Services

732-431-6000

Burlington County Office of the Aging:

609-265-5069

877-222-3737

NJ Association of Geriatric Care Managers (statewide)

856-985-1180

Area Agency on Aging

877-222-3737

Adult Day Services (statewide)

732-329-8954

Adult Protective Services – Social Services Unit

609-989-4346

Elderly Abuse (Nursing Home Ombudsman)

800-582-6995

From Our Shelves...

...Book Reviews

“With Open Arms: Receiving Care with Grace and Gratitude”

By Thomas A. Droege

Thomas Droege presents an excellent perspective on the theology of the cross as it pertains to understanding the act of receiving care as a sacred faith action. Droege very clearly makes the case that it is as blessed to receive care as it is to provide care because Jesus required care, in all its forms – emotional and physical – throughout his life. Jesus’ need for such care sanctifies and exemplifies the sacredness of receiving care.

Our ministerial journey as compassionate healers is strengthened and inspired when we recognize that at the heart of our Trinitarian faith is the primordial example of pure love and profound relational power. Droege researched and wrote his book while battling a terminal illness. He reminds his readers that each one of us whether a caregiver or not will be in the need of receiving care and will have to face death. He challenges us via his keen insight and thorough research to understand that “we die as we live” and “dying well” concerns itself with the sacred practice of receiving and providing care with graciousness and gratitude.

– Reviewed by Anna S-Brudzynski

“Getting to Know the Life Stories of Older Adults”

By Kathy Laurenhue, M.A.

The author opens this book by quoting a Yiddish proverb, “God made man because he loves stories.” This book offers both the professional and non-professional elder care-giver with the tools needed to uncover the ‘stories’ hidden within each person to whom we minister. The exercises are outlined with great clarity and in great detail, so all one needs to do is follow the steps. It is a ‘workbook’ to be used as a resource, not a book to ‘read.’

Although intended to be used with the elderly, it provides ways to adapt the exercises for youth or other small groups. It can even be used in a one-to-one format, and has a special section on how to use the book with folks with dementia. It should be on the shelf of everyone hoping to make the most of their time caring for the elderly, in homes or in institutions.

– Reviewed by Deanna V. Sass



Who We Are

Rooted in the Gospel mandate to continue the healing mission of Jesus Christ, we advance the compassionate, spiritual and sacramental care of God’s suffering people by resourcing the clergy, pastoral ministers and caregivers who serve them in many ways.

- As a diocesan liaison to hospitals, parishes and health-care facilities we:
 - advocate for and facilitate collaborative, empathic & timely sacramental & pastoral care
 - respond to pressing matters from individuals/families or chaplains regarding pastoral care needs
- As formators of pastoral-care ministers we:
 - provide practical training for those who minister to the sick
 - offer days of reflection, retreats and other spiritual enrichment for pastoral care ministers
- As promoters of pastoral care at the parish level we:
 - raise awareness of the baptismal responsibility to journey with the sick and dying
 - offer consultation to parishes in developing or enhancing pastoral care ministries
 - resource clergy and lay ministers with current teachings and best practices in pastoral care
- As consultants & resource persons we:
 - offer referrals, suggest resources and provide educational materials
 - provide consultation to individuals/families or chaplains on matters related to life-transitions, and end-of-life issues

Deanna V. Sass, MA

Director

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