



The Vision

Imagine . . . circles of pastoral caregivers equipped to serve in many ways in and beyond their Area Catholic Communities.

You can help build these communities of pastoral caregivers, steeped in Benedictine Spirituality, and practiced in compassionate listening.

Area Catholic Communities (ACCs) said they needed more companions for those with pastoral needs. Bridge-Builders for a Thriving Mission can help! Funded by a *Thriving Congregations Grant* from The Lilly Foundation, Inc., this training for lay pastoral caregivers is being **offered at no cost to ACCs in the Diocese of St. Cloud.**

As a result of this training, participants will be able to:

- meet people where they are at in the pew, at home, on the margins;
- describe Benedictine foundations for caregiving;
- practice non-judgmental listening;
- begin making pastoral visits; and
- form prayerful communities to encourage and nourish caregivers.

Benedictine Spirituality

When Benedict of Nursia wrote a Rule for the monks of his monastery in sixth century Italy, he was encouraging those seek God together in community.

1500 years later that Rule is still being observed all around the world, wherever people draw on time-tested Benedictine wisdom.

Benedict's Rule equips people to "**listen with the ear of the heart,**" a discipline supported by spiritual practices like these:

- Lectio & Visio Divina (sacred reading)
- Caring Community
- Radical Hospitality
- Discerning Gifts & Calling
- Conversatio Morum (transforming way of life)

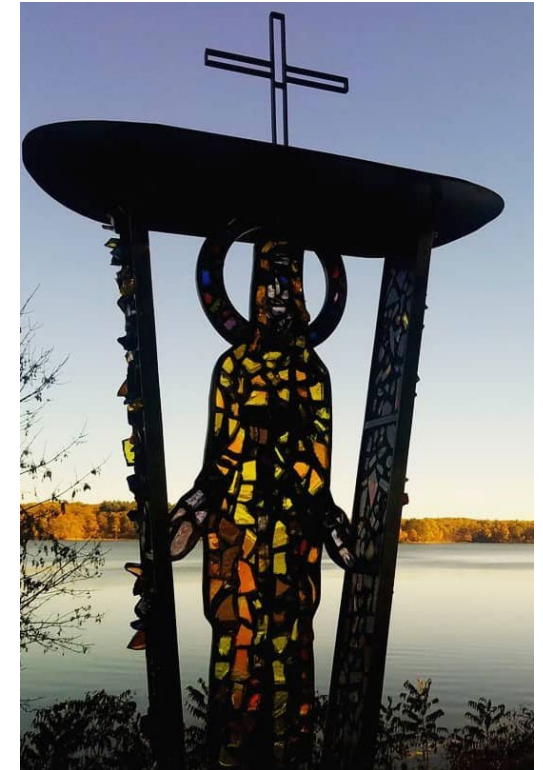
These ancient Benedictine practices come together in the ministry of pastoral care—especially in **the art of listening.**

Lectio Divina roots us in Scripture. Community offers support and encouragement. Hospitality invites humility and mutuality. Discerning gifts enables us to respond to God's call with our best strengths. Conversatio morum renews our patience with all this as a lifelong journey.



Training Lay Pastoral Caregivers

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Training Lay Pastoral Caregivers



in partnership with . . .
Community of Hope International



Community of Hope International

Bridge-Builders for a Thriving Mission chose to partner with Community of Hope International (COHI) because of the organization's expertise and rootedness in Benedictine spirituality. COHI has been equipping lay people worldwide to serve in all forms of pastoral care, providing ecumenical training materials in English, Spanish, and French. COHI sees pastoral care as a way to encounter Christ in one another, being present to a person in spiritual need with compassionate and non-judgmental listening.

Through ongoing spiritual formation and practical lessons on caregiving, members learn to integrate theological reflection and practice with their experiences of ministering to others.

Pastoral Care Examples

- Home Visitation
- Companionship the Homeless, Prisoners, and Marginalized
- Hospital and Hospice Settings
- Mission Trips
- Nursing Homes, Retirement Centers
- Women's Ministries
- Youth/Children's Ministries

Initial Training

The fourteen modules used in training cover topics both theoretical and practical, ranging from the tenets of Benedictine Spirituality to practical instruction in making a pastoral care visit. The goal of training is to awaken participants to God's call and discover their spiritual gifts for ministry.

"This training is about the skills and the practices of spiritual life that prepare each one of us to be open and hospitable to the presence of Christ in the other person . . . Our prayer is that the stranger will receive us and see the Christ in us."

*Adapted from The Rev. Dr. Helen Appelberg,
Community of Hope International Founder*

www.cohinternational.org



Ongoing Circles of Care

Following the training, Circles of Care continue to meet, nurturing and sustaining a Benedictine sense of community. Lay pastoral caregivers meet monthly in Christ-centered circles to pray, reflect, and nourish caregivers for the ongoing ministry of listening.



Modules

The 14-module curriculum includes:

- 01 | Benedictine Spirituality
- 02 | Theology of Pastoral Care
- 03 | Pastoral Identity
- 04 | Listening Skills
- 05 | Prayer, Meditation, Silence
- 06 | Motivational Spiritual Gifts
- 07 | Pastoral Visits & Boundaries
- 08 | Confidentiality, Practice Visit, and Debriefing
- 09 | Family Systems
- 10 | Grief: Coping with Loss
- 11 | Pastoral Care for Seniors
- 12 | Second Practice Visit
- 13 | Care for Caregiver
- 14 | Commitment to Ministry

Contact info@thrivingmission.org for upcoming training dates and locations.