

The **CIRCLE OF CARE.....**
 is established in each Training Center after
 the initial training is completed. All com-
 missioned Pastoral Care Givers are includ-
 ed in this group meeting once a month.
 Actions include:

- ◆ Debriefing after pastoral visits;
- ◆ Worship together to deepen spiritual life;
- ◆ Benefit from continuing education opportunities;
- ◆ Participate in peer mentoring;
- ◆ Report ministry information;
- ◆ Deepen community;
- ◆ Participate in retreats and quiet days.

*“The Circle of Care is where the ongoing life of
 the Community of Hope is sustained.”*

Community of Hope ministries:

- ◆ Outreach to the parish
- ◆ Homebound
- ◆ Nursing homes
- ◆ Hospices
- ◆ Retirement homes
- ◆ Outpatient clinics
- ◆ Prisons
- ◆ Women’s ministries
- ◆ Youth ministries
- ◆ Homeless and the un-
 derserved
- ◆ Mission trips



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The Community of Hope International

“... a school for God’s service.”
Prologue, The Rule of Benedict



Fall 2014

Our **MISSION**

as *The Community of Hope* is to create
 Christian communities of lay pastoral
 care givers united in prayer, shaped by
 Benedictine spirituality and equipped for
 and serving in pastoral care ministries.

www.coh-international.com

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The Community of Hope training awakens trainees to God's call on each of our lives by helping individuals discover and better understand their own spiritual gifts for ministry. Each participant is encouraged to make this experience a journey into wholeness, to use this opportunity to explore a "rule of life", practice sacred silence, Christian meditation, compassionate listening, pastoral identity and *lectio divina*, all within the context of Benedictine spirituality. This experience builds community and develops spiritually centered pastoral caregivers.

The Community of Hope curriculum includes 12 weeks of classroom training, practice visits, a three-month internship, and a retreat:

- 1) **Introduction to The Community of Hope**
- 2) **Theology of Pastoral Care** - characteristics, goals and functions of pastoral care ministry and identification of the pastoral care givers' needs;
- 3) **Benedictine Spirituality** - how the Rule of St. Benedict continues to be a relevant model for strengthening spirituality, building Christian communities committed to pastoral care;
- 4) **Listening Skills** - compassionate, intentional listening in caregiving and in community;
- 5) **Prayer, Christian Meditation & Silence** - enhancing the ability to hear God's voice, obey His word and build community;
- 6) **The Pastoral Visit, Boundaries & Pastoral Identity** - developing the skills of observation, listening, sensitivity, compassion, prayer, and privacy;
- 7) **Confidentiality and Debriefing** - learning to honor privacy and care for one another in pastoral ministry and in community;

- 8) **First Practice Visits** - an opportunity to apply newly developed pastoral care skills with supervision at a local institution;
- 9) **Grief: Coping with Loss** - understanding personal loss and grief as preparation for appropriate pastoral ministry to others;
- 10) **Exploring Pastoral Ministry** - spiritual care for seniors, understanding the needs of seniors for living a fulfilling life;
- 11) **Second Practice Visits** - a second opportunity to refine pastoral care skills in a real setting;
- 12) **Discovering Who You Are** - identify and appreciate spiritual gifts in community, their relationship to pastoral care ministry, and their impact on building community;
- 13) **Commitment to Ministry** - commitment, stability, obedience, humility and perseverance as Benedictine values that are essential to pastoral care ministry and community;
- 14) **Community of Hope Internship** - a three-month internship after completing the initial training will include pastoral care visits followed by debriefing and participation in at least three Circle of Care meetings, or the equivalent. This internship is a prerequisite to commissioning.
- 15) **Retreat** - a time of personal reflection and formation within community.



*"Listen with the ear of your heart."
St. Benedict*



A Brief History of The Community of Hope

The training originated in the Diocese of Texas at St. Luke's Episcopal Hospital and grew rapidly. As The Community of Hope grew to over 86 centers, the need for decentralization was recognized and a regionalizing process began in 2004.

Leaders met at the Annual Leadership Conference in June, 2005 to organize a new structure: *The Community of Hope International*. The essential philosophy and mission remain the same, while allowing each region to adapt the program to its specific needs.

The volunteer Pastoral Care Givers remain united in prayer and community as their ministries lead them to serve in the congregation and wider community. The program remains rooted in Benedictine spirituality and is based on the classic "clinical pastoral education" model used in many hospitals to train chaplains.

The training is not limited exclusively to Episcopalians but, rather, is open to and enriched by the representation of many denominations.

The Community of Hope defines pastoral care as:

being present in a listening, compassionate, non-controlling manner to an individual or group for the purpose of consciously, or perhaps unconsciously, representing God to them and seeking to respond to their spiritual needs.

