Theology of Pastoral Care

Becoming lay chaplains you become aware that:
• You share in the ministry of being a shepherd. The word “pastor” is Latin for shepherd. Jesus, our Shepherd calls us to care for His sheep, especially those who are lost or in crisis.

We focus on:
• Listening with the ear of the heart
• Practice being “present.” Put aside personal agenda, free to BE.
• Determine how your needs impact your pastoral ministry.

Purpose of studying the Rule of Benedict:
• Learn and practice the spiritual practices of silence, contemplative prayer, study and reflection on Holy Scripture (Lectio Divina).
• Learn to seek to serve Christ in the stranger, the person in crisis

Contributions from outstanding teachers and prominent leaders:
• John Patton – Professor, Columbia Theological Seminary in Decatur, GA. who teaches that Human care and community are possible because we are held in God’s memory. Caring is in our DNA.
• William Arnold – has a pastoral theology around human development.
• Eric Erikson – has captured the well-known Eight Stages of Life.
• James Fowler – gives us his famous work in the Seven Stages of Faith

In this module we are encouraged to become sensitive to and aware of our own individual and very unique pastoral identity, who we are:
• Our beliefs, attitudes, needs, fears, unresolved hurts, grief and questions.
• Am I aware of how these influence my attitude and understanding of what is happening during a pastoral visit?
• Am I meeting the needs of the care receiver? Are my needs getting in the way?

During the weeks of coming together to learn, pray, worship and explore pastoral care giving each person grows in their relationship with Christ, with each other and with ourselves. This time of growing in our relationship with Christ we allow him to heal our own woundedness, we grown in compassion and care and become vessels to heal others as we have been healed…we grow because we let go, we grow in every way into the grace and will of God, in Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit.

We hold fast to the words of John 15:5,
“Jesus said, I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit; because apart from me you can do nothing.”
Grace and humility, obedience.“to listen with the ear of the heart.”