CAREGIVING IS A JOURNEY OF FAITH, HOPE AND LOVE

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INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE
• To reflect on the caregiver’s experience as a journey based on faith, hope and love

OBJECTIVES
• To see the gift of a caregiver as an essential part of our faith
• To affirm the role of caregiver as one of love and as an important role in today’s society
• To acknowledge that caregiving can be a time of challenges and a time of hope (Ecclesiastes 3:1)
• To suggest ways to care for the caregiver and to reflect on the caregiver’s experience
WHAT IS A CAREGIVER?

Caregivers care for people of all ages who may be:

• Homebound
• Ill
• Recuperating from illness or surgery
• Bedridden
• Unable to care for all their physical or spiritual needs
WHO IS THE CAREGIVER?

• Today, caregivers might be hired from home health agencies
• Many caregivers are family members
• Neighbors and friends may also be caregivers
• Clergy and other church lay persons may provide spiritual caregiving
THE ROLE OF THE CAREGIVER

• Prepare meals
• Assist the person in his/her physical needs
• Accompany the person to doctors’ visits
• Provide transportation to various places
• Accompany the person at any given time of day or night
• Make appointments for them
CAREGIVING: A LONG HONORED TRADITION OF COMPASSION OR CONCERN FOR THOSE IN DISTRESS AND SUFFERING

Faith, Hope and Love

- Genesis 18:1-5
- Luke 1:39, 56
- Mark 1:29-31
Mary visits Elizabeth
CAREGIVING: SPIRITUAL WORKS OF MERCY

- Showing patience
- Forgiving others
- Comforting the afflicted
- Praying for the dead (praying for our losses)
CAREGIVING: CORPORAL WORKS OF MERCY

- Feeding the hungry
- Giving drink to the thirsty (Isaiah 55:1)
- Clothing the naked
- Visiting the sick and imprisoned
“All you who are thirsty, come to the water!
-Isaiah 55:1
CAREGIVERS ARE PEOPLE OF HOPE

The Lord is My Shepherd

The Lord is my Shepherd; I shall not want. In verdant pastures he gives me repose; Besides restful waters he leads me; He refreshes my soul... Even though I walk in the dark valley I fear no evil; for you are at my side With your rod and your staff that give me courage.

-Psalm 23:1
CAREGIVERS ARE PEOPLE OF LOVE

We care for others out of love
  • Love of others
  • Love of Family
  • Love for ourselves

-1 Corinthians 13:4-7. (NAB)
Time’s Decree

Love for those who can no longer care physically for us!
CARING FOR OTHERS OUT OF GRATITUDE

- Gratitude for our loved ones
- Gratitude for our Creator
MY STORY

• Pastoral Care
• Story of my journey with my Mom
AS CAREGIVERS, WE CAN:

• Wear bright colors
• Strive to be positive
• Smile!
• Listen
• Watch TV with them
• Laugh with them
• Encourage them to share their memories, stories and wisdom
• Pray together
CARING FOR OURSELVES

• Love also means taking time to care for our spirits and our bodies

• Stopping to ‘let the soul catch up with the body’ (paraphrased from Macrina Wiederkehr’s Seven Sacred Pauses)

• Nature as a healer

• Through Writing and Art: Express the gift of our story in the experience
  • Write the memories
  • Journal
  • Draw the moment
CAREGIVER

• Excerpt from “Caregiver” from Moments of Grace: a Collection of Poetry Inspired by Faith.
REFLECTION

- What are some ways that you take time for yourself?
Moments of Grace: A Collection of Poetry Inspired by Faith, to be published in December, 2013, embraces the theme of pilgrimage. The soul, on its journey towards its Creator, reflects on God’s presence in the ordinary and extraordinary moments of life. The author occasionally code-switches (English/Spanish) and includes a section on Journaling with Scripture and reflection.
Mary Olivia Patiño, M.T.S. (Masters in Theological Studies), is a writer, a poet, and author of *Moments of Grace: A Collection of Poetry Inspired by Faith*. She facilitates faith-based writing groups, and leads spiritual retreats and workshops. A graduate of Oblate School of Theology, her past work experience includes lay ministry formation at Oblate School of Theology, adjunct instructor in Religious Studies at Our Lady of the Lake University, and parish ministry in the Archdiocese of San Antonio.

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