

Our Lady of Lourdes Pastoral Care Team Mission

PASTORAL CARE POLICY

“By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye love one another.”

What is Christian Pastoral Care?

- Our Lady of Lourdes Pastoral Care Team (PCT) is part of the shepherding of the flock. Pastoral care is the responsibility of all church members and not just the church leaders. Christians, committed to the belief that God loves us all unconditionally, seek to reflect that love in their care for others. Pastoral Care happens when Christians help others by listening, responding, praying and providing caring support.
- The goal of Our Lady of Lourdes Pastoral Care Team (PCT) is to help people live life in all its fullness in the strength of and according to the example of Jesus. Through communion, listening, responding, praying and providing caring support, the OLLPCT will practice and exemplify the values of pastoral care of love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, fidelity, gentleness, compassion, humility, tolerance, forgiveness and thankfulness to God. They are practiced and exemplified with an emphasis more on listening and service than speaking.

Formal/Official Pastoral Care and Informal/Unofficial Pastoral Care

- Much pastoral care occurs in the church in an informal and unofficial way as Christians seek to help in practical ways and to encourage one another in the faith. Formal or official pastoral care is pastoral care carried out by Church representatives on behalf of the Church community. Those who are part of the Pastoral Care Team (PCT) are acting in an official capacity when they are asked by the clergy to undertake pastoral visits. When deciding how much formal pastoral care might be offered to someone the clergy will take into account the amount of informal pastoral care already being given by friends and family within the Church. The PCT encourages church members to inform the clergy or team members about those members who are in need of pastoral care visits. The clergy will coordinate with the hospital chaplains at the local hospital with regard to any church members who are patients staying in that hospital.

Communion to the Sick or Homebound

- It is important to make clear that these are to be provided for those people who specifically desire to have communion rather than those people who just want someone to visit them. They are also for those who are unable for reasons of age or illness to get to service at church.
- Sensitivity needs to be exercised as some elderly persons needs may vary from time to time.

Pastoral Care Visits

- Pastoral care visits are made to offer friendship, help, support and contact with the church community.
- These visits may include practical help, giving information and helping people to make their own decisions by listening to them articulate their concerns. It is not intended that PCT should make people's decisions for them. The role of the PCT is not that of pastoral counseling or spiritual guidance, which must be left to those with appropriate training. PCT members *cannot hear confession in the formal sense of that term but can encourage church members to use the sacrament of reconciliation.*

When pastoral care is need, please call the church office 404-522-6776. Please leave the name of person or persons needing care, contact information, and any special information or insight that is need for a formal visit of the PCT.