



## Who's Caring for the Caregiver?

Solving a National Public Health Issue with a Faith-Based Solution

Never before in history have we seen the number of people worldwide struggling to juggle the demands of everyday life with that of caring for an aging, ill or disabled loved one. In the United States alone, there is an estimated 60 million family caregivers, many who are suffering from depression, chronic stress and medically-related conditions, and who are hungry for spiritual support.

In a sea of materials, websites and programs for family caregivers in the public domain, few focus on the whole person and most lack the key element of faith. Nourish for Caregivers is the first of its kind, providing an effective Christ-centered program to minister to the practical, emotional and spiritual needs of family caregivers, within the framework of the Catholic Church.

# 65 Million Americans are Caring for A Loved One

(CAREGIVER ACTION NETWORK)



## 39%

FOUR IN 10 U.S. ADULTS ARE CARING FOR A LOVED ONE WITH SIGNIFICANT HEALTH ISSUES.  
(PEW RESEARCH CENTER)



## 63%

CAREGIVERS REPORT BEING STRESSED.  
(FAMILY CAREGIVER ALLIANCE)



## 3 in 4

MILLENNIAL CAREGIVERS REPORT HOLDING A PAYING JOB WHILE CARING FOR A FAMILY MEMBER (AARP & NAC 2015)



## 40%

FAMILY CAREGIVERS SUFFER FROM DEPRESSION  
(FAMILY CAREGIVER ALLIANCE 2015)

Nourish for Caregivers™ provides Parishes with all of the tools needed to equip a lay-led team to facilitate an effective and ongoing program to support the practical, emotional and spiritual needs of family caregivers in the framework of our Catholic faith.

# Our Mission

Our mission is to *equip parishes* to create a *spiritual home* that ministers to the *practical, emotional and spiritual needs* of caregivers, giving them the *tools and resources* to help caregivers *connect with their faith and encounter Christ*, so that they can *see the grace and blessings* in their caregiving journey.

## Brief History

Nourish was launched Fall of 2015, in Downers Grove, IL at St. Mary of Gostyn Parish by Deb Kelsey-Davis and Kelly Johnson. Fueled by their personal experiences, deep Catholic faith, clinical and pastoral backgrounds, and transformational leadership, Deb and Kelly shared a strong passion to place the church and faith directly at the center of caring for caregivers.

We are deeply grateful to Father James Schwab and Father Shaun Cieslik of St. Mary of Gostyn Parish for their support and belief in our vision to bring Christ and caring to family caregivers.



## Nourish is Designed to Achieve Six Critical Objectives

**01**

Provide an outlet for learning, sharing and growing with the exchange of ideas, solutions and encouragement.

**02**

Connect with others going through similar experiences who share common faith values and beliefs.

**03**

Discover the power of faith and spiritual teachings essential to caring for others and one's self.

**04**

Fulfill unmet needs through the strengths and gifts of the faith community.

**05**

Address the emotional side of caregiving and relationships with God, family and their loved one.

**06**

Support caregivers in finding peace, comfort and joy in their caregiving journey.



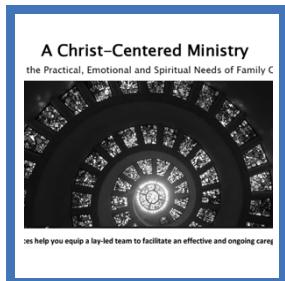
**“**

I feel like the  
church really  
cares about me  
and my family.  
Thank you for  
making this  
available to me.

JOANNE, NOURISH PARTICIPANT

# Program Components

Nourish for Caregivers™ is a turnkey program, containing all the resources needed to launch and successfully maintain an ongoing monthly caregiver ministry.

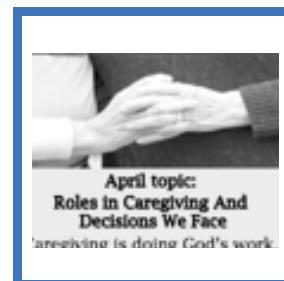


## LEADER'S GUIDEBOOK & PARTICIPANT MATERIALS

- 12 monthly topics w/detailed session overviews
- Participant handouts and activity sheets
- Reflection questions and background resources
- Topical prayer, scripture and Catholic teachings

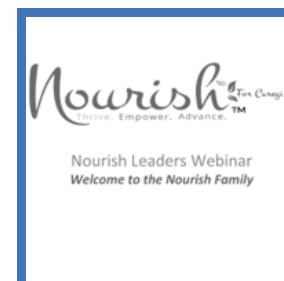
## PROMOTIONS AND ONGOING COMMUNICATIONS

- Prepared four-color bulletin announcements
- Pulpit copy, posters, flyers and brochures
- Ongoing promotional tips and new material



## WORKSHOP CONTENT AND PROMOTION MATERIALS

- Presentation material to conduct 2 hour workshop
- Detailed speaker notes, slides and activities
- Participant handouts
- Promotional and communication materials



## QUARTERLY LEADERS WEBINARS

- Live informational and sharing sessions
- Spiritual nourishment for facilitators
- Recorded and archived for online viewing



## ONLINE TRUSTED HEALTH INFORMATION

- Provided by affiliate partner Sagacity.Care
- Leading health and caregiver information platform
- Content certified nation's most trusted sources



## A Christ-Centered Ministry

Supporting the Practical, Emotional and Spiritual Needs of Family Caregivers



Nourish resources help you equip a lay-led team to facilitate an effective and ongoing caregiver ministry.

Sample Packet

# The Realities of Stress and Learning to Cope



Faith showers us  
with exactly what we  
need at precisely  
the right time.

## LEADER GUIDE: Realities of Stress

**Step 1: Opening Prayer  
(5 minutes)**

**Step 2: Introduction of New Members (5 minutes)**

**Step 3: Announce Topic.  
Highlight Faith Foundation  
(5 minutes)**

*God,*

***Grant me the serenity  
to accept the things I  
cannot change; the  
courage to change  
the things I can; and,  
the wisdom to know  
the difference.***

***Let me feel your love,  
your presence,  
especially  
when I'm  
overwhelmed  
with stress.  
Enfold me  
Lord in your  
peace.***

***In Jesus name,  
we pray.***

**Amen**

***Through Faith We  
Thrive!***

“Trust in God at all times, my people. Tell Him all your troubles, for he is your refuge.”

**Psalm 62:8**

“Don't worry about anything, but in all your prayers ask God for what you need.”

**Philippians 4:6**

Faith showers us with exactly what we need at precisely the right time.



[www.NourishForCaregivers.com](http://www.NourishForCaregivers.com)

### **Step 4: Facilitate Discussion and Reflection (30 minutes)**

#### **For Discussion and Reflection**

- What is it about caregiving that causes so many of us to have high levels of stress at times?
- What are the top 2 things that cause you the most stress, associated with caring for your loved one?
- Take a minute now, and think about times where those things occur but do not cause you to feel stressed. Why not then? What's different?
- What type of boundaries have you set for yourself (even Jesus had boundaries!)?
- What have you found to be most helpful for you to relieve your stress?
- Can faith, worry and stress co-exist?
- How does worry and stress distance us from God?
- Faith reassures us that everything happens/ is resolved in God's timing. What helps you most get back to that place of trust in just this fact?

### **Step 5: Breakout Activity (15 minutes)**

#### **Activity**

Stress Comes with the job!

- Take 5 minutes and quietly complete the brief Caregiver Stress Test (handout)
  - Score your current stress level.
- Review the Realities of Stress handout and talk with a partner about ideas for relieving stress.

## Leader Background Materials

### *Session Overview*

Caregiving can be rewarding, but it can also be challenging and stressful at times. Emotionally and physically we feel the strain. Maybe it's because there is little time for work or friends. Or, the usual patterns of our life are changed by providing support or being "on call" most all the time. Or, maybe it's because we feel alone and overwhelmed. The most important thing to remember is that stress is common for all caregivers!

The reality of stress was also present in the life of Jesus. He faced pressures from those who hated him. He sweated drops of blood while praying before his crucifixion. What we can learn from Jesus is that the power of faith and trust in God can indeed overcome our feelings of helplessness and anxiety. We also can learn from how Jesus surrounded himself with his disciples and family to support him in his ministry.

The very same tools Jesus leaned on in times of stress are there for us too. From our faith, we can gain strength and hope, and learn how to cope through acceptance. We can find others to lean on in our caregiving journey, to surround us with encouragement and support. And, like Jesus, we can make time for ourselves, to replenish our bodies, minds and spirit.

The reality is that stress can harm us if we are not aware of how it is impacting us. The presence of stress can cause depression, health issues and even cause us to have short-term memory problems.

The blessings that come with caregiving are real and can be gratifying. Our ability to prevent stress, to manage it and use the tools of our faith to cope with it will help us reap its rewards.

Remember, you are not alone.

## ***Relying Upon the Framework of Our Catholic Faith***

The LORD is my shepherd;  
there is nothing I lack.  
In green pastures he makes me lie down;  
to still waters he leads me;  
he restores my soul.

**Psalm 23: 1-3**

For me, prayer is a surge of the heart; it is a simple look turned toward heaven, it is a cry of recognition and of love, embracing both trial and joy.

**Thérèse de Lisieux**

Love is patient, love is kind. It is not jealous, [love] is not pompous, it is not inflated, it is not rude, it does not seek its own interests, it is not quick-tempered, it does not brood over injury, it does not rejoice over wrongdoing but rejoices with the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

**1 Corinthians 13: 4-7**

If possible, on your part, live at peace with all.

**Romans 12:18**

There are some who remain at peace with themselves and also with others. And some neither have peace in themselves nor allow others to have peace. Such people are a trouble to others, and an even greater trouble to themselves. And there are some who are at peace with themselves, and who try to guide others into peace. But all our peace in this present life should depend on humble forbearance rather than on absence of adversity. He who knows the secret of endurance will enjoy the greatest peace. Such a one is conqueror of self, master of the world, a friend of Christ, and an heir of Heaven.

**Thomas a Kempis, The Imitation of Christ. Book 2 Chapter 3**

Bear one another's burdens, and so you will fulfill the law of Christ.

**Galatians 6:2**

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We were happy to tell our parishes about this new ministry, because it shares our mission of linking the mountains and valleys of family life to the Paschal Mystery of Jesus.

Nourish for Caregivers helps churches evangelize and heal families who are caring for a loved one.

There is clearly a growing need for this ministry, and we support Deb and Kelly's mission. We like the fact that it's wholistic - it addresses practical, emotional and spiritual needs - and that, while it requires the pastor's support, it's lay-led. We're confident that this ministry will be a blessing for the families and the parishes involved.

DR. VAL MATY, ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF FAMILY  
MINISTRY, DIOCESE OF JOLIET

# Frequently Asked Questions

## **Why Nourish and why now?**

As of year-end 2017, there were a reported 60 million family caregivers in the U.S. struggling and searching for support. That number is expected to grow dramatically as the population ages. So, where do they go for support? Family caregivers typically turn to a close friend, another family member, online groups or a trusted member of their faith community. Now is the time for churches to reach out and minister to the millions who are caring for a sick, disabled or aging loved one. And, Nourish is the program designed to do exactly just that.

## **How is Nourish a ministry?**

Churches for years provide resources and support to people as they go through trials and challenges in their lives. And, churches are the place so many people turn to for important ministries such as grief support, widowed programs, divorce groups, and many others. Caregiving is a similar time of need, a time when people feel isolated, alone, ashamed and guilty. It is a time of incredible stress. With a ministry like Nourish, caregivers are invited to immerse themselves in feelings of love and confidence, finding strength through a Christ-centered view.

## **How is Nourish different than other caregiver support groups?**

The caregiver support groups found on the web or being offered in community settings are focused primarily on providing a place for sharing, venting and coping. This is good. However, what's missing is a structure with topics to guide fruitful discussion , specifically designed reflections and activities focused on finding meaning (beyond just coping), and probably most importantly is that there are no current program materials and formal ministries in place that include the faith tradition of the Catholic Church as part of the experience.

## **What makes you so sure that faith is the answer that's integral to your program?**

First of all, we have lived it through our own personal experiences. Secondly, multiple studies confirm that 70% - 75% of family caregivers say their spiritual and religious faith is significantly important to them and that they pray regularly as a means to find strength, hope and to cope. Pew Research reported faith is critical especially during times of crisis and change and family caregiving is most certainly one of those times. As well, because of the faith component to Nourish, we've found it be an evangelization tool, bringing people back to church for encouragement and spiritual support.

# Let the Holy Spirit Guide You As You Nourish Family Caregivers

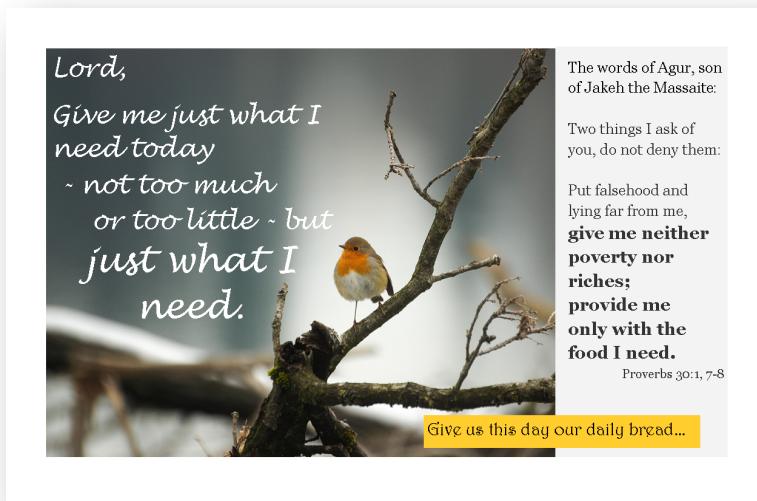
Thank you for your interest in bringing the Nourish for Caregivers ministry to your parish/diocese. Know that your leadership will make a difference, guiding and leading others deeper and closer to the love of Jesus Christ during one of the most stressful and challenging times of their life. We know from experience that with Nourish, through faith and your support, you can help caregivers find joy and see the blessings in their very personal journey.

God bless you as you discern creating a spiritual home for caregivers with the Nourish Program. We are happy to answer any questions you may have. Please feel free to contact us at [info@nourishforcaregivers.com](mailto:info@nourishforcaregivers.com).

We leave you with this prayer and our blessings,  
Deb and Kelly

Debra Kelsey-Davis & Kelly Johnson, Nourish Co-Founders

## Nourish Leader's Prayer



### Come Holy Spirit, Come.

We thank you for leading and guiding us. We thank you for the gifts and abundant blessings you have given us and the Nourish program. Guide our efforts as we seek to do your will. Fill us with wisdom to discern your path, and with courage to step forth boldly. Please keep the caregivers we have met safe and well today, give them the deep and absolute peace that only comes from you. Help them encounter you today in an unexpected and joy-filled way. Thank you for leading us, yesterday, today and always. Thank you for giving us just what we need. Amen!