

**Faith in Suffering:
A Course for Pastoral Care Givers**
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ABSTRACT

The project attempted to (1) develop a biblical-theological understanding of suffering and (2) equip local members of the clergy with training and materials to enhance their effectiveness in providing pastoral care at the Katherine Shaw Bethea Hospital in Dixon, Illinois. Prior to the project's research and development phase, the author developed a plan to address issues of suffering that frequently arise among the clergy persons providing pastoral care at the hospital. The research included a review of relevant literature on the topic of suffering and the biblical-theological understanding of suffering among Christians.

The venture culminated in developing a seminar on providing pastoral care to those who suffer. Overall, the seminar produced a positive experience for the attendees. The statistical analysis showed an exceptionally positive correlation between seminar attendance and the attendees' perceived growth in their abilities to provide pastoral care to persons who suffer. The project also facilitated the development of two tools for the pastoral caregiver entitled, *Rules for Calling upon the Sick* and *Ministry to the Dying*.

This venture brought about a deepening dialogue between the author, in his role as a hospital chaplain, and the local clergy members. As a result of the dialogue and seminar experience, he plans to present the seminar at a sectional Assemblies of God fellowship meeting and conduct seminars on related topics at Katherine Shaw Bethea hospital. The project verified the need for additional training aimed at current and future clergy.