

The Spiritual Caregiver

A Newsletter of the Ecumenical Institute for Pastoral Care



**Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction,
faithful in prayer. - Romans 12:12**

Summer 24 CPE Units Underway

The Summer 2024 units of CPE offered through Ecumenical Institute are underway. Six units have been offered and filled. This is a remarkable growth of CPE and the Ecumenical Institute. The offering of online/distance education is in significant demand.

ACPE Certified Educator, The Reverend Tania Hammer-Luken, our colleague at Ecumenical Institute has presented two units of CPE. One was completed in late Spring and a Summer unit is underway. Four units with ACPE Certified Educator Roger Cauthon are now in progress with one on Tuesday, two on Wednesday, and one on Thursday morning. The units began in late March and will continue through mid-August 2024.

The Spring 2025 units will begin in early September and continue until mid-March 2025. These additional six units are filling with students rapidly. A total of thirty-eight spaces are available for students.

The current Summer 24 units reflect the wide reach of the Ecumenical Institute providing the opportunity for CPE.

Students are doing their clinical work in Iowa, South Dakota, Nebraska, Michigan, Tennessee, North Carolina, Indiana, Arizona, Minnesota, Florida, New York, Pennsylvania, California, Massachusetts, and Minnesota.

The students reflect the ongoing chaplain educational and professional support that Ecumenical Institute offers to students in acute hospitals, local parishes, retirement facilities, hospice, recovery centers, military, and mortuary-cemetery sites. There is diversity in age, ethnic background, religious background, and gender.

The support that Ecumenical Institute donors give allows this educational and developmental ministry to flourish. Ecumenical Institute is an ACPE center that offers distance education (video conferencing learning) and placement at a clinical site in a student's local area. The need for this offering is noted in the ongoing requests of students that makes Ecumenical Institute a vital part of pastoral care training for parish and chaplaincy in Iowa and other parts of the country.

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Students' Testimonies:

I wish to thank especially my educator Rev. Tania Hammer-Luken for her dedication, doggedness and expertise in Chaplaincy and ministry. Through her wealth of knowledge and experiences this unit being my fourth was professionally, ecumenically and academically enriching, enhancing and empowering. Through this unit I believe I have developed greatly in skills and professionalism and achieving effective Spiritual care both in my hospital setting and parish ministry here in New Jersey.

I promise to propagate ecumenical principles and views in my Chaplaincy and parish ministry to promote a just, harmonious and peaceful global society. Thank you!

Father Andrew I Njoku

Catholic Chaplain - Mountainside Medical Centre Montclair, New Jersey

As a prospective minister of word and sacrament, your support has reminded me of the importance of helping those in need. I pray that God will help me work diligently and do everything I can to support other students in the future who may need financial assistance to pursue their academic goals.

“As it is written: “He has dispersed abroad,
He has given to the poor;

His righteousness endures forever.” 2 Corinthians 9:9. “Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift.” 2 Corinthians 9:15.

God’s blessings to you.

Lotegeluaki Ole L. Lengai

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definitely changing.**

**Our nation’s future
is unknown.**

**Our future
with God is known.**

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**Contact Denise for more
information at 712-225-0202 or
denisegreen608@gmail.com**

A CPE Reflection: Louise

Sitting in the pews one Sunday morning I heard the calling of the Lord while in High school. While listening to the pastor, I was thinking to myself I could do what the pastor does. The rest of my body was screaming, “Are you crazy.” I was gripped by fear and let that moment and my life pass by. I had a fear of public speaking. How could I go out and preach if I cannot do public speaking. I was so shy in High School that if someone looked at me wrong, I would burst into tears. In high school I could not get up in front of the class and speak. I loved doing research and writing speeches but was gripped by my shyness and fear to give the speech. I ran like Jonah until God caught up to me at age 50. I had run out of excuses on why I could not follow God’s plan and not attend Seminary. Although I was not swallowed by a large fish – I was given a full life with its good times and

bad. God transformed me like Jonah by sending me to seminary and Jonah to Nineveh. We know Jonah did not want to go to Nineveh and I was not excited about going to seminary and doing more homework. I would have to dedicate five years of my life while working full-time. I knew I could do it with perseverance since I had completed my undergrad taking one class at a time for 10 years. Coming out of college with a double major of Business Administration and English. Without my undergraduate education, I would not have been able to consider seminary. Even though I was still running from the Lord, He had a purpose for me. The Lord knew if I did not have a college degree, I would not be able to go to seminary. God keeps transforming me. After College and Seminary, I thought I was on easy

Continued on Page 3

Typical Day in a CPE Group: Roger Cauthon

Often when a student inquires about completing a unit of CPE, the student has in mind an academic picture of what CPE is like. CPE learning is indeed academic, there are some books and articles to read and is accredited on the graduate level of education by the US Department of Education. However, it is not the traditional method of learning. It is graduate level reflection. Let me share with you what it is and then show a typical group session of CPE.

A CPE unit is four hundred hours of work. At least one hundred of those hours are educational in group and individual supervision. The other hours, around 300, are clinical hours. This is where the student is doing the work of spiritual care. The goal of a CPE unit is to learn how to listen, be present, and be conscious of one's inner world as patients or parishioners are encountered.

CPE is the "action/reflection" model of learning. The "action" lies in the clinical aspect. The reflection is in the educational area. The methodology of CPE is verbatim. Verbatim is a written copy of a pastoral/spiritual conversation. It includes the dialog between the care giver and the patient or parishioner. Real names are not used

for privacy. The students write what he or she knows about the patient, what preparation was done for the encounter, and describes the setting of environment where the conversation took place. After writing the dialog, the emotional tone of the conversation, the students write an assessment of the patient/parishioner, an assessment of him or herself during the conversation, an assessment of the diversity issues involved, a theological reflection of the encounter, future opportunities that might happen, and then the students write the reason for bringing this particular encounter to the group and what the student would like to learn.

All the above is done before a group meeting and the verbatim is sent to every member of the CPE group so they may read it.

So now we begin a typical CPE group. A group is usually five to seven students and the CPE Educator. As the online session begins, there is a check in with others to offer what is happening or important in each student's life. Then one student offers a devotional or grounding expression to bring the group together. Then a student presenting a verbatim reads the verbatim aloud to the group and the students follow along.

When finished the group is invited by the Educator to offer their insights and responses to the verbatim. This includes both affirmation of the encounter, wonderments of what happened, and critique of what happened. This is all done as professional colleagues in a professional support and educational group. When the conversation is ended, the next student presents a verbatim and the process repeats. Each group session there are two to three verbatim presented. Feedback of affirmation and critique is mutual and everyone learns from each other's work.

After the verbatim time, a didactic or teaching is offered by the Educator along the topic of the unit or what is needed for group learning currently. Following this there is 'group life' time where the group reflects on what has happened during the session for learning, emotions, and what group process is happening. Groups form a bond that is an essential part of learning and professional support.

**Training
Faith Based
Caregivers**



A CPE Reflection.. Cont' from Page 2

street. No more classes or papers. Little did I know God had other plans. I was not expecting to take CPE classes. I was being selfish once again. Why would God want me to take more classes. I'm enjoying my retirement and working on the weekends as a Hospice Chaplain. I was comfortable and now God was making me uncomfortable. Fear of more change and how to fit CPE into my life. CPE has changed me as a person. I look at things differently and have incorporated many of the techniques taught in CPE. The Book of Jonah is one of compassion.

Jonah was a prophet and even though he let God down many times, he was still forgiven by God. God showed him love and compassion. God gave Jonah forgiveness and mercy. God has given me forgiveness for all the times I did not follow his path. The Lord has given me compassion in the work I do as a Hospice Chaplain. It is hard for me to put into words the Love and compassion that the Lord has given. I know he walks beside me as I walk beside those at the end of life. The Lord has given me a precious gift.

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None of this work is possible without the generous support of donors. Since the inception of the Pastoral Education Center in the late 1960's, the number of students participating has now grown well past a thousand. Imagine the countless lives these students have touched with the skills they've learned. With your assistance the number of students will continue to grow.

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Thank You

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their continued support.



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