**BEREAVEMENT MINISTRY**

The Catholic Diocese of Christchurch adheres to the Church National Safeguarding Guidelines. These include guidelines for volunteers in Church ministries to maintain a safe and healthy ministry environment. Our commitment to these guidelines requires that we have safe recruitment practices including conducting background reference checks (police vetting) for all persons who intend to engage in voluntary ministry having direct and regular involvement with children and young people (those aged up to 18 years) and vulnerable adults. The role of the Bereavement Minister is a Police Vetted role. This role will commence on completion of the police vetting process, which can take up to 6 weeks.

*“Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.” - Matthew 5:4*

**MINISTRY TITLE: Bereavement Ministry**

**MAIN PURPOSE & OBJECTIVE OF MINISTRY ROLE:**

Bereavement Ministry is praying for the dead and comforting those who mourn, one of the Spiritual Works of Mercy. This role, under the guidance and direction of the parish responds to the needs of the community in practical and pastoral ways at the time of a bereavement. Losing a family member can be one of the most difficult and painful experiences a person can go through. This role serves as a vital pastoral connection between the parish community and the person who experiences the loss of a loved one.

**TASKS**

* Accompany the priest when visiting the bereaved family after a death.
* Be ready and available to listen and provide spiritual support as is needed in the days leading up to the funeral and again afterwards.
* Lead the bereaved in prayer as appropriate.
* Lead the family through organising the funeral requiem or service.
* Arrange musician, booking of Church, Servers for refreshments as required.
* Ensure all family and friends involved in the funeral feel comfortable with what they are doing and where things are at the Church.
* Ensure copies of all readings and prayers are at the readers’ lectern before the funeral.
* Provide follow-up support by way of phone calls and/or visiting.
* If appropriate, organise meals or a food parcel for a time, following the funeral.

**EXPECTATION OF ROLE**

* Undertake formation and pre-training prior to beginning this ministry and attend ongoing formation and bereavement ministry team meetings.
* Undertake safeguarding training by way of safeguarding awareness workshops.
* Seek advice from the ministry team leader, who will support you in this role, on any matters related to this ministry if you are unsure or have concerns.
* Observe the physical surroundings and the emotional and spiritual needs of the person/s you are accompanying.
* Follow the two-person practice of visiting in pairs.
* Keep necessary visitation records.
* Exercise good judgement with a respect for safety, privacy, and confidentiality.
* Have a non-judgemental attitude, respecting the privacy and dignity of those that are visited.
* Wear Church ID, with your name and role clearly visible.

**PERSON SPECIFICATIONS:**

* A Commitment to the essential teachings of the Catholic Church and the ethos of the Parish.
* Have skills, sensitivity and an understanding of grief and loss.
* Possess good listening and relational skills.
* Is comfortable in the presence of sadness, tears, and intense emotion.
* Must be over the age of 18.

**VOLUNTEER SAFEGUARDING AGREEMENT**

Our parish / community is committed to safeguarding and protecting all children, young persons and adults who may be vulnerable, as well as all volunteers in Church roles.

**This role will comply with the National Safeguarding Guidelines and Safeguarding Policy:**

* Police Vetting Process completed prior to commencing ministry
* Code of Conduct for Employees & Volunteers - Signed by Volunteer
* Volunteer Agreement - Signed by Volunteer
* Safeguarding Training Workshops and relevant online training if appropriate