

Ames Catholic Community Stephen Ministry



REFERRALS — A PROCESS

In your church family, place of employment, community activities or other outreaches you may have, there may be individuals in need of care that they don't seek for themselves. Many times they think they should be able to take care of themselves. You could be the extension of God's Love in making a referral to Stephen Ministry for a one-to-one caring relationship for someone you know.

Making a REFERRAL is a process used to connect a person going through a difficult time with a Stephen Minister. Any one (clergy, parishioners, Lookouts, Stephen Ministers, etc.) may identify another person whom they feel would benefit by having a Stephen Minister. Once you have recognized or identified a person in need of care, MOVE TO ACTION!

Approaching someone to suggest Stephen Ministry needs to be done in a caring, loving way:

First, recognize that there is a difficult situation in his/her life and *listen* if they share any of their stories. In response you might relay that there is a ministry available that could help them by introducing Stephen Ministry as follows:

"We have a ministry here in the Ames area which has trained individuals who will listen and be there to help you through this difficult time in your life."

Follow up with a short description of how the Ministry is helpful to persons who need help. Refrain from asking questions such as *"Would you like to have a Stephen Minister?"* or *"Do you think that you need a Stephen Minister?"* (to which the person is most likely to reply "No").

Rather use statements like....

"Stephen Ministry is a one-to-one relationship where a caring person meets with you weekly to listen, care, support and pray."

"I sense that you are really hurting right now and could use someone to talk to. I would like to suggest Stephen Ministry and put you in contact with someone who could more fully explain the Ministry and answer any questions you may have. There is no obligation on your part in finding out more about the Ministry."

"I would like to put you in touch with a Stephen Minister who would help you work through your situation. It could be an opportunity for personal growth and understanding for you."

"A Stephen Minister could be the best gift you can give yourself right now."

“I feel that one of our Stephen Ministers could help you deal with your feelings and all the adjustment you’re facing at this time.”

“The best way I know to help you at this time is to put you in touch with a Stephen Minister.”

If the person is hesitant or says “no”, don’t take their first “no” as their final answer. If possible, explain a little more about what Stephen Ministry is so as to address their concerns. The most important thing is to establish a connection and then the detailed information will be handled by the Referral Leaders.

- Their only commitment at this point would be to have a Stephen Leader visit with them to further explain Stephen Ministry.
- For private persons, talk about how Stephen Ministry is very CONFIDENTIAL.

There is no obligation and suggest that they might “try it” for few weeks and then, if they feel like they don’t need it, they can stop having a Stephen Minister.

Explain that while someone may get through a situation on their own, they would get through it much better if they had someone to walk with them.

REMEMBER, the GOAL is...

to get the person in need of care to agree to have someone to contact them to visit more about Stephen Ministry!

Once a person has agreed to have a Stephen Leader contact them:

Get their contact information.

Let them know that a Stephen Leader will be contacting them in next day or two.

Call a Referral Coordinator: Cindy Hauber (515-291-0250)

Sue Osweiler (515-709-0021)

Anne Schmitt (515-291-8257)

Be ready to give the referral coordinator:

- The person’s contact information
- Details about the situation of the person needing care
- Confirmation that you have told the potential care receiver to be expecting their call

Confidentiality requires that the action taken from this point is between the person in need of care, a Stephen Leader and an assigned Stephen Minister. Thanks to your referral, you have been a part of extending God’s love to someone in need. You have now fulfilled the part you play in making a referral. However, you may wish to continue praying for the person whom you referred.



STEPHEN MINISTRY

Carry each other’s burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ.

Galatians 6:2