

# Responding to the Opioid Crisis

## Part 3: Ways for the Church to Respond

Rev. Dr. Barry Steiner Ball

### Discussion Questions for Part III

1. The opioid epidemic affects everyone from having to pay more at stores because of shoplifting to the loss of a family member from overdose. How have you/are you being affected?
2. When we watch the news, read the newspaper or have breakfast at the local diner we can easily be overwhelmed by all the horrible reports we hear about the epidemic. When we let all the stories overwhelm us, we become paralyzed with no idea how to respond to such a huge multi-faceted problem. While we remain paralyzed though, our neighbor suffers in silence with the loss of a child, a person trying recovery needs a friend and a child in second grade needs help learning to read. Who is suffering in your neighborhood that you can easily reach with your time, talent and prayers? One of the glaring shortcomings this epidemic has highlighted is we do not know our neighbors by name. We can send money somewhere or write a letter of support and feel like we completed our responsibility, but we still do not know the names of our neighbors who are suffering. Who do you know who is suffering?
3. Read again Bishop Ives' quote:  
Remember: We may not be the best qualified to do this, but we are the ones who are here and who have the responsibility of doing it. We can't wait until the best qualified ones come along. Right now, in this place, at this time we are the best qualified one to do it.  

*-- Bishop S. Clifton Ives*
- Why are we hesitant to attempt new ministries? What scares us about reaching out to a stranger? Can we ever have enough training to be a perfect representation of Christ? If we do not respond to our neighbors who will?
4. What stresses would a parent of a child lost in addiction face? When the phone rings what news could be coming from the sheriff, the hospital the federal prosecutor? What could the lost child be asking for if they are calling? What fears would a brother or sister have for their lost sibling?
5. How does a parent cut off (tough love) a child lost in addiction? What would that feel like? When is the proper time to cut all ties?
6. What new struggles do grandparents face when all of a sudden, they are the primary caregivers for their grandchildren? What type of support could a grand family use? What grand family do you know?

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7. If we cannot fix another person's problems, does letting that person express their anger, frustration, hurt, fear and hope do any good?
8. What stresses does a person walking the tightrope of recovery face? (Job, criminal justice, Driver's License, relapse cravings, rebuilding trust with family, friends, and community, forgiving self...) Who helps the tightrope walker with these stresses? (former dealer, former friends still using, family who is not speaking to them) What specialized training is required to be a friend? What person trying recovery do you know?
9. Imagine being in the first grade again. Imagine that your mom (dad's not in the picture) is so sick with Substance Use Disorder that you are left to fend for yourself. Who helps you with homework, bathing, brushing teeth, explaining acceptable behavior, buys healthy food and prepares it, takes you to the doctor? In school on Tuesday mornings an adult who is not a teacher, chooses to come to the school and help you read and constantly tells you that you are wonderful. What would that feel like? If members of the Body of Christ don't mentor these children, who will?
10. Because of parents being so overwhelmed with Substance Use Disorder, many children are removed and placed in foster care. How can the Body of Christ support foster families? What needs do a foster family have? What foster family do you know?