

## **December 1996**

### **Annual Report 1996**

The Caring Network has been in operation in the brotherhood in the Ontario area now for over five years. As a committee, the Caring Network has been involved with the promotion and operation of caring initiatives (inter-ecclesial and intra-ecclesial) the hosting of special seminars, and as a support for young people's activities.

The "CARING NETWORK" is the umbrella term under which specific tasks and initiatives are carried out. Some individual initiatives have been briefly reported on below for your review.

### **SPECIAL EVENTS**

Each year one or two special events are hosted for the benefit of the brotherhood at large on a theme related to caring or "bearing one another's burdens".

#### **STRESS SEMINAR**

In March of this year (1996), about 85 people gathered at the West Avenue Ecclesial Hall for an informative session about "Stress"; what it does to our bodies and our lives, what the bible says about it, and how to deal with it. It was a very constructive day where bible wisdom enlightened many of the secular aspects of the problem.

#### **UPCOMING SEMINARS**

In the last meeting of the Caring Network, the next seminar was discussed, with the consensus being that it should focus on a book of the bible with specific issues such as interpersonal relationships, financial management, wisdom and appropriate values, etc. drawn out and discussed. This next special event is

planned for early in 1997.

## **CARELINE**

The Careline continues to receive calls regularly from Brothers, Sisters and young people who need to talk to someone confidentially about problems they are facing. The calls that have been fielded have ranged from problems and concerns considered by the caller as being relatively minor, to genuine crisis calls. The Careline is clearly serving a need that compliments the existing work that is done on an ecclesial and individual basis. The reality is that many members of our community struggle with problems at various times, and we need to provide as many effective avenues of assistance as possible. The Careline volunteers continue to undergo a series of instructional sessions led by Bro. Jonathan Midgett, who has an educational background in the area. The Careline number is .... 519-823-1039

## **YOUNG PEOPLE**

Young people continue to be a priority in the Brotherhood. As such, the Caring Network has taken a position of support for numerous young people's initiatives. The support the Caring Network has provided has come in the form of money, assistance with organization and coordination, spiritual input, and general guidance. It should be emphasized that the initiatives of our young people have been orchestrated by their efforts and their ideas, with the role of the Caring Network being support.

## **ECCLESIAL CARE TEAMS**

Several ecclesias have active "Caring Teams" which provide a focal point for caring activities within the ecclesia, under the direction of the Arranging board. For example, one ecclesial Caring Team arranges for special food baskets to be delivered to "shut-ins" during the holiday season, with the assistance of Sunday School members. The same team is also planning a sandwich lunch workshop on "telephone counseling". The Caring Network has a member acting as a liaison between the network and ecclesial Care Teams to assist where needed, and to help coordinate and organize events of mutual interest and edification.