

## BLESSED SACRAMENT CATHOLIC CHURCH

### GRIEF SUPPORT NEWSLETTER 4

This is the fourth letter in our series of grief support newsletters. We hope that the thoughts and ideas that were presented have been helpful to you in your healing. This newsletter contains a few more suggestions on the “next steps” of your continuing journey and what may lie ahead.

Over the past months you may have faced a number of significant “firsts” ~ holidays, birthdays, wedding anniversary and other equally special days that were important to you and your loved one. The year milestone is important. You may anticipate this time as a turning point, a recovering time and a point to begin anew. Be patient with yourself if you are not yet “over it”. Remember many months ago we talked about people reaching milestones at their own pace? That is still true. You may be ahead of some or not yet where they seem to be. But YOU ARE YOU, and entitled to be exactly where you are today.

*Whatever steps you have taken, or still need to take, we know Our Lady of Sorrows has you in her heart and hands and will lead and comfort you until you have reached the fullness of your journey.*

#### WHAT YOU MIGHT BE EXPECTING AROUND THIS TIME

As seasons change, it is not uncommon to subconsciously recollect the events that were occurring during this time last year. For some this is welcome, while for others it is painful. Whatever you are experiencing, acknowledge it. Try talking to a loved one about your feelings and how far you have come in the past year.

At this point you may experience a new “wave” of grief, a period of intense emotion related to your grief. Consider what you've learned that has helped you in the past.

If the past months have been extremely busy, acknowledge that your grief has been 'delayed'. What may be happening now is that you now have more time on your hands to think about things past and present. This may be the right time for you to consider what's next in your life.

Are you thinking of moving? Maybe there is a hobby you want to try? Remember you have the power to make changes in your life or to keep steady the things you like. If you feel internal pressure to make decisions, this is the time to talk with others, both inside and outside the family or with a trusted friend.

#### FRIENDS OLD AND NEW

“In the sweetness of friendship let there be laughter, for in the dew of little things the heart finds its morning and is refreshed.” ~ Khalil Gilbran

#### Making New Friends

A common statement with the bereaved is “Some of the people I thought would be there for me weren't. Some have been there that I didn't expect.” Remember that there can be many reasons why a friend may become distant after the death of your loved one. Whatever the reason, the distance definitely comes at a bad time for you and it will be up to you to decide if the friendship is worth maintaining. Fortunately, it is also likely that another friend has reached out to you and offered support. Making new friends is daunting, but remember no one makes an old friend. New friends can quickly become old friends. An old friends can remain friends, but perhaps not best or close friends.

### **Connecting with other grievers**

Ideally all of us would like to be able to turn to a friend who understands loss when the pain of grief becomes overwhelming., but that is not always possible. Instead many people find it helpful to see a few new friendships grow from amongst their social or support groups.

If at this time you feel the need of a social or support group and wish to know more about our grief support activities, please call the church office at **321 632 6333** or email us at [secretary@blessedsacramentcocoa.org](mailto:secretary@blessedsacramentcocoa.org)

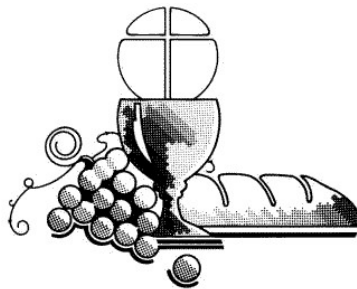
### **Complicated Bereavement**

The death of a loved one puts bereaved people at a slightly higher risk of developing a mental health disorder. While it is important not to self-diagnose (and the Internet is not the most reliable source of information!), self-awareness is good. If you are having a particularly hard time and sense the need for further help, please reach out to a **community mental health therapist** or your **primary care doctor** especially if you are experiencing any of the following:

- increased substance use (alcohol, drugs or medication)
- flashbacks (especially of anxious or threatening times or situations)
- thoughts of self-harm
- unintended weight loss due to difficulty eating or retaining meals
- frequent and intense feelings of loneliness or helplessness
- self-imposed isolation or isolation as a result of no close family, friends, relatives or neighbors
- overwhelming anxiety

### **Adieu my friend...**

The journey has been long and hard, and you may still have further to go, alone or with others. We ask that God Bless you and be with you in the days ahead.



**“There is sacredness in tears. They are not the mark of weakness, but of power. They speak more eloquently than ten thousand tongues. They are the messengers of overwhelming grief, of deep contrition, and of unspeakable love.” ~ Washington Irving**

*Many thanks to the Bereavement staff of St Francis Hospice/Reflections Lifestage Care for sharing their grief support thoughts and information with us and for allowing us to offer it as part of Grief Support ministry.*