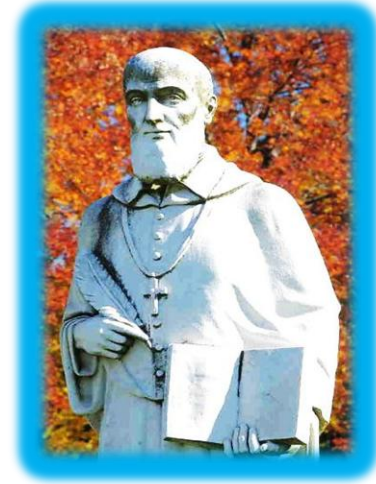


St Francis de Sales Parish Bereavement Ministry



To offer comfort, support,
and encouragement for
those who are grieving.

Ministry Goal

- To establish an on-going parish ministry of Aftercare and Follow-up that will continue to provide support for all grieving parishioners of St. Francis de Sales Parish.

Ministry Objectives

- Offer sympathy cards and letters and other informational mailings
- Provide grief education presentations and bereavement support groups
- Show care and concern with pastoral visits

Who is bereavement support for?

Anyone experiencing grief due to the death or separation of a loved one.

The bereavement support group will focus on the aspects of the grieving process, whether it is a new loss or a long enduring one, and will assist you in understanding how to cope with grief and how to begin turning your mournful feelings into cherished memories.

What are the effects of grief?

- Shock, numbness
- Anger, guilt, loneliness
- Anxiety, fear, panic
- Sleeplessness, fatigue
- You may want to sleep all the time
- Change in appetite, nausea
- You may always be crying or wonder why you don't cry
- You may have feelings of relief then guilt about those feelings

Bereavement Ministry Components



Aftercare and Follow-up for Adults, Teenagers, and Children

- Begins with the bereavement team making contact when a loved one is lost.
-continues with a series of timely letters on special days and anniversaries.
-includes follow-up pastoral visits throughout the year.
-provides contact information for local agencies and other resources.
-offers information on suggested reading as the individual or family members progress through the grieving process.

Grief Education

- Grieving is a natural part of the experience of loss and a response to the pain of separation and unique to each individual. Grief is often the source of emotions you have never known before. Grieving is the process of coming to terms with what has changed in our lives. Grief education will supply information about the grieving process and in your own time you will come to know life with meaning again and that everyone has the capacity to heal.

For more information contact:

Sr. Mary Heffron I.H.M.,
Program Administrator
610-693-5851 – fax 610-693-5852

Rich Bates, Coordinator
610-488-8632

Living Jesus for Others
and
Building the City of God

Bereavement Support Group

- A support group is a healthy, safe place. It offers comfort, encouragement, and companionship to any who grieve the loss of loved ones. The support group provides an environment in which all participants are free to grieve in their own way and in their own time. Having others listen to our emotional reactions is critical to healing. The people in the support group will have the opportunity to share and grieve with one another as each moves toward greater peace with their loss.

Bereavement Support Group Sessions

- Bereavement support sessions are offered twice a year. The first session in May and June and another in October and November. Each session is once a week for five weeks. The following is an example of the five sessions.
- Week 1 - Tell your story
- Week 2 - Learning about grief
- Week 3 - Stress and grief
- Week 4 - Finding meaning
- Week 5 - New beginnings