

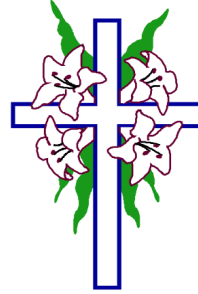


## Ministry of Consolation

*A pastoral  
ministry program  
designed to support  
parishioners who have  
experienced the death  
of a loved one in our  
parish community.*

St. Mary of the Lake Church  
4690 Bald Eagle Avenue  
White Bear Lake, MN 55110  
429-7771

## The Journey from Grief to Healing



Death touches us throughout our life.  
When a loved one dies, you are left behind.  
There may be many questions, unusual  
thoughts, or feelings that are uncommon and  
new. Death comes with little preparation.

Your experience of death and loss is unique.  
Your loss is your loss, your experience is real,  
appropriate and valid.

Grief is a conscious, as well as unconscious,  
response by your body, mind and spirit to  
accept the reality of the death  
and to move you toward healing.

Mourning is “going public” with your grief.  
It is an outward expression of loss while you  
adjust to the new life situation which has  
occurred as a result of the death.

We invite you to enter into a delicate journey  
toward healing. You do have a choice as to  
how you want to respond to this experience.  
Here are gentle ways to help you on that  
journey. Choose the ideas that appeal to you.

- \* Be gentle with yourself.
- \* Give yourself time. There is no need to rush.
- \* Let the grieving process run its course.
- \* Rest & exercise can provide balance and healing.
- \* Go for a walk. Get back to your exercise routine.
- \* Try keeping a diary or journal. You’ll be amazed at your progress.
- \* Plan events to look forward to. Visit a friend.
- \* Learn something new.
- \* Do something for someone else. Volunteer!
- \* Take time for yourself. Go to a movie, take a trip.
- \* Laugh once in a while.
- \* Have realistic expectations of yourself.
- \* **READ.** There are many excellent books on grief and healing.
- \* **PRAYER.** Prayer is important in our lives. God is near, holding us in His arms, open to our pain.

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***Parish Support Programs***

**The parish community of  
St. Mary of the Lake  
offers several opportunities  
to walk with you and your family  
on the journey of grief:**

◆ ***Personal Bereavement Follow up***

This is a program of individual grief ministry. About one month or so after the death, a Minister of Consolation will call the bereaved parishioner to offer a home visit. At that time the Minister of Consolation will present a candle of remembrance and a packet of grief-related materials to the parishioner. The parishioner and the Minister of Consolation will keep in contact with each other through visits phone calls and other comfortable ways of conversation. God's healing touch is present through our Ministries of Consolation. No parishioner needs to walk the journey of grief alone.

◆ ***In Remembrance***

Coming together in prayer can also provide you and your family with an opportunity to remember the person who has died. At special times during the year, like Valentines, fall, Christmas, you are invited to attend a prayer service to honor the memory of your loved one. The prayer service is followed by refreshments and fellowship.

Mass at St. Mary's Cemetery is celebrated annually at St. Mary of the Lake Cemetery on Memorial Day at 9 a.m. The names of those who have died since last Memorial Day are remembered at Mass.

◆ ***Resources***

Suggestions for resource materials and local support groups are available to support one's journey of grief.

◆ ***Grief and the Holidays***

A two hour workshop offered each year in November that provides practical suggestions to help one prepare for and cope with the holiday season.

◆ ***Companions in Grief***

Those having experienced a loss are invited to come together for FOUR consecutive Thursday afternoons, 4:30-6:00 p.m. at the church. These four week series occur approximately 8 times during the year. Call the Parish Life Center at 651-429-7771 for a schedule.

Rev. 7:17

*He will  
lead them to  
springs of life-giving water  
and God will  
wipe every tear  
from their eyes*