



In Your Bereavement

A practical guide to personal grief



ST MICHAEL & ALL ANGELS, BRAMCOTE

Sunday Services:

8am Holy Communion (1st Sunday of the month)

10am Morning Worship

With Sunday Stars - activities for children of all ages - on the 1st and 3rd Sundays of the month.

6.30pm Evening Worship

With Choral Evensong on the 5th Sunday of the month

Midweek Activities:

Coffee Morning

Every Wednesday from 10am, with a lunch once a month
For more details or to arrange a lift contact Wendy Willan on 07786 401332

Holy Communion - Every Thursday at 10am

Silver Surfers - Coffee, cake & computers

Every Thursday from 1pm, with lunch provided from 12.30pm
For more details email surfersbramcote@gmail.com

Friday Fitness & Friendship

Every Friday from 10am. Gentle keep-fit to music from the 50s and 60s, followed by refreshments and a chance to catch up with friends

For pastoral requests please contact a member of the clergy team via the Church Office (0115 9430137). If no one is available please leave a message and someone will get back to you as soon as possible

You will be made warmly welcome at any of our services and activities. If you would like more information please see our website www.saintmichaelsbramcote.com or contact the Church Office.

Introduction

Separation from a loved one is always painful, because the death of someone close is often one of the most difficult experiences any of us will go through. As human beings we have a built-in ability to cope with the loss of somebody important to us, but often need the help of others to do so. With that in mind, we should like to offer you our support in your loss and grief.

Bereavement is the process by which we come to acknowledge this loss, remembering that death, for all of us, is an integral part of the cycle of life. At the moment, you may have all the help you need from family and friends, but sometimes it seems that people are less able to listen once the funeral is over, or you may think that your feelings are so overwhelming that you cannot be reacting normally.

The Church is always here to share support, friendship and experience in the difficult times ahead. Through its clergy and members, the Church has a great deal of experience in supporting and caring for people, not just before the funeral but for life beyond. There are a number of different resources which we can offer, in ways which are wholly appropriate to you.

The following advice and support will not always be applicable in every circumstance, but are offered here as a general framework, and to provide you with some basic information and resources to help you start to come to terms with your loss.

Bereavement is the process of healing and recovery. Not so much the solution to a problem which needs to be resolved, but a journey with a number of different stages.

Some common milestones

There are various stages in the process of recovery from bereavement, and you may find that you experience some or all of the following:

Disbelief

You find your loss difficult to believe and are sometimes shocked all over again to find that your loved one is not at home to welcome you or somewhere else that you might have expected to find them in the past. You feel numb, grief-stricken and lonely, but despite your sorrow there is the feeling that your situation is unreal.

Reality

One day you will realise that the death of your loved one is really true. Despite the pain, this is a real step forward.

Exhaustion

You often feel unreasonably tired and use up reserves of energy in just coping. Sometimes you may experience fear when doing things that previously would never have bothered you.

Self-reproach

Bereavement is often accompanied by a sense of guilt or regret about the past. Anger is also a natural feeling.

Rejection

You will sometimes get the feeling that others are avoiding you or unwilling to speak about your loss.

Despair

Grief may continue for a long time and be accompanied by depression and even loss of your will to live. Don't be afraid to talk to others nor to cry in their presence. That goes for God as well as other people. Grief needs an outlet.

Acceptance

The day will eventually come when you are able to trust your loved one to God's care, and then having let go, to face the future peacefully once again.

Whilst memories of your loved one will never leave you, these reactions are quite normal, and with the proper support in place they will slowly start to fade wherein you can find yourself beginning a new chapter of life.

SOMETIMES

*allowing yourself to cry
is the scariest thing you'll ever do.*

And the bravest.

*It takes a lot of courage to face the facts,
stare loss in the face,
bare your heart and let it bleed.*

*But it is the only way to cleanse your wounds
and prepare them for healing.*

God will take care of the rest.

Barbara Johnson

Prayers that may be helpful
when you cannot find the words

A prayer for use in the time of sorrow:

God of hope, we come to You
in shock and grief and confusion of heart.
Help us to find peace in the knowledge
of Your loving mercy to all Your children,
and give us light to guide us out of our darkness
into the assurance of Your love,
in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

A prayer for those who have died:

Lord God, Creator of all,
You have made us creatures of this Earth,
but have also promised us a share in eternal life.
We commend into Your hands all who have died.
According to Your promises,
bring them to the joy of heaven,
where there is neither sorrow nor pain,
but life everlasting;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

A prayer for those who mourn:

Most merciful God,
whose wisdom is beyond understanding,
give to the suffering and the bereaved
the consolation of Your love.
Sustain them in their anguish
and strengthen them to meet the days to come;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

A prayer for faith:

Father, you know our hearts and share our sorrows.
We are hurt by our parting from those whom we loved:
when we are angry at the loss we have sustained,
when we long for words of comfort,
yet find them hard to hear,
turn our grief to truer living,
our affliction to firmer hope in Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

A prayer for hope:

Lord, have mercy on those who mourn
who feel numb and crushed
and are filled with the pain of grief,
whose strength has given up
You know all our sighing and longings:
be near to us and teach us to fix our hope on you
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

A prayer for healing:

Our eyes, Lord, are wasted with grief;
you know we are weary with groaning.
As we remember our death
in the dark emptiness of the night,
have mercy on us and heal us;
forgive us and take away our fear
through the dying and rising of Jesus your Son.
Amen.

Practical Hints and Suggestions

Don't Worry

Only tackle problems as they arise. Start by learning to cope with just one day at a time.

Spoil Yourself

Don't be afraid of spoiling yourself occasionally.

Take Your Time

Avoid rushing into quick decisions. Moving house and other big decisions should never be tackled hastily. As a general rule of thumb, most people take around a year.

Help Others

Look for ways to help others. That way you will soon begin to feel wanted and needed again.

Remember

Remind yourself of those things which haven't changed. Many of your old friends, interests and pleasures are still there waiting for you. Do remember to look after your health and appearance, and aim at maintaining a good balanced diet. Sleeplessness may become a problem. A hot bath and milky drink will often help. Avoid habit-forming remedies, such as excessive alcohol.

Future

As time goes on you may find that it helps to develop new interests and hobbies such as an evening class.

If widowed, do check your spouse's motor insurance policy to ensure that it continues to provide you with adequate cover. If you are in any doubt, a quick call to your insurance company will soon put your mind at rest.

Also, do speak to your local Tax Office and explain your new circumstances to them. Always be sure to keep a copy of any letters you send, and make a written note of any telephone conversations. If you are really stuck, it may be advisable to consult an accountant who will oftentimes be able to save you money in the long run.

Remember, you can always pray anywhere and at any time and in any situation.

Useful Contacts

Cruse Clubs

These often offer support to both widows and widowers.

(0115) 924 4404 www.cruse.org.uk

Compassionate Friends

Provide useful practical support for bereaved parents.

www.compassionatefriends.org

Macmillan Cancer Support

Offer general advice concerning the end of life and coping with bereavement.

0808 808 0000 (lines open 7 days a week, 8am-8pm)

www.macmillan.org.uk/information-and-support/coping/at-the-end-of-life/coping-with-bereavement)

Telephone Counselling

The Samaritans are available at any hour. They will give advice and counselling to anyone, including young children, when requested.

(0115) 941 1111 www.samaritans.org

Citizens' Advice Bureau

They will supply answers to a wide range of questions and problems.

0300 330 5457 www.nottinghamcab.org.uk

Age Concern

If you are over 60, Age Concern can often provide practical help, as well as wide ranging general, legal and insurance advice.

(0115) 844 0011 www.ageuk.org.uk/notts/

