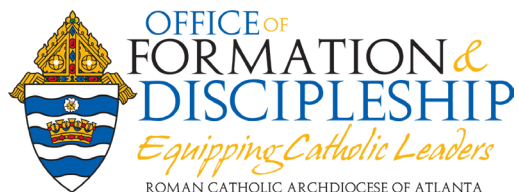

Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for words. And God, who searches the heart, knows what is the mind of the Spirit . . .

Romans 8:26-27



If you or a loved one is grieving, please contact the parish office to see what resources are available to you.

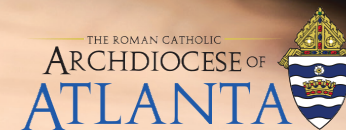
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Adapted from materials of the National Catholic Bereavement Ministry

Returning to “Normal”

CATHOLIC GRIEF SUPPORT SERIES



Returning to “Normal”

What’s “normal”?

In grief there is often a sense or feeling of waiting for things to return to “normal.” However, we know in our mind that things will never return to normal, and our life has been irrevocably changed by the death of our loved one. There will be no return to “normal” as it was before the death, however, we may find a “new normal.”

Normal will be different for you than for your friends because of what you have experienced. Death has a way of changing people, often making them stronger and wiser. Your sense of “normal” will change as you pass through the grieving experience, and it will be different from month to month.

Although your thoughts may be different from some of your friends, they may be normal for someone who is grieving. You may find yourself angrier or more irritable. You may worry more about money than others do. You may find you cry more easily or feel like being alone more often.

These emotions can catch you off guard. You may be out shopping, catch a glimpse of someone who looks like your loved one, and feel like running away. Or you may hear a certain song that brings back strong memories for you. Returning to church may bring back many memories, including memories of the funeral.



Key points to remember:

- Your experience of grief will be completely unique to you.
- You may feel different or new emotions than you have before.
- Be patient with yourself, these emotions can catch you off-guard.
- Other people may not know how to respond to you and they may avoid you.
- We need each other and a sense of community.

Behold, God is my salvation, I will trust, and will not be afraid; for the Lord God is my strength and my song, and he has become my salvation.

Isaiah 12:2

Anything can be a trigger and set you off crying, feeling confused, or feeling like you need to run. Know that this is a common part of grief. Take a couple deep breaths, cry if you need to, step out for a moment or two, or do whatever you need to do to center yourself. These feelings are real, and it is important to acknowledge that they are there. It will be difficult at first, but it does get easier.

You may find it difficult going back to work, back to your regular activities, back to social get-togethers, or back to church. Sometimes people don’t know what to say to you, so they might avoid you. Sometimes friends or family members will say things that hurt you. Of course, in most cases, they don’t mean any harm; they simply don’t know the right thing to say. As you deal with these painful experiences, you will become stronger, and each step of the pain will lead you through grieving and back to life.

We really do need each other; that is the way God made us. In the midst of your loss and your pain, may you discover again a sense of community.