



CATHOLIC OUTREACH RETREAT



November 11 - 12 2005

Bereavement Support Group Workshop

Which Way for Your Parish?

Presenter: Sr Ann Cullinane

Parish: St Francis Xavier, Armadale

- Often prior to death the pastoral team are involved with the family up to the death of the person.
- Assistance with funeral preparation is offered. Sometimes the person prepares the funeral beforehand.
- Sympathy cards are sent.
- Families are welcomed at the Requiem Mass and assistance given as required. Morning tea is provided.
- Follow-up visits or phone calls are made on a weekly, fortnightly or three weekly basis or whenever the bereaved are ready.
- Bereavement sessions are held every month in private homes with morning tea. The bereaved share where they are at, slides are used at times and practical issues are addressed.
- Counselling is recommended if required.
- Anniversary cards are sent and appointment made to visit during that week.



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Presenter: Dorothy Johnston

Parish: Our Lady of the Rosary, Doubleview

- Three main points for a parish when dealing with bereavement:
 - (a) Liturgical Ministry (parish priest, pastoral worker, parish secretary)
 - (b) Ministry for practical needs (Care groups)
 - (c) Long term support (eg. parish pastoral assistant, Dominican nuns, Seasons for Growth, Archdiocesan initiatives.)
- Implementation of Seasons for Growth program.
- Program is directed at families who have been bereaved over 12 months.
- Program is aimed mainly at the elderly in this parish who have lost a spouse.



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Presenter: Lesley Mc Minn

Parish: St Thomas More, Bateman

- Initial contact is made with bereaved family.
- Assistance with funeral preparations is offered.
- Follow-up 6 week visit is made to the bereaved family.
- Bereavement Support Group meets every 2nd and 4th week of the month.
- Meetings are informal and prayer is optional over a cup of coffee. Wholesome foods are offered as well as cake, eg. almonds, dried apricots. Bereaved are encouraged to exercise eg. walking either together or with a volunteer.
- A library is available.
- Social functions are organized.
- There is an annual Mass for the bereaved and a bi-annual Mass for babies.



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Presenter: Betty Thompson

Parish: Sts John & Paul, Willetton

- Bereavement Support Group meets every 1st and 3rd Wednesday evenings. Transport and supper are offered.
- 11 facilitators assist on a roster basis. All have been bereaved and are ready to help others move on. In the process of formation a strong bond has formed.
- Meetings are informal and usually commence with a prayer.
- Since it's inception about 12 months ago 10 bereaved have attended.
- Visits and telephone support is given where necessary.
- Social functions, sometimes with special speakers, are held three or four times a year which are well attended. A Christmas function is planned.
- Library books are available.
- A notice advertising the group is in the weekly bulletin and brochures have been produced clearly stating the groups' objectives.