

St. Margaret's Bulletin

Early, 9:00 am Mass twice in September. The first and second Sundays in September Geraldine will have 9:00 am Mass. In October we will return to regular schedule of 9:00 am Mass only on first Sunday of the month.

Altar Servers—It is time to train altar servers. Altar Servers have not been a part of our liturgy ministries since COVID. It would be good to have 5 or 6 people to rotate in this ministry. Everyone is eligible, women, men, youth and adult. There will be 2 opportunities for training, on Sunday, September 6, after 9:00 am Mass and Sunday, September 20, after 11:00 am Mass.

A big thank you to Dillon Land and Cattle for donating \$5000 for our lift. We presently have \$22,500.00 in our savings account for the lift.

Reflection by Trish—Grief

When I think of my friend Kathy, I see her smile, hear remarks that she frequently said, and feel the comfortable bond of our friendship. When I think of my friend Joe, I hear him laugh, the words he said that helped me keep perspective in life, and his deep faith in Jesus. Both these individuals passed away several years ago. They continue to be a part of my life through the impact they made on me, the wisdom they imparted, the laughter we shared, and because I still talk to them.

Scripture tells us that death is part of the cycle of life. We are created to return to the Creator. The Great Mystery that is with us now will be with us forever. Believing in this great love does not lessen the grief we feel when someone we care about dies. Who do we think of often? Whose wisdom, humor and life do we recall often? Do you gain strength knowing that the deceased continue to care for us through the thin veil that separates us?

Grief is the natural response to loss whether the death of a friend, loss of a career, independence, or other major event in life. Grief is nature's way of healing a broken heart. Grief affects our physical, emotional, mental and spiritual well-being. Grief is uncomfortable. It is difficult and it can literally hurt. Grieving can take us through every emotion, and all of them are natural and appropriate to feel.

Grief is a process that is very important. Some try to avoid dealing with grief, yet this can make grief more difficult and last longer. If you do not acknowledge your feelings now, they will likely resurface later and perhaps in unhealthy ways. Grief is a sign that we have cared and loved. Alongside this difficult sorrow, we can gain perspective on life and the value of relationships. We can become more aware of other's struggles and increase in compassion and understanding.

The grief process is not a way to getting over something. It is how we rearrange things. It is how we find a way forward with life taking on a new shape and how we learn how to navigate the

many changes loss brings. Grief takes time, often a long, long time. It is hard work and can leave us exhausted.

It is said that God sheds the first tear when we shed tears of sadness. Our longing for the deceased is natural. Our creed professes that we are part of the communion of saints. This tells us that the living and the dead are connected, in community. They are not with us in the same physical way, but they have been woven into our lives. Our union, the community, of the living and the dead, never ends. Through Jesus' death and resurrection, he showed us new life. We will have life after death also. With this belief we can find comfort that the deceased are experiencing a new life.

Scripture says there is a thin veil separating the living and the dead. Those that have gone to new life are not very far away. Many people find comfort in talking to their loved ones who are gone. Sometimes in our grief we share our anger about them leaving us, our frustration of living without them, and the pain of our love for them. I ask the deceased to give me counsel, insight, or peace. It is common to ask them to pray for our needs or pray for us, just as we would ask our friends and relatives here to do.

I will close with a couple verses on death that I have gathered:

Death leaves a heartache no one can heal. Love leaves memories no one can steal.

Death is God carrying us in one arm while the other flings aside heaven's door
To welcome us back to the blazing hearth of our first home
While those inside, having arrived before us, rush to the door like glad children shouting,
"They're here! They're here!"