

*From the Parish Nurse*

# Grief and Loss

*(Third in a Three-part series on End of Life issues)*



In life there are good days and bad days--those with significant achievements and others that bring profound losses. We often grieve with differing intensities over the loss of a playmate who moves away, friends who relocate, a treasured pet who dies, a job promotion we didn't get, the grades we didn't achieve, a missed opportunity for personal growth, divorce, financial burdens, loss of health or the death of family or friends. Each loss is grieved on an individual time table based on our strengths and weaknesses. Sometimes unresolved grief over past losses will resurface when a new loss occurs thereby causing past regrets or sadness to be brought from a distant memory to the forefront again.

Grieving is different for each individual and because of this there is no designated one, two, three solution or simple "how to" formula to use when it

occurs. As with so many things in life, we have weaknesses and no human can be counted on to meet our needs. Therefore we can feel alone, lost and we find ourselves crying out to the Lord. "Hear my prayer, O Lord; let my cry for help come to you. Do not hide your face from me when I am in distress. Turn your ear to me when I call, answer me quickly." Psalm 102: 1-2. We look within ourselves and to others for support. Notice, that even sometimes when we pray we want an answer quickly. Grief requires us to travel new paths of darkness and the path is traveled at a different pace for each individual yet the good news is that eventually the light of life and joy does return.

Each person needs a support system to help them through the losses they experience, and one source is certainly the Lord who has said, "Even to your old age and gray hairs I am he, I am he who will sustain you, I have made you and I will carry you; I will sustain you and I will rescue you" (Isaiah 46:4).

Champs  
Center for Healthy Aging, Ministries, Programs & Services  
13271 Millard Avenue  
Omaha, Nebraska 68137  
Tel: (402) 895-2224  
Website: [www.champsonline.info](http://www.champsonline.info)  
Email: [champs@crossandheart.org](mailto:champs@crossandheart.org)

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