

The **BETHANY BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT GROUP** is a voluntary Parish-based ministry which aims to help the bereaved and grieving.

The name **Bethany** recalls the visit of Jesus to Mary and Martha on the death of their brother Lazarus.

In today's world, people tend to be unaware of the grief associated with bereavement. It is not widely understood that the grieving process may be long and severe. Understanding the stages of grief can be helpful and reassuring.

Although grieving is a natural process which can be helped by the sympathy and understanding of friends, sometimes one may need support to work through it in a positive way. Friends don't always know how to help; they may feel embarrassed by one's grief; they may even avoid meeting one in the mistaken belief that a meeting may increase distress.

It is quite normal to feel anger, guilt, fear and depression as well as the awful pain of loss. These feelings need to be expressed rather than repressed, to be talked out, cried over and put in some sort of perspective.

It helps the healing process to talk with a trained listener and confront the very strong feelings associated with grief.

Many Bethany members have themselves been bereaved. They are trained to listen with understanding. They accept those suffering loss as they are, and support them through the grieving process.

While the services offered by Bethany vary somewhat from parish to parish, in Malahide Bethany provides:

1. **Group Support Sessions.**
2. **One-to-One Support.**
3. **Funeral Preparation.**
4. **Home Visits**

1. SUPPORT SESSIONS:

Meetings are held, usually, at 10.30am each Monday (except bank-hols) and on the 2nd Monday of the month at 8pm in St Sylvester's Parish Pastoral Centre. Support is offered by trained Bethany members who provide the opportunity to the bereaved and grieving to share their experiences in complete confidence. Each person is given the opportunity to speak about his/her bereavement but there is no obligation to do so. One is free to say as little or as much as she/he wishes.

2. ONE-TO-ONE SUPPORT:

One-to-One support is also provided at the meetings. Alternatively if anyone wishes to speak to a trained Bethany listener they can do so at any time by contacting

the on-call Bethany listener

on 087-7936189

3. FUNERAL PREPARATION:

The Bethany support group assists bereaved families in the preparation of the Funeral Mass for example by calling to the house, or meeting the family in the Parish Pastoral Centre and providing Liturgy Readings, Hymns etc.

4. Home Visits

In some parishes Bethany also make house visits. The Malahide Bethany Group will provide this support to those who may not be in a position to avail of the other supports offered.

FURTHER INFORMATION:

For information about the Malahide Bethany Bereavement Support Group please contact

Bethany 087-7936189 or

The Parish Office 8451244