

COMFORT FOR THE GRIEVING

As we look towards our celebration of Christmas, many of our hearts are filled with warm memories and eager anticipation. For persons who have experienced a loss of a loved one, this can be a very difficult time.

Jesus has won victory over suffering and death, yet these are very real and painful experiences for us. The Bible reminds us that even Jesus cried at the death of his dear friend Lazarus. Often we may wonder 'What can I say or do that will be a comfort to a grieving friend?'

When a friend is grieving there are several things we can do for/with them.

First, we need to remember that there isn't a right thing to do or say that will make the pain go away. We need to be willing to simply be a continuing presence in our friend's life. It can be a comfort to just sit quietly. We can always be willing to listen. The pain of loss creates a deep and abiding loneliness. This is magnified when those grieving feel separated from others.

Second, we need to take our cues from our friend. If they need to cry and experience sadness, we need to be able to be with them without trying to cheer them up. If they need reassurance of their worth, we need to be affirming. When they need to hear words of comfort from Our Lord, we need to be able to speak these to them.

Third, we need to remember them in our prayers and let them know we are praying for them.

May we "comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves have received from God" (2 Cor.1:4).

I pray that you & your loved ones enjoy all of the peace, joy,
and wholeness that is Christmas!

Peggy Taylor RN, Parish Nurse

