

Columnists

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THOUGHTS TO CONSIDER



EDWIN SULEWSKI
 FUNERAL DIRECTOR

What is grief?

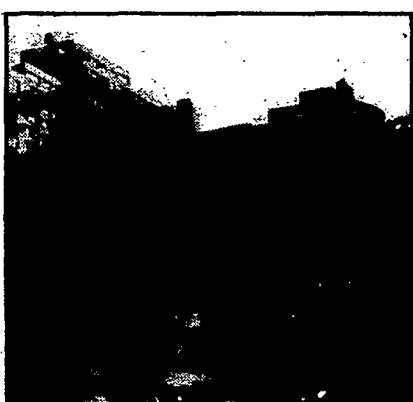
Grief is a process of feelings and behaviors which follow the loss of someone or something that we love. The entire process of grieving helps us to come to terms with the changes that have taken place in our lives and begin adjustment to them. This is not always easy and often lasts for a year or more. Some of the feelings that accompany grief are anger, guilt, anxiety, shock, jealousy and depression. It is not uncommon to be confused, restless, to have difficulty sleeping or to have a change in appetite. It takes time to accept the reality that someone we love is deceased. It takes longer to recreate a life that can make us happy.

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A struggle for school survival

By Father Albert Shamon
 Sunday's readings: (R3) Mark 14:1 - 15:47; (R1) Isaiah 50:4-7; (R2) Philippians 2:6-11.

The Passion of Our Lord brings to mind the struggle our Catholic schools are undergoing to survive. I offer these few suggestions to help our schools:

Regarding consolidation of schools, we must avoid two pitfalls. First, consolidation must mean more than taxation — a mere financial quota from each parish involved. Secondly, the financial determination must not be made according to the number of students in the school. This would discourage parishes from sending students, because the more students the parish enrolled, the higher its assessment would be. Rather, parish assessments should be determined by the financial income of the parishes involved.

Moreover, true consolidation must entail two things: 1) a financial quota from the participating parishes based on parish income; and 2) a student quota from the involved parishes. Consolidated parishes should give not only a specified number of dollars, but also a specified number of students. Otherwise, consolidation is a subterfuge for closing schools.

Another concept that needs to be retaught is the notion that support for Catholic education is not the sole duty of the parents of children in the school. It is the responsibility of the entire Christian community.

Public schools are not supported only by the parents of children in them; they are supported by school taxes from the entire population, because education is a community service. Catholic education, likewise, deserves the support of the entire parish, not just of the parents, because the entire Church benefits.

The bishops of the United States said as much. Catholic schools, they stated, "...deserve the support of all members of the Catholic community because, directly or indirectly, they serve all" (Teach Them, 5/6/76). "We call upon all members of the Catholic community to do everything in their power to maintain and strengthen Catholic schools" (To Teach As Jesus Did, 11/72).

A third and final point is that we must es-

A Word for Sunday

establish a fund for consolidated schools. Universities run on funds. Our schools should build up educational funds to at least a quarter of a million. Then annual salary hikes would not throw educational boards into panic.

Again, these are the three suggestions; consolidation by student quotas and financial assessments, not based on "heads;" the entire Catholic community — not just the parents of students — assuming responsibility for Catholic education; and the establishment of a special Catholic schools' fund.

To achieve these goals:

1. A permanent committee should be set up for each school to advertise, to recruit and to build up the fund. Call it the Catholic Education Committee.
2. This committee should establish the Catholic Education Fund to subsidize needy students and meet salary increases. To create and enlarge this fund, a collection could be taken up in each of the parishes involved every February during Catholic School Week.
3. Among other initiatives, solicitations should be made for bequests and funeral memorials, and envelopes for contributing to the fund should be inserted in the monthly envelope packets, etc.
4. And this is important: 10 or 20 percent of the income from every school fund-raiser should be siphoned off for the fund. The fund should be frozen except to use its income for salary increases and needy students.
5. During July and August, instructions should be given on Catholic education, stating the requirements of Canon Law (cp. Canon 798) and the mind of the Church.
6. Lastly, we must advertise!
7. Our goal: Every Catholic child enrolled in a Catholic school.

I am the resurrection and the life

By Cindy Bassett

Jesus often came to visit at the home of my neighbors Martha and Mary, and sometimes I helped Martha serve when he stayed to dinner. But it was not until Lazarus, the brother of Martha and Mary, became ill that I discovered who Jesus was.

Early one morning, Martha asked me to go to Jerusalem to find Jesus who was preaching there. "Tell Him that Lazarus, his friend, is very sick," she begged.

When I found Jesus preaching to the crowd that seemed to follow him throughout Jerusalem, I rushed up with the news about Lazarus. His reply was puzzling: "The purpose of his illness is not death, but the glory of God." And then he turned away and went on preaching to the crowd.

So I waited two days for Jesus to accompany me back to Bethany. Finally, he said to his apostles, "Our friend Lazarus is sleeping. But now I will go to his house and awaken him." Then Jesus told us that Lazarus had died. "Now you will have another opportunity to believe in me," he said. "Come, let us go to Bethany."

My heart ached with grief for Martha and Mary as we made the short journey. Jesus had healed many people he didn't even know. Why wouldn't he come to the aid of his good friend Lazarus?

As we approached the house, Martha came running out to meet us. "Oh, Lord," she sobbed, "if you had only been here, Lazarus would never have died!"

Again, Jesus' words were puzzling: "Your brother will come back to life," he assured her. "Yes, Lord, on the day of resurrection," Martha replied.

"Anyone who believes in me, even though he dies, will be given eternal life. Do you believe this, Martha?" Jesus asked.

"Yes, Lord, I believe," she replied. "Come and stay with the family now. Many have come to mourn our loss with us." Jesus' remarks seemed to comfort Martha, so I vowed I would never tell her that he had waited two days before coming to Bethany.

Instead of going inside, Jesus went directly to the tomb where Lazarus' body had lain for the last four days. When Mary learned of Je-

The Bible Corner

Jesus' arrival, she ran to find him there. "Oh, Jesus, if only you had gotten here in time," she lamented. "Lazarus would still be alive!"

When Jesus saw her distress, he too began to weep. But I was not impressed by his tears. He had not been so concerned when I found him in Jerusalem.

Mary argued with him when he Jesus ordered that the stone be rolled away from the entrance to the tomb. "Did I not tell you that if you believe you will see a great miracle?" Jesus replied. Mary relented, and the stone was removed.

Then, looking heavenward, Jesus prayed: "Thank you, Father, for hearing me. I know that you always hear even my unspoken prayers, but I say this for the others here, that they may come to believe." He went to the entrance of the tomb and commanded loudly, "Lazarus, come forth!"

In a few moments, the people gasped as Lazarus appeared in the entrance of the tomb, still bound in the burial garments. "Unbind him now," Jesus said.

I was ashamed that I had considered Jesus unkind for not leaving Jerusalem immediately. God's ways are not always the ways we think they should be, I realized. I knew that I must learn to trust God even during times I do not understand His ways.

Many others also came to believe in Jesus that day. But some in the crowd refused to believe what they had seen. Instead they went back to Jerusalem to report the incident to Caiaphas, the high priest, who then began plotting with the Jewish council to have Jesus arrested.

Scripture reference: John 11:1-53.
 Lenten meditation: Dear Jesus, help me in my unbelief.