

## **Bereavement Testimony – Anna Marrano**

Bereavement refers specifically to the process of recovering from the death of a loved one. People who attend a support group learn a lot about themselves and the lives of other people who are going through the same pain (grief). Grief is a normal response after the loss of the loved one and it's important to realize that everyone grieves differently. Some people may get over a loved one's death rather quickly while it could take others to do just that. There is no right or wrong way to grieve. Our bereavement support group with Father Owen helped us understand this and he was there to guide us through the grieving process and offered individuals the opportunity to come together with others who were grieving and wanted support in managing their grief more effectively. Grief is a reaction to bereavement ranging in feelings from deep sadness, anger and the process of adapting to a significant loss from one person to another depending on beliefs, and relationship to what was lost. Grieving behavior ranges from crying, laughing, and confusion. Some people find comfort in the company of others, particularly those affected by some loss where others prefer to be alone with their feelings. Grief can be complicated by depression due to some people being more emotional and diving into their feelings. Others may seek distractions from an unchangeable way of living. Express your feelings, accept comfort, ask questions and find peace with faith. Bereavement draws people closer to God because He is the only one who, through real prayer, you find hope and comfort in. As we were all sitting around the tables, about 20 of us, we were all introducing ourselves. Who had lost a mother, a husband, a sister, a brother and who had lost a son and a couple had even lost two children. Tears were coming down to each one of us, our hearts were crying to each other and you could feel the sadness fill the room. As the weeks went by we shared sad stories and at some point happy stories about our loved ones. To me personally I could not have done this without the help of Father Owen. His prayers, kind words, and how he knows just what to say at the right times. I don't think that any of us would be here today without his help, blessing and prayers. I pray to God to please give peace to my confusion, joy to my sadness and hope to my heart. I can never get over losing my husband, but I know that I haven't lost him. I know just where he is. He's not coming back to me but he is with me at all

times. He sends me signs to let me know that he never went away, he's with me when I sleep, or he wraps his arms around me when I cry. With tears in my eyes, I always manage to say that I'm okay. I can't be strong all the time, sometimes I just need to be alone and let my tears out. The most beautiful thing left are memories, pictures and a smile. I started thinking how blessed I am and my eyes start tearing up and I thank God for my family and friends that are always there for me. The only choice I have is to be strong for them. There are people that walk with me but cannot walk for me. I ask God why are you still blessing me and He said, I need to bless you so that you can be a blessing for your children and grandchildren. They are still having a hard time understanding why he left this earth so soon, they weren't ready to say goodbye. But as it's almost a year we begin to accept not just that he died, but that he lived and his life gave us memories too beautiful to forget. Our love for him will never go away, he walks with us everyday unseen, unheard, but always near. He will forever be loved and missed.