



"The Death Chamber" by Edvard Munch

Comfort and Hope for the Journey of Grief

Faith & Grief Ministries, Inc.
Comfort and Hope for the Journey of Grief
Grief Workshop & Course, Participant Workbook - excerpts

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Comfort and Hope for the Journey of Grief led by Fran Shelton

All sorrows can be borne if we put them in a story or tell a story about them.
Isak Dinesen

Today's Agenda

Introductions	call for volunteers for worship
Good Friday	"The Death Chamber" by Edvard Munch
Holy Saturday	Metaphor for Grief and Mourning: Days between the Days
Easter Sunday	Resurrection Stories: Relearning the World
	General Understanding
	Respect for Individuality
	Prompting and Listening to Stories
Spiritual Practice:	Cinquain

OPENING SENTENCES (read responsively)

Grace and peace to you.

Praise be to our merciful and comforter God who meets us in all our sorrows, so that we can comfort others in their sorrow, with the consolation we have received from God.

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

PRAYER (unison)

How can I find words to pray?

How shall I begin to unburden myself of this weight of grief?

**All the ordinary happenings of the day seem unreal;
nothing makes sense anymore.**

My mind is numb, and I shrink from the companionship of even my closest friends.

YOU understand, dear God.

Bear then, some of this grief with me; share my sorrow.

Help me to see my family circle as part of your greater family, linked by ties of love which death can never weaken. Amen.

Adapted from prayer by Gladys Knowlton

Story for Grief and Mourning – adapted & selected passages from Luke 23 & 24

Good Friday

It was now about noon, and darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon, while the sun's light failed; and the curtain of the temple was torn in two. Then Jesus, crying with a loud voice, said, "Father, into your hands I commend my spirit." Having said this, he breathed his last. When the centurion saw what had taken place, he praised God and said, "Certainly this man was innocent." And when all the crowds who had gathered there for this spectacle saw what had taken place, they returned home, beating their breasts. But all his acquaintances, including the women who had followed him from Galilee, stood at a distance, watching these things.

Holy Saturday

Now there was a good and righteous man named Joseph, who, though a member of the council, had not agreed to their plan and action. He came from the Jewish town of Arimathea, and he was waiting expectantly for the kingdom of God. This man went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Then he took it down, wrapped it in a linen cloth, and laid it in a rock-hewn tomb where no one had ever been laid. It was the day of Preparation, and the sabbath was beginning. The women who had come with him from Galilee followed, and they saw the tomb and how his body was laid. Then they returned, and prepared spices and ointments. On the sabbath they rested according to the commandment.

Easter Sunday

But on the first day of the week, at early dawn, they came to the tomb, taking the spices that they had prepared. They found the stone rolled away from the tomb, but when they went in, they did not find the body. While they were perplexed about this, suddenly two men in dazzling clothes stood beside them. The women were terrified and bowed their faces to the ground, but the men said to them, "Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here but has risen. Remember how he told you, while he was still in Galilee, that the Son of Man must be handed over to sinners, and be crucified, and on the third day rise again." Then they remembered his words, and returning from the tomb, they told all this to the eleven and to all the rest. Now it was Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and the other women with them who told this to the apostles. But these words seemed to them an idle tale, and they did not believe them.

SPIRITUAL PRACTICE Cinquain

A Cinquain is a five-lined poem (hence the name!) and is a favorite poetic form for many because, as one writer pointed out: “They don’t require a whole lot of words!” They also reinforce some basic grammatical parts of speech. It can be a useful tool in expressing how you feel as you grieve.

Format for Writing a Cinquain

Line 1: One word (a noun, the subject of the poem)

Line 2: Two words (adjectives that describe the subject in line 1)

Line 3: Three words (-ing action verbs–participles–that relate to the subject in line 1)

Line 4: Four words (a phrase or sentence that relates feelings about the subject in line 1)

Line 5: One word (a synonym for the subject in line 1 or a word that sums it up)

Alternative Line 5:

Five words (a phrase or sentence that further relates feelings about the subject in line 1)

1 word	–	noun
2 words	--	adjectives
3 words	--	verb + ing
4 words	--	words that express feeling or mood
1 word	--	synonym

CLOSING PRAYER (read responsively)

We remember our lives, the way they were before our child died.
How we yearn for those moments when all was well. There will forever be an empty spot in our lives because we have lost our child. We search for inner peace and we strain for a sense of acceptance of this reality...

God, be near to us, be our strength.

We remember our lives, the way they were before our spouse died.
How we yearn for the beauty of our past life together, the home we made, the fellowship, the humor, the hopes and plans. We long for consolation and peace in our lives...

God, be near to us, be our strength.

We remember our lives, the way they were before our sibling died.
How we yearn for the time when we took each other for granted, when love and affection came through laughter, loyalty, and time together. We looked forward to future growth together...

God, be near to us, be our strength.

We remember our lives, the way they were before our parent died.
How we yearn for the days when we felt like a child in safekeeping rather than a child feeling lost and alone...

God, be near to us, be our strength.

BLESSING

**May the sweet light of change shine in your darkness,
May the first breath of each morning help you begin life again,
May the memories unfold as prayers for life,
May the love continue to fill the silence.**

- Zenju

Check out all our grief support programs at faithandgrief.org

- Weekly Support Gatherings – 1-hour of sharing your grief journey – online
- Comfort & Hope for the Journey of Grief Workshops
- Weekend Grief Retreats
- Listen to the Faith & Grief Podcast – wherever you download your favorites
- Faith & Grief Book Club

Finding Comfort & Hope Retreat

March 26-28, 2021

Montreat Conference Center, NC

Join us in the glorious Blue Ridge Mountains at Montreat for this weekend retreat led by grief support experts who really "get grief" after experiencing it themselves. The retreat explores the nature of grief, allows you to tell your story, and provides you spiritual practices designed to promote comfort in your grief.

The retreat is limited to 8 participants and will follow all recommended health policies. Please join us and find comfort and hope for your grief journey.

Register at faithandgrief.org/retreats





COMFORT & HOPE FOR THE JOURNEY OF GRIEF RETREAT FEBURARY 19-21, 2021

JOIN US AT MO-RANCH

Come and join us in the beautiful Texas Hill Country at Mo-Ranch for this retreat where you may experience comfort & hope as you process the dynamics of your grief with others on a similar grief journey in a peaceful place, full of nature's healing splendor.

Led by grief support experts, the retreat includes presentations on the nature of grief, small group discussions, and spiritual practices designed to promote comfort in your grief.

Register at faithandgrief.org/retreats or Moranch.org

Questions?, contact Program Director, Shelley Craig at shelley@faithandgrief.org.

