



PARENT FEEDBACK

At the end of each retreat, we ask parents to complete a short evaluation form telling us what they thought about the retreat and giving us suggestions on how to improve. Here is a sampling of their comments:

“We left this weekend with exactly what we had hoped for - strength, wisdom and just a little more peace.”

“I know what it is like to be angry with God, yet clinging to him because he is all that you have. We entered...filled to capacity with our grief and you allowed us to empty whatever we could or would... leaving us a little less burdened.”

“To say the weekend was amazing, both spiritually and physically, is an understatement. When I lost my son, I was numb, void of feelings at times, not knowing why I was feeling some of the emotions I was having, mad at God at times, having no patience with those around me who could not possibly understand my pain, etc. This went on for a few years. I tried small groups of people who have had a loss, but until I surrounded myself with parents who have suffered the same loss and received the spiritual guidance I needed to try and understand and cope, I was floundering.”

“A truly wonderful experience—no answers as to the "why" this happened and that's ok—so good to be with those ‘who get it.’ Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.”

“I felt so safe there, I didn't want to leave. But then I realized that it was the spirituality of everything that I have experienced there that has lifted me up. If only I can keep that same spirituality, I will be ok. Losing it keeps me in a dark place. Keeping it helps me get through the day. So I have to keep it.”

“This was a Godsend to us. We have been so isolated in our grief and have not had any help with the spirituality of grieving for our children. We are so grateful for the kindness and compassion shown to us.”

“There are no words to adequately say how much comfort, peace, faith, reassurance, and so much more, that (this retreat) brought to me. I do believe now that through (a friend's name), God was inviting me to be a part of this weekend.”

“We come away emotionally and physically exhausted, but with a renewed faith that our children are truly alive and still with us; we come away with HOPE. There is nothing that can totally take our pain away, but somehow sharing with each other does help.”

“I had completely lost faith and all my beliefs when my son died. This was the first time that I had gone to Mass in a long time. It was wonderful to begin believing again.”

“Though I can’t predict the long term impact of today, I do feel a tangible peace that I didn’t have yesterday.”

“Although wounds are open again, this ministry gives us an opportunity to ‘share,’ which we sometimes have to suppress in our everyday life – we need these forums.”

“You brought our son into the room for the weekend. “

“As more time goes by since I lost my child, there seems to be fewer and fewer opportunities to talk about him... and share those feelings. I love being able to talk about my faith in relation to my loss. This is the only place I can do this.”

“I have never been more at home or more comfortable with a group of strangers who, thanks to the Holy Spirit, are no longer strangers and who provided me with real love, compassion, and understanding.”

“As the days go by, I look back at the things we shared. Right at the start of the retreat, the picture on the program reached out to me. Even before Father told us the Emmaus story, I felt I was looking at Jimmy on the right, myself on the left and Jesus in the center. For me it was very powerful. I can never forget the trauma of Jimmy’s journey in life and death, but with Jesus walking with him and with us together, I am blessed. I still grieve deeply but I am blessed with the love of Jesus within my grief.”

“To be able to discuss our losses spiritually was an immense help for me. I have been unable to do this elsewhere.”

“The sharing was outstanding and demonstrated the diversity of the effects of grief on the part of the participants.”

“I’m always at a different place in my grief journey and my spirituality with each retreat. I always have a different experience and get something new out of each retreat.”

“I want to thank you for yesterday. As hard as it was I am glad I was a part of the retreat. Today is a good day and I thank the Lord for that. One day at a time.”

“There are no words to thank you for all the time and effort that you put into making our retreat such a memorable day. The spiritual journey is made so much more bearable when we share the pain of our loss. God bless!”

“I left with such a feeling of peace, something I haven’t felt in a long time. I was also mentally and physically exhausted, but the feeling of peace overshadowed that.”

“Just keep doing what you are doing. Don’t change anything. It was transformational for me.”

“I shall never forget the blessed retreat. I have finally found peace within my soul.”

“I came thinking it was too long of a day and found that, when it was over, I did not want it to end!”