



EMMAUS MINISTRY FOR GRIEVING PARENTS MISSION AND CORE VALUES

Required for use of the trademarked name
“Emmaus Ministry for Grieving Parents”



1. **OUR MISSION.** We are a Catholic ministry that serves the *spiritual* needs of *all* grieving parents (no matter what religion) whose children of *any* age (from conception to old age) have died by *any* cause (including abortion, miscarriage, suicide, overdose, etc.), no matter how long ago (from a few days to more than 40 years ago,)

2. **OUR ROLE.**

As Emmaus Ministry Retreat Team Members, our role is to provide parents with the opportunity to spend dedicated time focused on their spiritual journeys after the death of their children. Primarily, we do our best to handle the logistics of preparing for the retreat and having it run smoothly. What actually happens at each retreat, however, is the work of the Holy Spirit, our children, and the parents, not ours.

3. **OUR METHODOLOGY.** We offer spiritual nourishment via Half-Hour, One-Hour, One-Day, and/or Weekend Spiritual Retreats. We tell parents who come to our retreats, *“You are giving yourselves the gift of getting away from everyday life to focus on where God and where your children are in your lives right now.”*

The Emmaus Ministry is not a support group and it does not offer therapy, workshops, or seminars. What we do offer is the opportunity to deepen your spiritual relationship with God and with your deceased child.

We accept all grieving parents wherever they are in their spiritual journeys. We do not judge or assume. All feelings are valid. We recognize that often feelings of grieving parents can seem “irrational” or “unusual” to others.

4. **OUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES.**

The Emmaus Ministry for Grieving Parents is based on

a. **Catholic Catechesis.** See our *Catholic Catechesis* summary below.

b. **Emmaus Ministry Retreat Guidelines/Requirements.**

- i. (Strictly adhere to and provided to all parents via hard copies and verbally at the beginning of each retreat)
- i. Emmaus Ministry retreats focus on the *spirituality* of the grieving process. We do not offer counseling, therapy or grief services. Our retreats are not seminars, workshops, or conferences. They are spiritual nourishment.
- ii. We never “go around the room” asking parents to introduce themselves or their children. Each parent is on his/her individual spiritual journey and we do not force you to share.
- iii. We encourage parents to share as much, or as little, as they wish, with no pressure at all. Many parents participate by listening only, which is perfectly acceptable.
- iv. We allow time for all who do wish to speak, avoiding anyone from monopolizing the conversation.

- v. We do not require participation in any of our sessions. If parents choose not to participate in a particular session, preferring to walk the grounds or spend time in the chapel, that is totally fine and we never question why.
- vi. We respect each other by refraining from comments that could be hurtful, e.g. “”*I don’t know why my child had to die; he wasn’t a drug addict.*” None of our children deserved to die. God’s love shines on all of them equally, no matter what.

5. OUR COSTS

In our interest of bringing this ministry to as many grieving parents as possible, there is never a cost for the services or travel expenses of us or of any of our Emmaus Ministry Retreat Team Members. (However, we do accept *donations* to cover our travel expenses.)

Individual sites may charge a Registration Fee or accept “Free-Will Offerings” to cover the cost of food and retreat materials.

We, as coaches coming to you to help you adopt the Emmaus Ministry in your area, however, charge nothing for our services

We encourage individual sites adopting the Emmaus Ministry to adapt the various parts of the ministry to your particular situation to better serve the spiritual needs of your grieving parents.

To maintain the integrity of the ministry, however, we do expect you to (1) adopt the Mission and Core Values of this document; (2) follow the general structure/schedule of our retreats, as outlined in our *Emmaus Ministry Retreat Team Guidebook*; and (3) offer at least one retreat per year at your location.



**ON BEHALF OF ALL OF THE GRIEVING PARENTS
WHO WILL RECEIVE PEACE, COMFORT, AND CONSOLATION FROM
YOUR EFFORTS IN THIS MINISTRY,
THANK YOU PROFUSELY!**

PLEASE CALL 800-919-9332 IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS.



CATHOLIC CATECHESIS WHAT THE CATHOLIC CHURCH HOLDS TO BE TRUE ON DEATH AND RESURRECTION

As the Word of God is revealed in the Book of Wisdom 1:13¹:

“Because God did not make death, nor does he rejoice in the destruction of the living.”

And, as amplified in the Catholic Catechism ²:

1008 *“Death is a consequence of sin.”* The Church's Magisterium teaches that death entered the world because of man's sin. Even though man's nature is mortal, God had originally destined him not to die. **Death was therefore contrary to the plans of God, the Creator, and entered the world as a consequence of sin.** *“Bodily death, from which man would have been immune had he not sinned” is thus ‘the last enemy’ of man left to be conquered.”*

WHAT ELSE WE HOLD TO BE TRUE	IN THE CATECHISM OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH, THE CHURCH TEACHES:
For our children, life has changed – not ended.	366 “The Church teaches that every spiritual soul is created immediately by God—it is not "produced" by the parents –and it is immortal: it does not perish when it separates from the body at death, and it will be reunited with the body at the final Resurrection.” 997 “...In death, the separation of the soul from the body, the human body decays and the soul goes to meet God, while awaiting its reunion with its glorified body.”
Our relationship with our children still exists and continues.	954 <i>“The three states of the Church.</i> When the Lord comes in glory, and all his angels with him, death will be no more and all things will be subject to him. But at the present time some of his disciples are pilgrims on earth. Others have died and are being purified, while still others are in glory, contemplating 'in full light, God himself triune and one, exactly as he is.” 955 “So it is that the union of the wayfarers with the brethren who sleep in the peace of Christ is in no way interrupted, but on the contrary, according to the constant faith of the Church, this union is reinforced by an exchange of spiritual goods.”
Even if my child was not baptized, there is hope for salvation.	1260 “Since Christ died for all, and since all men are in fact called to one and the same destiny, which is divine, we must hold that the Holy Spirit offers to all the possibility of being made partakers, in a way known to God, of the Paschal mystery 1261 As regards <i>children who have died without Baptism</i> , the Church can only entrust them to the mercy of God, as she does in her funeral rites for them. Indeed, the great mercy of God who desires that all men should be saved, and Jesus' tenderness toward children which caused him to say: ‘Let the children come to me; do not hinder them,’ allow us to hope that there is a way of salvation for children who have died without Baptism.”
We have faith and hope that we will be together with them again.	989 “We firmly believe, and hence we hope that, just as Christ is truly risen from the dead and lives forever, so after death the righteous will live forever with the risen Christ and he will raise them up on the last day.” 997 <i>“What is ‘rising’?</i> In death, the separation of the soul from the body, the human body decays and the soul goes to meet God, while awaiting its reunion with its glorified body. God, in his almighty power, will definitively grant incorruptible life to our bodies by reuniting them with our souls, through the power of Jesus' Resurrection.” 998 <i>“Who will rise?</i> All the dead will rise. Those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of judgment.”

¹The New American Bible. World Catholic Press, 2000.

²Catechism of the Catholic Church, Second Edition. United States Catholic Conference, 2000.

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