

## **Finding Hope in Grief: The Ministry of Consolation**

**Console:** to alleviate or lessen the grief, sorrow, or disappointment or give solace or comfort.

**Hope:** the feeling that what is wanted can be had or that the events will turn out for the best

### **The Four Task of Mourning, J. William Worden**

1. To Accept the reality of the loss
2. To work through the pain of grief.
3. To adjust to an environment in which the deceased is missing
4. To emotionally relocate the deceased and move on with life

Instant Coffee vs. Tea

Community and Personal Grief: Newtown, 911

### **Hope, the ongoing stream: Sufi story**

- Meaning
- Memory
- Rituals
- Change/Teresa of Avila
- Ongoing Presence of God

### **Ministry Bag**

- No expectations/empty cup
- Presence
- Tea bag or ball
- Listening heart
- Awareness

Mary Catherine Casey, MDiv  
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Southwest Liturgical Conference

### **Tools for the Bag**

- Ears to listen
- Heart to hold
- Eyes to reflect
- Catholic gifts: ritual, remembering, sacraments, rosary

### **Putting the Tools to work**

- Presence/Boundaries
- Ongoing Education
- Mirror/reflect
- Other losses
- Resources

### **Emily Dickenson: Hope**

By Emily Dickinson 1830–1886 Emily Dickinson

“Hope” is the thing with feathers -

That perches in the soul -

And sings the tune without the words -

And never stops - at all -

### **Dietrich Bonhoeffer:**

First: nothing can make up for the absence of someone whom we love, and it would be wrong to try to find a substitute; we must simply hold out and see it through. That sounds very hard at first, but at the same time it is a great consolation, for the gap, as long as it remains unfilled, preserves the bonds between us. It is nonsense to say that God fills the gap; he doesn't fill it, but on the contrary, he keeps it empty and so helps us to keep alive our former communion with each other, even at the cost of pain.

Secondly: the dearer and richer our memories, the more difficult the separation. But gratitude changes the pangs of memory into a tranquil joy. The beauties of the past are borne, not as a thorn in the flesh, but as a precious gift in themselves. We must take care not to wallow in our memories or hand ourselves over to them, just as we do not gaze all the time at a valuable present, but only at special times, and apart from these keep it simply as a hidden treasure that is ours for certain. In this way the past gives us lasting joy and strength.

Jeremiah 29:10-14

Romans 5:1-5

Luke 24:36-44

