

WHEN SOMEONE YOU CARE ABOUT DIES

I'm a great believer in having a good sense of humour. Life's full of ups and downs, and it can be a great help when we are down, but there is one down that even it cannot help, and that's when someone we care about dies.

I've lived a long time during which I've lost a mother, father, sister, and son. I know how sad it can be to lose someone. This document is a result of my experiences in this matter and is an attempt to help other Christians cope more easily with the loss of someone dear to them.

When someone we care about dies, we tend to feel deprived, broken-hearted and always sad. It hurts and sometimes we want to blame something or someone for depriving us of the one we loved. Some people go off into a quiet place and cry, others do it openly. It is a very sad time for the living.

THIS TERRIBLE SORROW IS SOMETHING WE ALL HAVE TO GO THROUGH AT SOME TIME IN OUR LIVES.

No matter how we try to console those left behind, it doesn't always work. We can only hope and pray that time will heal this heart-breaking wound. Some people never get over the loss of a loved one, even after a long time.

The Death of a loved one is probably one of the most saddening and depressing things in anyone's life.

HOW CAN WE COPE WITH THESE TERRIBLE FEELINGS?

One way is to use 'Grief Therapists'. Using their expertise can often be very effective.

Another way to help Christians is simply to go through what happens to the souls of people who die long before we lose them, but how? It doesn't stop the intense sorrow or crying when it happens, but it does help to put it all in perspective and stop us from assigning blame.

The method is to repeatedly remind ourselves that when anyone we love dies, we hope that their immortal soul will have gone to live with God in heaven, where there is no pain, sorrow or sadness, just everlasting peace, joy and love.

If we believe our loved one has gone to heaven, do we really want to be truly selfish and wish them back with us and all that lies in wait for them as human beings?

We should be reminded of this regularly then when we lose someone dear to us, it will still be a great loss and cause us deep sorrow and pain, but now we can at least get some comfort in remembering where they've gone and hope that we'll join them when we die.

I found a great comforting epitaph in the magazine 'AFRICA' published by the St. Patrick's Missionary Society; it reads:

**REMEMBER, I'VE NOT LEFT YOU,
I'VE JUST GONE AHEAD OF YOU**