

My name is _____ and I am a member of _____ parish. I would like to thank _____ for allowing me to talk to you today.

I am here to speak to you about the Beginning Experience Organization of Omaha. We have nearly 30 years of history serving the surrounding communities. Every marriage eventually ends through death or divorce. The loss of a spouse is one of the greatest traumas a person can experience. Ripples from this profound loss reach into the community since the grieving person's contributions to family and their job are disrupted while they struggle to find order and purpose again in their lives.

Beginning Experience is an international peer ministry for divorced, legally separated, and widowed persons and their children. It is a process that is intended to facilitate the resolution of grief, promote healing, and thereby free people to live and love themselves, others and God. The programs that are available are: Coping, Beginning Experience Weekend, and Young Adult Beginning Experience Weekend. These programs are open to persons of all faiths.

Coping sessions are designed to help individuals work through the trauma and loss of their spouses and are led by a trained group of men and women who themselves are widowed, separated, or divorced. During the year, there are two series consisting of six sessions each, held in Columbus. We will begin a new series at St. Isidore convent in Columbus on March 2, 2006.

Beginning Experience Weekend is designed to help individuals make a new beginning in life. It helps them close the door gently on their marriage. The weekend begins on a Friday evening at 7:30 and ends Sunday by 5:00 PM. These are held four times a year. The next weekend will be held April 21-23, 2006 at the Immaculata Convent in Norfolk.

Young Adult Beginning Experience Weekend, known as YABE, is for young adults ages 16 and up who are dealing with changes in their families and personal lives resulting from the death of a parent or the divorce of their parents. These are offered twice a year.

Another extension of this organization is the Columbus Area Support Group for Widowed, Divorced, and Separated. This organization provides support, fellowship and friendship to those who have gone through the loss of a spouse. Monthly meetings are held the fourth Sunday of the month at 7:00 PM at the St. Isidore Convent in Columbus.

Again, all of these programs are open to people of all faiths. We will be available at the rear of church with brochures and will answer any questions.

Thank you.