



WIDOW WARRIOR MINISTRY

If you are a recent widow or widowed for many years and yearn for sisterhood and fellowship, please join us.

May Meetings:

Monday, May 11th & 25th

9:00am - 10:30am

Adult Formation Bldg., 2nd Fl. Padre Pio Room

If you are recently widowed or know someone who is, or would like to know how you can serve this ministry, please contact:

Deborah Sedillo Dugan at 602-577-4141.

Widow Warrior Ministry

National Widows Day ~ May 3rd, 2025

God has a special place in His heart for widows. Throughout the Old Testament, He warned against afflicting widows and orphans, for they are among the most alone and in need of protection.

National Widows Day is May 3rd; a day to honor and support widowed women in their journey. For widows, it is a day of remembrance and renewal, a day to seek empowerment and to lean on a support system. At St. Gabriel, the Widow Warriors Ministry is that support. The ministry seeks to empower its members through shared experiences and fellowship. They ensure that no widow in the ministry goes through their journey alone, but with lasting support and life-long connections.

This informal ministry began a few years ago after the death of the ministry founder's husband, Doug. It was created with a handful of recent widows in need of emotional and spiritual support, with the goal of providing encouragement, comfort and empathy to women following the death of their husband.

Widowhood is a personal journey that includes mourning, understanding new family dynamics, changing household & financial needs, loneliness, and much more. Widow Warriors feel blessed to take part in God's work of healing and prayer.

Our daily prayer is to our Blessed Mother, asking for her intercession to help us get through our grave loss. We ask for her love and presence, because she best understands our grief, having lost her husband and only Son.

In honor of National Widows Day, Widow Warriors Ministry is in the midst of drafting a logo, designed by Katrina Wiltse, the daughter of one of our members. The logo features a shield of armor with angel wings at each side, representing the silhouette of a woman. The purple shield symbolizes power and spiritual wisdom. As our Widow Warriors journey through this new chapter of their life, we emphasize three words, inscribed on a sword that looks like a cross: TRUST. FAITH. LIFE. We are reminded to TRUST in the strength and FAITH we have in Jesus Christ, assuring us that we are embraced and loved unconditionally by the Lord, empowering us to move forward and to live LIFE.

We are excited to share the final version of the logo in the near future.

If you see a woman today at Mass wearing purple and yellow flowers, she is widowed and would be grateful for your prayers.

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A Widow's Journey

Is Widowhood a Vocation?

by Deborah Sedillo Dugan

Who am I now? I was married for more than half my life. I was a wife for many years; married to a wonderful man, and now I am widowed. Redefining, redesigning and relearning how to do life without him. Who am I now? I am alone. Who am I now?

"I have called you by name, you are mine." Isaiah 43.1

We must have heard Jesus calling us by name. He has chosen us for a purpose, we know it. Trusting in God has been pinnacle through this widowhood journey. Is widowhood a vocation? We are single now, not married here on earth. As widows, we are dedicated to prayer and service to the church and to Christ, providing in a way, a life-affirming vocation to our parish. Scripture tells us that the widow and orphan shall be taken care of.

The St. Gabriel Widow Warriors Ministry is an active ministry with close to 25 members. It is a ministry no woman wants to be a part of, yet here we are, finding our way through grief, grace and growth. We've done the counseling, we've read the books, we've consoled each other, we've cried, and we have laughed. We are sensitive and compassionate to loss and we are here for each other and for others who have experienced loss. During the past six months, we have had five new widows in our parish, some have learned about this ministry and others have traveled from other parishes to be a part of this ministry.

As widows, we lean on our faith to get us through the grief that will remain with us for a lifetime. We learn to live with it. It never gets any better, it just gets different. The magnitude of loss can be so grave that it feels like we are literally drowning and then one day, we bob up and down treading water, and then another day we start kicking and splashing and maybe another day taking one stroke at a time, starting to swim. On any given day we could go back to drowning and treading water because grief is unpredictable, cruel and unforgiving. There are good days and bad but because of our faith and love for Jesus Christ, He has saved us. Collectively as a widow ministry, we are trying to find hope and healing while rebuilding and remembering our loved ones. We are Widow Warriors. This ministry has been transformational for all of us, and for some, it has been life changing. Some have found their way back to church and have renewed their faith one day at a time.

"I [the Lord] am with you and will watch over you wherever you go." Genesis 28:15

Today, May 3rd is National Widows Day, a day to remember widows in our parish, honoring their strength while also highlighting their service and faithfulness to Jesus. Some members don't have any family here other than church family, some have moved to assisted living and some have moved away to be closer to family. Regardless of location, we support each other and are here for each other. This dynamic group of strong women are learning how to redefine themselves while giving it to God and putting trust in Him to guide us, love us and show us the way.

Who am I? I am widowed and my vocation is prayer and service to the church.

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