



Bukás Loób sa Diyós
(Open in Spirit to God)
CATHOLIC CHARISMATIC COVENANT COMMUNITY
DISTRICT OF TORONTO

In response to a request raised during our Disciples meeting, we have prepared this summary of free and confidential support available to help our members navigate the practical, legal, and emotional challenges that can follow the loss of a loved one. This brief guide highlights no-cost or low-cost services in Toronto that BLD members can refer to on for both (1) clear steps to take after the passing of a spouse—including estate administration and access to brief legal advice—and (2) counselling and grief-support options. A quick ‘how to use’ notes and direct source links are included to make it easy for anyone to find the help they need.

COMMUNITY SUPPORT GUIDE

Free & Confidential Help for Grief, Death-Related Practical Steps, and Emotional Support

A) When a loved one dies: What to do first (understand the essential steps)

1) Ontario’s official estate guide explains how to:

- Locate a will
- Understand the estate trustee role
- Determine if probate (estate certificate) is needed
- Handle assets, debts, and benefits

2) Learn your rights for funerals, cremation & burial

- The Bereavement Authority of Ontario provides a free, plain-language guide covering decision-making authority, service options, consumer protections, and costs.

Visit:

Understand essential steps: <https://www.ontario.ca/page/administering-estates>

Learn your rights: BAO Guide to Death Care — <https://thebao.ca/for-consumers/consumer-information-guide/>

B) Free Legal Advice (Estate Questions & Next Steps)

1) Pro Bono Ontario

- Up to 30 minutes with a lawyer, confidential
- Civil matters including estate administration
- Mon–Fri (daytime)
- Call: 1-855-255-7256

2) Law Society Referral Service (LSRS)

- Get matched with a lawyer offering a free 30-minute consultation
- Available by phone or online

Visit:

FREE Legal Advice: Pro Bono Ontario Hotline: 1-855-255-7256 (Free 30 min);
<https://www.probonoontario.org/> (available by phone or online, Monday to Friday, daytime)

Law Society Referral Service: <https://www.findlegalhelp.ca>

C) Free & Compassionate Grief Support

- 1) Bereaved Families of Ontario – Toronto (BFO-Toronto) <https://bfotoronto.ca>
 - Free peer grief groups, including spousal loss groups
 - One-to-one peer support and ongoing programs
- 2) Hospice Toronto – Bereavement Support <https://hospicetoronto.ca/bereavement-support/>
 - Individual sessions, peer groups, and support calls
 - Phone, virtual, and in-person options
- 3) CMHA Toronto – Free Online Drop-In Grief Program <https://cmhato.org/programs/grief-support-program/>
 - Weekly, therapist-facilitated sessions on Microsoft Teams
 - For adults navigating grief or loss
- 4) GTA Directory (Jan 2025): A curated PDF of free/low cost grief programs across Toronto (children, youth, adults; peer & professional). Great for quick <https://torontoservicedirectory.ca/>

D) Immediate Emotional Support (24/7)

- 1) Distress Centres of Greater Toronto (24/7 Crisis Line)
 - Emotional support, crisis intervention, suicide prevention
 - Multilingual support (Mon–Fri 10am–10pm)
 - Call: 416-408-4357
- 2) 211 – Community & Mental Health Navigation (Confidential) <https://211central.ca/>
 - 24/7 phone, text, or chat
 - Helps connect you to counselling, housing, financial help, seniors’ supports, and more
 - Dial: 2-1-1

E) Low-Cost Counselling (Sliding Scale fees (\$10–\$150))

- 1) Family Service Toronto (FST) <https://familyservicetoronto.org/our-services/programs-and-services/counselling/>
 - Individual, couple, and family counselling
 - Sliding scale fees based on income
 - Multiple languages available
- 2) Catholic Family Services of Toronto: Individual/couple/family counselling; **fees based on income; no one turned away for inability to pay.** Welcomes all backgrounds. Website: <https://www.cfstoronto.com/fee-for-service/>

F) You are NOT Alone

- **Distress Centres of Greater Toronto – 408-HELP (416-408-4357): 24/7/365**, confidential. Multilingual support Mon–Fri 10am–10pm (Cantonese, Mandarin, Portuguese, Spanish, Hindi, Punjabi, Urdu). Also survivor support after suicide: <https://www.dcoft.com/survivors-of-suicide-and-homicide-loss/>
- **Ontario 9-8-8 Suicide Crisis Helpline** (for immediate suicide risk; national service) <https://988.ca/>