RITUALS OF SEPARATION IN THE FACE OF THE DEATH OF A CHILD

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ABSTRACT

Objective: To describe the separation rituals developed by bereaved mothers in the face of the death of their children.

Methodology: Descriptive field research, with a qualitative approach, carried out in a municipality in the interior of Paraíba, with ten members of the “Mothers of Pieta” group, consisting of mothers who lost children of natural or tragic death and share their experiences with other mothers in the process of mourning. Data collection took place over two months, using the focus group technique through individual interviews.

Results: Interpretations were obtained about the maternal experiences of loss produced from conceptual maps in the light of the rituals of “Before death” - the rite of anointing the sick or the hospital experience, “Before the burial” - rite of the funeral and “After the burial” – celebration of the mass in faithful memory of the deceased.

Conclusion: It was found that each ritual has its relevance in the face of the displeasure caused in a situation of loss, which shows the loss can have a better understanding when symbols (rites) are adopted that help in the elaboration of this experience.

Keywords: Death, Separation, Funeral Rituals, Son, Maternal Mourning.

RESUMO

Objetivo: Descrever os rituais de separação desenvolvidos por mães enlutadas diante da morte de seus filhos.

Metodologia: Pesquisa de campo, descritiva, com abordagem qualitativa realizada em município do sertão da Paraíba, com dez membros do grupo “Mães da Pietá”, constituído por mães que perderam filhos de morte natural ou trágica e comungam suas experiências com outras mães em processo de luto. A coleta de dados ocorreu durante dois meses, a partir da técnica de grupo focal e através de entrevistas individuais.

Resultados: Foram obtidas interpretações acerca das experiências maternas de perda produzidas a partir de mapas conceituais à luz dos rituais católicos de “Antes da morte” – o rito de unção dos enfermos ou a experiência hospitalar, “Antes do sepultamento” – rito das exéquias e “Após o sepultamento” – celebração da missa em memória fiel do falecido.

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1 INTRODUCTION

The human search for an understanding of death predates the historical period of writing itself, since ever since developing a differentiated view of the phenomenon is what guides the investigative process. Death and its repercussions are points of analysis of various dimensions, among them: biological, philosophical, anthropological, spiritual, religious, social and psychological. Meaning death and the implications it can bring to human beings through grief are central concerns of various cultures (Santos & Incontri, 2009).

Abramovitch (2015) cites that some cultures express death as a human condition of frailty in dealing with feelings, while other cultures solemnize it as a transition or rite of passage, leaving open edges on the complexity of the phenomenon of dying. In cultures based on the knowledge of the Christian Bible, death is symbolized as a passage, evident in the words of Jesus when he reports that "it is the door, and whoever passes through it will be saved" (Augras, 1984).

In the study developed by Gennep (1978) on the meaning of the passage, the author highlights three Rites of Passage: Separation Rites (preliminaries), Margin Rites (injunctions) and Aggregation Rites (post-injunctions). Depending on the ceremony, all rites may appear, although it is possible for one rite to emerge with more prominence than the others. It is important to emphasize that in funeral ceremonies the rites of separation are evidenced.

Anthropology calls rites of separation a structural time linked to social time in which the funeral rite transcends the real time of death, so that there is a social recognition of the bereaved. Thus, death presents an external conflict that affects social reality, so that to solve it it is paramount that it be narrated and lived emotionally (Turner, 1974).

For Gennep (1978), ritualizing means marking, evidencing aspects of reality or an event and Abramovitch (2015) states that ritual consists of a set of rites, while rite is the formative unit of ritual process. The rituals have as a common mark the process of repetition, providing a sense of security to people, starting from the idea that they promote a feeling of social cohesion.

Among the transition periods of roles in the life cycle, the human being experiences several rituals, those related to death being contextualized experiences from funeral separation rituals (Bromberg, 2000).

Funeral rites occur from the news of death, including the funeral service, funeral service, condolences, social/psychological mourning, and the cult of the dead (visits to the cemetery). Thus, they begin with agony and perpetuate themselves with the initial stages of mourning (Bayard, 1996).

Chamber (2017), based on studies developed on the psychology of religion, based on the Catholic religion, reports the existence of three different rituals before death, are: (1) Anointing of the sick (before death), (2) Rite of the funeral (before burial or cremation) and (3) Celebration of Mass in faithful memory of the dead (after burial or cremation).

According to Turner (1974), funeral separation rituals arise from the demarcation of a state of bereavement, since this process originates according to the recognition of the
importance of loss and the relevance of the lost being. The rituals offer the family a support structured in cultural aspects capable of providing predictable responses in the face of a stressful situation that generates vulnerability, numbness and disarticulation.

Imber-Black (1998) evidence mourning rituals based on five functions: (1) marks the loss of a family member; (2) focuses on the affirmation of how life was lived by the deceased; (3) facilitates the expression of mourning based on cultural values; (4) reasoning and narrating about death and life expressing meaning proper to each of these; (5) defines a direction of meaning in the face of loss and the continuation of the life of the mourners. Thus, for the author, the symbolic character of the rites of separation tends to promote the facilitation of the social communication of meanings associated with death and death, providing meaning to the fact. However, it is important to point out that the loss may be followed by trauma, an experience derived from a lack of preparation to receive the news. The type or narrowing of the bond can transform this experience of separation into a shock, causing a psychic commotion (Ferenczi, 1934).

According to Winnicott (1994), mother and son develop an affective experience of immeasurable bonding and the breaking of this bond tends to cause pain and suffering, whether physical or psychological.

The loss of a child can be identified as a phenomenon capable of generating an absence of a sense of life in the mother. Since, in the face of the separation ritual, the mother remains with her maternal "title", but undergoes a small adaptation of sense, now classifying herself in a profile of mother of an absent child. Death, in this classification, tends to hinder the construction of overriding tactics (Suárez, Sousa & Caldas, 2020).

Finally, the universality of human manifestations in the face of death emerges as a strategy of meeting cultural, social and psychological demands, framing loss and death in a predictability (Bromberg, 2000). Given such perspectives and in light of the main rituals before death, this research aims to describe the separation rituals developed by mourning mothers in the face of the death of their children.

2 MATERIAL AND METHODS

This research was based on a descriptive, qualitative field research based on an understanding of the participants' discourse based on their social, cultural, beliefs and values (Creswell, 2010).

The study was carried out with mothers who are members of a group called "Mothers of Pietà" who experienced the loss of their children by early death, whether it was sudden/natural or violent/tragic; the group practices originated in the municipality of Patos, located 308 km from the capital of Paraíba, located in the backcountry of the state. The group started in 2009, on the initiative of a priest, a doctor and seven mourning mothers who lived in the same neighborhood. The "Mothers of Pietà" group is currently structured with one hundred and ten (110) mothers who have lost children, of which thirty-five (35) remain active in home visits, prayer groups and religious events.

The sampling was intentional and as criteria were adopted: (1) inclusion criteria: (a) living with the children before the loss and (b) being an active participant of the group; and (2) exclusion criteria: (a) age below 18 years and (b) mother of stillbirth.

The research was submitted to the Ethics Committee of the Catholic University of Pernambuco (UNICAP), under Opinion No. 2,155,336. After its approval, the first meeting with the participants of the group was established in order to explain, in a clear and concise manner, the nature of the study, its objectives, methods and, later, to carry out the invitation to participate.
in said research. Therefore, ten participants of the group agreed to participate in the study and signed the Informed Consent Form (TCLE).

The data collection, carried out in 2017 and lasting two months, started from a collective meeting with the sample to present the research project. The qualitative research strategy used was based, preliminarily, on the Focal Group (GF), in order to develop an action based on the group's existing knowledge, focused on complex issues involving group thinking, original ideas and deeper answers (Gatti, 2005). The GF was conducted from a triggering question about the origin of the group: "What is the purpose of the Mães da Pietà Group?". To do so, complying with the methodological rigor of the research, the GF was recorded through audio and a posteriori transcribed, with additions of the researcher's annotations and observations.

Afterwards, an interview was scheduled for individual listening, following the ethical rigors of Psychological Science, and individual listening was conducted through a thematic guide starting from a triggering question: "How was the experience of losing a child?". In addition to this question, auxiliary points were used which directly involve the reporting of farewell rites.

It is important to note that to ensure the secrecy and confidentiality of the participants were used pseudonyms in the interviews, onomatoposes chosen by the participants according to their "Saints of Devotion".

The organization of the data was carried out using the software Mindomo 4.5.4, in the premium version. The choice of this tool was due to its versatility and the structure based on mental mapping (Mindomo, 2021). For the construction of the mental maps, it was necessary to carry out the transcriptions of the speech of the mothers interviewed. Then the transcriptions, preceded the analysis of the texts based on the farewell rituals, based on the hospital experience before death, before burial or cremation and after burial or cremation (Câmara, 2017).

From the previous phase, the thematic analysis was carried out independently by extracting the sense of the data extracted from the interviews, whose purpose was to organize and prepare the data through reading, coding, description, discussion and interpretation (Creswell, 2010).

Finally, the devolutiva was carried out from a collective meeting with the presentation of the results in printed form to each participant, so that they could approve them sequentially.

3 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In order to conduct the analysis of the narratives, the results were structured from the data of the mothers' characterization, with the purpose of describing a situation based on the subjective reality of the participants.

Faced with the reports on death, Câmara (2017) presents a frequency of rituals that can be related to different moments of the loss situation: Before death - to the rite of anointing of the sick or the hospital experience, additionally presenting reports of extrasensory perceptions; Before the burial - rite of the funeral, with a detailed analysis of the funeral and burial;

Based on the social data of the ten participants of the survey, 100% resided in the municipality of Patos - PB; the age range of the participants ranged between 45 and 64 years old; the level of schooling varied between incomplete high school and full college education, with 50% having completed tertiary education, 10% incomplete tertiary education, 10% technical education, 20% high school, 10% incomplete high school, with diverse experiences, among them: retired teacher, dental surgeon, veterinary doctor, psychopedagogical, nursing technician, nursing technician, auxiliary, auxiliary, Clinical laboratory, housewife, loan broker, and gastronomy enthusiast.
At the time of the interview, 50% were married and 50% were widowed. In relation to religion, all of them were of Catholic origin and practices. The returned children were between 3 and 28 years old at the time of death, between them 80% were men and 20% were women.

3.1 Rite Of Anointing Of The Sick And Hospital Experience

According to Câmara (2017) the "Anointing of the Sick or Extreme Anointing" refers not only to a sacrament of patients on their deathbed, but, an occasion in which the individual runs the risk or danger of death due to old age or a malignant pathology. On the basis of the sacrament of the Catholic Church, the sick person is presented to God, longing for the healing of his pathology or a dignified rest in the Christian faith. In view of the sample under analysis, it is important to note that there is no maternal account of the realization of the Anointing of the Sick in their children before death. However, there are reports of abnormal experiences, discourses based on hospital experience and death reporting.

Life cycle experiences that precede death are marked by reports of experiences that are difficult to understand and explain before the sciences. Nonetheless, Anomalistic Psychology emerges as a field of research that applies psychological methods to the study of anomalous experiences and associated beliefs (Holt et al., 2012).

Although not very frequent in Psychological research in Brazil, studies on extrasensory perception (ESP) are common in the Universities of the United States and are frequently published in scientific journals such as the "Journal of Personality and Social Psychology", aiming to investigate the human capacity to anticipate the future through anomalous experiences, popularly known with premonition/presentiment (Corredato, 2014).

Surveys carried out by Machado (2009) with people of different ages, purchasing power, educational level and with or without religious ties, indicate that 87% of the participants reported having undergone at least one anomalous experience. It has become common to hear reports of experiences related to extrasensory deathbed perceptions in hospitals or premonitions from family members in the face of situations involving death. As can be seen in the reports of the research sample, below:

"When I was about to return it I spent a month dreaming about accidents that involved it, among dreams one caught my attention, it was a truck accident and I ran to try to avoid and couldn't. And as it happened, my son was the victim of an automobile accident that resulted in three deaths. Perhaps these dreams were already the guardian angel of him preparing me for that pain" (Francisca).

"Twenty days before my son passed away, a strong "depression" hit me, it was a void, I had no motivation to do anything. Today I don't know if it was depression or a feeling. I went to mass, I hardly attended it, I was in enormous distress" (Rita de Cassia).

"J's dream was to buy a motorcycle, after purchase the store gave a deadline of 15 days for delivery, but with 5 days it was already available. He came home very cheerful and said, "Mother thank God my motorcycle has arrived." I looked and said, my son is not happy. He asks me: why? I answer: because I felt death! I said to my daughter: I saw a shadow on top of "J", she answered: there is no such thing no. I insisted, I felt a very bad thing" (Fatima).

Although 70% of the mothers did not present anomalous experiences in the face of the death of their children, 30% presented speeches that encompass aspects founded on extra sensory perception. For Corredato (2014), anomalous experiences are present in the reports of the customary life of various peoples, through cultural, literary, religious and mystical contexts; even if science does not include it in the list of recognized experiences.
Based on the hospital's farewell experiences, Kellehear and Lewin (1989) report that in the moments to come the separation, through communication, whether verbal or non-verbal, it is possible to transmit gestures and looks that say everything and speak nothing, as the report of the present study in analysis gathers together:

"My son has been transferred to a reference hospital. I wondered the whole trip why I couldn't hold him, I started feeling the pain of separation and guilt, they taking care of me. A mother is always guilty even for what she didn't do. When I arrived at the hospital, at the CAT-scan clinic, I asked to get close to my son, because I needed to ask for forgiveness, he was inside the ambulance, I approached him and God gave me the opportunity to ask him for forgiveness, "I" hoped I could hold him, because we played catch and I always caught him. And he lying in the ambulance, I ask him for forgiveness, "I" opens and closes his eyes" (Mary).

In the light of the sample studied, it was possible to show that 90% of the mothers lost their children abruptly or suddenly, not being able to experience farewell; only 10% of the mothers experienced the departure of their son in the hospital. Only in "Maria"'s speech was it possible to observe that she had the opportunity to bid farewell to her son moments before his loss, making farewell on her deathbed an experience of fundamental importance for the beginning of the elaborate mourning.

Imber-Black (1998) points out the relevance of gestures and attitudes in farewell. Words are elaborate, full of meanings, grounded in effort and dedication, and may result in acts of thanksgiving or farewell prayers.

"Mary's" request for forgiveness reassures her son, who closes his eyes, eternalizing that farewell. For Frankl (2003) finding meaning in life is unconditional, making it possible to experience meaning even in the face of tragic - guilt, suffering and death, for it is presumed to take something positive out of them. Faced with the experience of loss of "Maria", it was possible to find meaning in suffering through the change of posture, in the face of "unnamed pain" (Suárez, Sousa & Caldas, 2021).

For Ribeiro (1994), the presence of relatives at the time of death of a member of the family system, helps in the elaboration of the loss, providing relevant changes in relationship patterns.

The absence of expression of grief at the time of loss tends to be associated with the shock caused by the news or concerns regarding the judgment of conduct. Culture and society can influence the experience of grief, making it difficult to exteriorize grief (Cassellato, 2015). In view of the above, the reports of the ten mothers who lost their children are presented in detail below in the "Map 1", responsible for fulfilling the first ritual suggested by Câmara (2017), the "anointing of the sick and the hospital experience".
Rituals of Separation in the Face of the Death of a Child

Map 1 - Anointing of the Sick (The hospital experience)

Morte por Acidente (atropelamento)

Morte por Acidente (automobilístico / carbonizado)

"R" não foi socorrido para o hospital, ela faleceu na hora, carbonizada. Eu optei por não vê-la, não olhar o jornal, nem as notícias. Mas, vinha na minha mente as chamas de fogo.

Morte por Acidente (automobilístico / carbonizado)

Ele era vendedor saiu de casa na terça-feira foi em destino a Minas Gerais, mas sua viagem foi interrompida na quarta-feira na Bahia. Ele faleceu na hora, carbonizado, não teve tempo para ser socorrido para o hospital.

Morte por Acidente (matocicleta)

Era em um período junino, "P" estava com os amigos em uma quadrilha cultural, eles não estavam gostando da festa e combinaram ir à casa de um amigo, ele seguiu em alta velocidade, veio um carro na contramão e houve um colisão. Era madrugada, eu estava dormindo e cheguei um cachalot de amigos do meu filho dizendo que ele havia sofrido um acidente de moto. Eu e meu filho mais velho, fomos juntos para o hospital, chegando lá não havia nenhum acidentado.

Morte por Acidente (matocicleta)

No dia que ele faleceu, ele contou o cabelo e disse: amanhã vou apanhar outro bater. Antes de sair de casa ele se pediu, disse: pai gosto tanto do senhor, mas eu somos filhos, por favor não brigue mais com ele. Me pediu para nunca abandonar a filha dele. Ouvi um boque no pai e me abraçou, foi saindo e disse: vou ali e já volto. Com 15 minutos chegou a notícia que ele havia sido a morte e estava no hospital. Mas meu filho não chegou nem a ser socorrido para o hospital, estava morto na porta.

Morte por Acidente (elevador)

Nunca imaginar passar por uma experiência desesperadora como essa. Dizemos às 17h10min e o elevador estava desregulado e "S" caiu no poço do elevador, me senti culpada por nunca ter ensinado a ele que o elevador poderia não estar disponível no andar corrente. O socorro foi acionado, mas, ele já se encontrava sem vida e não teve como ser socorrido ao hospital.

Source: Research Data (2018)
It is worth pointing out that none of the mothers could in fact perform the anointing of the sick, since the deaths occurred suddenly. However, the report of both the extrasensory and hospital experiences was evidenced. Once the analysis of the Anointing of the Sick (before death) has been completed, the next section will give an account of the continuity of the experiment, evidencing the Rite of the funeral (before burial or cremation).

3.2 The Rite Of The Funeral And The Velarium

Farewell rituals, as well as the process of mourning, may vary by society, culture, and religion. In the Catholic religion, the Rite of the Exeques, from the Congregation for the Worship of the Divine, was translated in Brazil in 1971, being a symbolic expression of the Church’s intense hope, that Christians linked to Jesus Christ, through baptism, carry out a passage from death to the eternal life (Portuguese Episcopal Conference, 2020).

The pastoral character of Christian death is exteriorized from the funeral service, the proclamation of a social body united in eternal life, through a ritual of ephemeral character in life. According to Câmara (2017), the Rite of the Funeral at the Christian Catholic funeral tends to be characterized in four stages, as can be seen in Figure 01:

Figure 01 - Four Steps of the Rite of the Exequias
Source: Adapted from Camera (2017).

It is important to point out that the Catholic Church celebrates before the farewell the Rite of the Exeques. However, each religion has a different rite of passage. The way the family bids farewell to their loved one is broad and diverse. The wake specifically has a solemn, sacred appearance, full of tributes and speeches that symbolize farewell (Imber-Black, 1995).

Based on the ritual of "Community Reception", in her speech, the mother identified as "Rosa" reported that before the words of welcome, she felt comfort and pain. "The house began to be full of people, it comforts me to know that "P" was very dear, his funeral was full of young people. I don't know if there's pain compared to mine!" Santos, Oliveira and Jesus (2015) reinforced, in their studies, the relevance of family support and friends for adaptation, promoting the feeling of support to the bereaved person, making him able to find forces to start the mourning.
The passage of the "biblical reading" on devolution to God represented for "Elizabeth" a story about devolution that symbolizes a cycle that ends, the last farewell, fundamental to the continuation of life. "At the funeral celebration, the priest talked about giving back to God, my husband made a reflection on the moment. And it stuck in my mind - you need to tell the story of the returned jewel. It was before the coffin that God gave me strength - I said I was returning the jewel that God gave me.

During the interviews, faced with the state of pain that involved her family, it was possible to realize how devastating it was for "Aparecida" to perform the "Eucharist" alone, a solitary communion. "The funeral was held in my house, only with me, because my husband did not get up, I felt the obligation to get up so that my family did not die together with my daughter, I solved everything by myself". Imber-Black (1995) presented a significant issue in the farewell ritual, in which a stressful situation can lead the mourner to therapeutic rites.

"Grace" experienced a "Commandment to God" in the face of a month's delay, performing the burial rite with uncertainty if indeed there was his son. "The wait for the arrival of the body of "W" lasted a month, it was the longest month of my life, a month of pain and prayer, God prepared me to receive the body of "W". We didn't open the coffin when it arrived, I opened it four months ago and I saw his body".

For Frankl (2003), it means inevitable pain when it sets out to become a reference, facing the existing suffering. Thus, the "Map 2", below, presents details of the reports, from the perspective of the "Rite of the Exequias", of the "Mothers of the Pietà" of this study.
Map 2 - Rite of the Exeques (The wake)

**Rite of the Exeques (The wake)**

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Source: Research Data (2018)
Once the analysis of the Rite of the Exechia (before burial or cremation) has been completed, the next section will give an account of the continuity of the experiment, evidencing the celebration of the Mass in faithful memory of the deceased (after burial or cremation).

### 3.3 Celebration of the Mass

Jesus' sacrifice, death, and resurrection are celebrated through Mass. For the church, this celebration of the Eucharist is the center of all Christian life (Portuguese Episcopal Conference, 2020).

According to Chamber (2017) the celebration by the deceased can take place at various times in reference to death, beginning the rites through the (1) Exequias, (2) the seventh-day mass, (3) the thirtieth-day mass, and after one year of death, the (4) first anniversary mass of death, starting to repeat the ritual annually. It is important to point out that the most celebrated rite is the seventh-day mass, since the celebration has a direct relationship with the biblical narrative of creation, evidenced by the rest on the seventh day.

This category presents a resentment of loss through the search for prayer in Catholic rites. In accordance with the "celebration of mass", more evident reports can be observed in 40% of the mothers taking part in the research, as seen in the following discourses. The first was "Conception", which related a constant prayer rite from burial.

"On Sunday I went to Holy Mass, the mass of 6am. I did not sleep well. I prayed without ceasing the prayer of the bloody hands and the office of Our Lady. On the fifth day, after the funeral in my house, I received the first visit of the Mothers of Pietà, with the third of the Mystical Rose, it comforted my pain“ (Conceição).

For Castle and Phillips (2003) there are rituals that can be called "actions to deal with suffering", for incorporating attributes related to the experience of losing a loved one.

The way the farewell occurs reaffirms the structured bonds in life, assisting the process of elaboration of death, the sense of the end of a relationship and the beginning of the process of mourning (Kellehear & Lewin, 1989). "Rita de Cassia“ presents in her farewell experience through the search for a divine explanation.

"I started going to mass very often, about three times a week, needed a response from God. Fifteen days after the death of "J" I received the visit of the Mothers of Pietà Group and began to participate in the meetings, the choice of the mystic of the group, the visits to other mourning mothers and the prayer of the rosary“ (Rita de Cassia).

Life, being ephemeral, does not make it meaningless, even among the elements that seem to take away the meaning of life, such as loss, separation, death and farewell (Frankl, 1991).

In the light of the mothers' account in evidence, it becomes possible to identify not only the rituals of mass and prayers, but, behaviors of self-transcendence, the search for something beyond themselves. This behavior is reported from the choice of being part of the Mothers of the Pietà Group and taking a speech of faith, in addition to the reports of their experiences to the new mothers who also lost their children. "Rosa" described this experience of faith and self-transcendence well: "After the return of "P" I visit the church more often. We hold the seventh day and first anniversary masses. I began to pray the third of mercy at 3:00. After ten days I began to participate in the visits and prayers of the Mothers of Pietà Group”. For Frankl (2011, p. 67), self-transcendence is the essence of existence. The human being is directed to something other than himself.
In the light of the reports, the beginning of a re-signification is perceptible. It is essential to go through the rituals of separation and to recognize death as the natural process of life. The human experience of loss strengthens the bond by directly linking the lost being to being bereaved, a symbolism of love that is eternal even in absence. "Sonia" reported the pain of loss evidencing the record of the time of eventuality and the focus on prayer in the third.

"At the seventh day mass, the house was full, it comforted me, all the family members came, even so, I cried very often. When it was 18:00 I felt very bad, the time of the accident, so I began to pray the third of mercy in that time through the New Song. When I began to participate in the Mother Group, my faith increased, after the group I sought to understand more my relationship with God". (Sonia)

Loss is a solitary and singular experience for each mother, separation rituals are essential to the initial process of grief, facilitating the understanding of the process of finitude (McGoldrick, 2011).

Imber-Black (1995) presented variables that may be linked with the difficulty of experiencing the farewell ritual, among them quotes: emotional distancing, feelings of anger, guilt and pride. The absence of outstanding issues with the deceased facilitates the performance of the ritual. The request for forgiveness during the ritual is something common in the presence of ill-resolved questions, promoting to the bereaved the feeling of well-being even after the death of the loved one. The "Map 3" presents in detail the experience of the "Celebration of Mass" present in the reports of the Mothers who are part of this research.
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Map 3 - Celebration of the Mass (In faithful memory of the deceased)

1. Maria

Morte por Acidente (atropelamento)

Eu não conhecia a doutrina da igreja antes da divulgação de meu filho, as missas do Grupo Mães da Petá são emocionantes e Espírito Santo está presente, a casa fica limpa, o jardim vira um lugar sagrado, a espiritualidade naquele "muído" é emocionante. Mães que se juntam para louvor a Deus pela perda, é de fato, algo inexplicável a interpretação humana.

2. Isabel

Morte por Suicídio (Arma de Fogo)

Dez anos após a divulgação do meu filho iniciamos os encontros nas casas das mães enlutadas, inicialmente a proposta era profassar a nossa fé através do terço, como forma de uma acolher a dor da outra. Nas visitas às mães enlutadas começou a sentir a necessidade de ajudar, por mais que a dor se fosse presente nesses momentos porque revivia cada detalhe, mas, o desejo de ir ao encontro de outras mães sempre foi maior, talvez seja contraditório para quem não vive a experiência, mas, ajudar outras mães em luto, auxilia meu cresimento espiritual.

3. Conceição

Morte por Acidente (automobilístico)

O sepultamento de "F" foi no sábado, no domingo já fui a Santa Missa, a missas das mães, não dormi direito. Rezou sem interrupção o católico das mães enlutadas e o officio de Nossa Senhora. No quinto dia, após as explosões em minha casa, recobri a primeira visita das Mães da Petá, com o terço da Rosa Mística, isso confortou minha dor.

4. Franciela

Morte por Acidente (automobilístico)

No início minha filha me chamava para ir à igreja, eu sempre dizia que não, abandonou a igreja, acabei revolvidas. Após 10 anos, conheci o Grupo Mães da Petá, comecei a participar do grupo, atualmente não perco os encontros semanais de oração, os encontros religiosos mensais com as famílias, também volto a ir na igreja.

5. Rita de Cássia

Morte Natural (infarto)

Eu conheci a ir às missas com muita frequência, cerca de três vezes no semana, precisava de uma resposta de Deus. Quero dizer após o falecimento de "F" recobri a visita do Grupo Mães da Petá e comecei a participar dos encontros, de escolha da música do grupo, das visitas a outras mães enlutadas e da oração do terço.

6. Aparecida

Morte por Acidente (automobilístico / carbonizado)

Eu já participava da igreja, de pastoral, na época o padre de minha paróquia me ajudou muito. Celebramos todas as missas na igreja.

7. Graça

Morte por Acidente (automobilístico / carbonizado)

Fez a leitura da bíblia nas noites que passei em claro esperando a chegada do corpo do meu filho. E assim, comentei a me fortalecer, eu pensava em Deus e pedir força para superar aquele momento. Cada visita que chega me fortalece mais, porque eu observavo o quanto as pessoas gostavam do meu filho. Eu fui escolhida pelo Grupo Mães da Petá, eles me ajudaram a superar a dor, nós somos uma família, nos reunimos toda quarta-feira em oração.

8. Rosa

Morte por Acidente (motocicleta)

Eu gostava da igreja, mas nunca frequentava. Depois da devoção de "F" visito a igreja com mais frequência. Realizamos as missas de sétimo dia e primeiro aniversário. Comecei a rezar o terço da misericórdia de 15h00min. Após dez dias comecei a participar das visitas e orações do Grupo Mães da Petá na quarta-feira.

9. Fátima

Morte por Acidente (motociclista)

No começo me desafiou de saindo, mas recebi visita do padre. Após seis meses da devoção do "F" recobri a visita do Grupo Mães da Petá, acabei de participar do grupo e começou a visitar outras mães. O grupo foi muito importante para mim, se eu soubesse que essa equipe iria me fortalecer tanto, eu teria procurado mais cedo.

10. Sonia

Morte por Acidente (elevador)

Na missa de sétimo dia, a casa estava cheia, isso me confortou, todos os familiares vieram, mesmo assim, eu chorava com muita frequência. Quando dava 1h00min me sentia muito mal, o horror do acidente, então comecei a rezar o terço da misericórdia nosso horário através da Câmpio Nova. Quando comecei a participar do Grupo das Mães, minha fé aumentou, após o grupo buscar compreender mais a minha relação com Deus.

Source: Research Data (2018)
The farewell rituals are considered by Herouet (2013) as a beneficial process, since although the ceremony represents a tribute to the deceased, it creates a communion among the participants, which generates complicity, compassion and renewal. In this way, the ritual also symbolizes the beginning of separation and the process of mourning.

Through the farewell ritual it is possible to pay a final tribute to the deceased. The ceremony marks not only the moment itself, but also establishes a reintegration of the deceased into the other category, the extension of memories.

According to Suárez (2018), the recollections of the circumstances of death, the elaboration of a discourse about feelings, memories and the sharing of the experience of loss with other people who experienced similar moments show efficient and therapeutic strategies for each of the mothers in the process of elaboration of grief, as can be seen below.

Within the sample considered, it was possible to identify that 60% of the mothers interviewed elaborated memories of the deceased child, reporting them with affection. It can be considered that the memories of the deceased (a) were positively evidenced. Bromberg (2000) points out that this behavior is part of the initial symptomatology of grief, in which the mother feels the desire to keep alive memories and positive experiences, being able to idealize the deceased (a) ignoring his defects and sublimating his positive characteristics.

For Imber-Black (1995), the symbolization of death, as well as the farewell rituals, is fundamental. Among these rituals, the visit to the cemetery tends to favor the social readaptation of the being that lost his loved one, softening negative feelings and contributing to psychological maturation, since such ritual contributes to the confrontation with loss and to the beginning of the elaboration of mourning. The visit to the cemetery is one of the most constant rituals after the loss of a loved one, and this fact can be identified below in the reports of the sample considered.
Rituals of Separation in the Face of the Death of a Child

About 40% of the sample presents reports of constant visits to the cemetery, evidencing in their speeches: longing, followed by positive feelings and prayers. It is important to note that 30% report talking or writing to their lost loved ones. According to Kovács (2005), death becomes habitual companion and forbidden; even circumstantial, transgressing and without limits, it is totaled by its silence.

For Imber-Black (1998), the absence of farewell rituals can impede the natural process of elaborating mourning after death. The deprivation of the experiences of separation rituals can become a trigger for deep sadness, stress and guilt, reflecting negatively on the experience of grief. However, it is important to point out that some emotional factors can complicate exteriorization, as well as the development of healthy feelings by mothers in the face of the death of a child, making the search for psychological support fundamental.

For Brown (1995), psychological guidance tends to aid in the elaboration of the farewell ritual leading to a better coping relationship with death. Through psychotherapy it is possible to work feelings, ambivalent and negative, assisting the bereaved in the understanding of death and in the farewell rituals, facilitating communication and the re-elaboration of loss, restructuring the sense of life.

4 CONCLUSION

The human being passes through life by objectively understanding its life cycle. Talking about life is something that instigates the human mind. However, preparing for the end of the life cycle is something resistant to human dialog. Death has a unique destiny, however, unknown to humanity.

Addressing death and dying is still a paradox. Faced with the above, the human being creates mechanisms to face this reality; often believing in an afterlife or in a reunion. To this end, rituals directed towards the dead are created, as funeral rituals as a way of elaborating the loss and starting the process of mourning.

Through the present study, it was possible to learn about some experiences experienced by mothers through the farewell rituals in the face of the death of their children. In some cases, it was possible to understand the rituals in a detailed way as a strategy of contemplating the lost being, while other accounts showed that this process was silenced, making it capable of altering the natural process of normal mourning.
The symbolic character of the rituals, embodied by individuals, in fact, communicates socially, as well as provides meaning to reality. It is necessary that it helps to symbolize the death of the loved one, since it is an extremely painful and difficult moment of acceptance, impossible to be measured.

Among the rites of passage it was possible to identify (1) the elaboration of the anointing of the sick, through the farewell in the hospital; (2) the rite of funeral, based on the experience of the wake, the welcome of the community, the biblical reading and the commission to God; and finally (3) the celebration of the Mass, followed by the elaboration of recollections and visits to the cemetery as a way to perpetuate a relationship.

Each rite has its importance in the face of displeasure brought about in a situation of loss. It is evident in this research that the event can be best worked on in the mind when adopted symbols (rites) that help in the passage of this difficult moment. Furthermore, these rites contribute to the redefinition of the daily life of the person who faces mourning and who has broken the social bond by the loss caused.

REFERENCES


