

BOOK REVIEW

AFTER THE FUNERAL

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Paulist Press, 1995

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This is a simple book with brief statements by children about feelings they have after someone in their life dies. The author normalizes the child's feelings and tells what the child does to manage the strong feelings, apprehensions, and anxieties that accompany dealing with death. The ink drawings clearly depict each child's experience. The children are of various ages and ethnic groups. The author includes a generic comment relating to all traditional religions believing in spiritual afterlife. The children are introduced in the book individually, unconnected, until the last two pages. At that time, the author depicts several of the children sharing in a grief support group.

Because of the simplicity and conversation style, this book both gently and directly evokes sharing from children about their own experience. The manner of death is not defined, only the relationship of the deceased to the child and the implied age of the deceased (baby, grandparent, parent, etc.). It is another one of those books, just right, for children who need a little more directness of discussion and encouragement in understanding grief and loss.