



The Compassionate Friends
Rochester Chapter
Supporting Family After a Child Dies

November / December 2014 www.tcfrochester.org

Tell Me What To Say

You know I've lost a loved one and
you see my grief is strong
You hope to bring me comfort and
you fear to speak no wrong
We've all heard horror stories
of when people say wrong things
And we've all heard testimonies
of the bitterness it brings
It's often someone close to us,
they mean to say their best
But then speak something hurtful
and now they feel distressed
We rehearse the words we want to say
so deep within our heart
But when our turn approaches
we stumble from the start
So let me help you out my friend,
I'm here today for you
And I've found some words of wisdom
from the sorrow I've gone through
The fact you're here brings comfort,
you need no longer fear
It's enough to say you're sorry and
enough to show you care
And as the days and weeks go by
and months turn into years
The grief may start to weaken
but it always will be there
So call once in a while
or just visit for the day
Because those simple acts of kindness
Are more than words can say

James Eugene Batchelor
In memory of Ethan
"We Need Not Walk Alone", TCF Publication

I have a son name Joshua.

He no longer is with me on this earth;
He lives in my heart.

I hear him in the beat of a blue heron's wings.
I see him in the smile on a young man's face.
I smell him in the aftermath of a soft rain
shower.
I touch him when I hug his true love.

His presence, his essence surrounds me.

Until that day when I can hold his adored face in
my hands and kiss his forehead, let me live my
life with compassion and caring as he did. Let
me try to understand and sympathize with the
challenges others face in their lives. Let me
truly hear everyone's story.

So that when Josh and I meet again, and he picks
me up off the ground and hugs me as he always
did –
He'll say "Mom, I'm so proud of you. I love
you".

Until that day...

Becky Price
In loving memory of Joshua Price
TCF, Rochester New York



The Ghost of Christmas Past

It's that time of year again
The ground is white with snow
The holidays will be here soon
And so begins the show

Merriment and tidings good
Should fill the days ahead
But all I seem to do these days
Is anticipate the dread

The eerie ghost of Christmas past
Shows up again to haunt me
Memories and picture books
Come out as if to taunt me

My mind sees jumbled pictures
Of Christmas morns before
The lighted tree and ornaments
Gifts spilling on the floor

The running feet, the squeals of joy
Still echo in my head
Excited children's voices
Crying "quick, get out of bed!"

He's been here Mommy, come and gone
And see what all he's brought
A doll! A truck! A game! A plane!
Much more than I'd have thought

Oh what delight to see their smiles
Their hugs and kisses, too
Especially when they figure out
That Santa Claus is you

My heart felt warm, my purpose clear
I'd done my job so well
If weariness would bring me down
No one could ever tell



Now I wake up all alone
Why hurry to the tree
No excitement in the air
There's nothing there for me

One is all grown up and out
With children of her own
One was taken way too soon
His absence still I mourn

Life is like that, moments gone
You try and hold them near
It seems like it was yesterday
That it was all so clear

Grandchildren fill the gap a bit
When they visit Christmas morn
You share their laughter and the joy
But nothing like your own

I suppose it's only natural
These feelings that I bear
I'm only just reflecting
What other women share

So, to all the harried mothers
Who feel the strain each year
Stop and thank the Lord above
For those you hold so dear

All the fuss and preparation
Will be a distant memory
But those moments last a lifetime
And stay in your reverie

You'll take them out and ponder
As the years go softly by
Reflections of past Christmas'
Bring tears back to your eyes

So, do not wish them gone so fast
When the holidays come 'round
Before you know it, time moves on
And it will all be gone.

**From the Poems and Prose of Deborah Passero Streb
In loving memory of Adam Marano
TCF, Rochester New York**

Thanksgiving Prayer

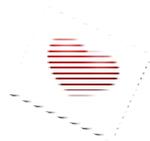
I'm thankful this Thanksgiving
That my grief is not so new.
Last year it was so painful to
Think of losing you.

Death can't claim my love for you
Tho we are far apart,
Sweet memories will always be
Engraved upon my heart.

Time can never bring you back
But it can help me be
Thankful for the years of joy
You brought our family.

To all the parents with grief so new
I share your loss and sorrow
I pray you find with faith and time
The blessings of each Tomorrow.

**Charlotte Irick
TCF, Idaho Falls ID**

**Love Gifts**

Steve Colangelo, in loving memory of Daniel Colangelo
Mary Ann Dobbins, in loving memory of Colleen Josephine Dobbins
Geraldine Drasch, in loving memory of Thomas Joseph Drasch
Linda Hale, in loving memory of Timothy E. Hale
Cindy & Nick Oliva, in loving memory of Stephanie Anne Oliva
Linda Viola, in loving memory of Shawn Viola
Daniel Wilson, in loving memory of Greg Paul Crawford

Support for the meetings in the month of September were donated by
Becky Price, in loving memory of Joshua Price
Susan Plunkett, in loving memory of Aaron Plunkett

Support for the meetings in the month of October were donated by
Paul & Linda Valint, in loving memory of Paul Valint, III
Mary Ann Dobbins, in loving memory of Colleen Josephine Dobbins

***Welcome New Friends***

At nearly every meeting we welcome new members to our group, always with mixed emotions. We are glad you found us, but we are so sorry for the circumstances that bring us together. We understand your pain; we hope our unconditional friendship and understanding will help you through your grief. Attending a meeting for the first two or three times takes courage, but for many it is the first real step toward healing. It may seem overwhelming, so we encourage you to come to several meetings to give yourself a chance to become comfortable.

I share with you the agony of your grief,
 The anguish of your heart finds echo in my own.
 I know I cannot enter all you feel
 Nor bear with you the burden of your pain;
 I can but offer what my love does give:
 The strength of caring,
 The warmth of one who seeks to understand
 The silent storm-swept barrenness of so great a loss.
 This I do in quiet ways,
 That on your lonely path
 You may not walk alone.



**From Mediations of the Heart, by Howard Thurman
 Shared by Life Time Care**

Upcoming Events:

Candlelighting Ceremony – Tuesday, December 9th (a regular meeting night) Jewish Community Center (our regular meeting place)

Please join us for a beautiful program of music & readings, in loving memory of our children, grandchildren, siblings

NEW Meeting Location:

Jewish Community Center

1200 Edgewood Avenue Rochester, NY

Meeting Days :

Tuesday the 11th & Tuesday the 25th (November)

Tuesday December 9, Candlelighting Ceremony

Tuesday the 23rd (December)

7:00 P.M. to 7:15 P.M. - social

7:15 P.M. to 9:00 P.M. - meeting

Contacts:

Becky Price 585-346-2441

Mary Ann Dobbins 585-872-0566

TCF Regional Coordinator:

Jacquie Edwards-Mitchell 718-451-0814

TCF National :

877-969-0010 or www.compassionatefriends.org

Send newsletter inputs or web comments to:

If you would like to contribute to our Compassionate Friends Chapter, please forward your Love Gifts and Donations to: The Compassionate Friends of Rochester C/O 6227 Furnace Road Ontario, NY 14519

Please make checks payable to: The Compassionate Friends of Rochester, New York

Sincere Thanks!

**To receive this newsletter via e-mail, please contact
 Alice Torres at alice3970@gmail.com**

See Brenda for TCF Bracelets (\$2.00) and Memorial votive candle holders (\$3.00)

Rochester Chapter TCF Mission:

When a child dies, at any age, the family suffers intense pain and may feel hopeless and isolated. The Compassionate Friends provides highly personal comfort, hope, and support to every family experiencing the death of a son or a daughter, a brother or a sister, or a grandchild, and helps others better assist the grieving family. Adopted 2-25-12



Healing Grief Rituals To remember our loves ones

The value of creating “Grief Rituals” is to help us remember our loves ones in loving, healing ways and with a sense of peace.

- ❖ Buy a Christmas ornament each year to remember your loved one.
- ❖ Buy a special candle and light it at times that are special to your loved one’s memory.
- ❖ Christmas stockings – hang one up for a loved one and have everyone write a note to put inside.
- ❖ Create a scrapbook of memories / photos ... a memory book.
- ❖ Create a scholarship in your loves one’s name.
- ❖ Donate gifts, quilts, etc. in a loved one’s name.
- ❖ Find a tree in the woods, tie a yellow ribbon around it. Go frequently to remember (this is especially helpful when ashes have been scattered and there is no grave site).
- ❖ Have a birthday party for your loved one on his/her birthday.
- ❖ Have a family “memory” evening where you share pictures, reminisce about special times, create a scrapbook of memories, etc.
- ❖ Help feed the hungry/homeless at Thanksgiving, holidays, etc.
- ❖ If you go on a trip , do something special to remember your love one (ie throw a rose in the ocean or light a candle).
- ❖ On birthdays, remembrance days, holidays, or other significant days, buy your loved one a gift and donate it to a hospital, nursing home, etc.
- ❖ Plant a strong, healthy tree or rosebush in a loves one’s name.
- ❖ Write messages on balloons and let them go up.

**From: To Touch a Grieving Heart, Paracome Inc. and Healing Resources, 1995
Shared by Life Time Care**



To Our Family and Friends

The "Holiday Season" is a time of family – festive gatherings, worshiping together, sharing love and gifts, and cherished memories. For the bereaved parent, these aspects of the season are precisely what makes us dread its arrival.

The absence of our child when the "whole family" gathers seems to accentuate our incomplete family. We are sorely reminded of "how it used to be" and don't want to accept what is now. We need patience and understanding of our family and friends to help us through the holidays as best we can.

We may want to change the way we spend Thanksgiving, Christmas, or Hanukkah. If the family traditionally gathers at one house, perhaps the gathering place could be changed, especially if the gathering home is that of the bereaved. If we do prepare the meal, be aware that we may not have the energy we have had in the past and will need a lot of help.

Perhaps we'll try to avoid the holiday altogether by going away for a few days. Whatever our thoughts are for coping with the day, please take our feelings into consideration when you make your plans.

For some of us shopping for gifts is a painful experience. The stores' festive decorations and music belie our mood, as we feel forced into participating in the "season". We think longingly about that special gift we won't be buying this year. Again, our depression saps us of the energy to do the things we have done in the past, and we need your understanding for the things that remain undone.

Perhaps the single most helpful thing you can do for us is to include our child in the holidays. We want to hear his/her name, to have you recall fond memories of their lives, to know that you, too, are feeling their absence and remembering them with love.

Getting through the holidays is a rough task for bereaved parents. We need to handle them in a way that we feel is best for ourselves and our families. We ask for your love and support during this especially difficult time.

Marge Henning
TCF, West Orange NJ



Our Children Remembered
November
Birthdays and Remembrance Days



Birth

| | | |
|-----------------------------|----------|----|
| Justin Adam Rifenberg | November | 5 |
| Lisa Ann Rupp | November | 5 |
| Christopher Robert Crawford | November | 7 |
| Joshua Lee Prescott | November | 24 |
| Andrew Clay Parkhurst | November | 27 |
| Grant Matthew Lintala | November | 28 |

Remembrance

| | | |
|-----------------------|----------|----|
| Slade Gerstner | November | 1 |
| Stephanie Anne Oliva | November | 4 |
| Alex R. Ketchek | November | 8 |
| Graham Wilson Smith | November | 13 |
| Greta Elinor Lindboom | November | 14 |
| Jeffery James Yates | November | 22 |





***Our Children Remembered
December
Birthdays and Remembrance Days***

Birth

| | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------|-----------|
| Matthew R. Loomis | December | 7 |
| Brian Charles Oster | December | 7 |
| Joel Ayite Ajavon | December | 16 |
| Michael David Mueller | December | 19 |
| Clarence L. Ross, II | December | 23 |
| Matthew James Straton | December | 23 |
| Shawn Patrick Viola | December | 29 |

Remembrance

| | | |
|-------------------------------|-----------------|-----------|
| Douglas M. Slocum | December | 2 |
| Steven L. Britt | December | 7 |
| Nate Riley | December | 7 |
| Jennifer Lynn McNeil | December | 7 |
| Tristan Foley Hanna | December | 10 |
| Matthew Gabe Fogarassy | December | 22 |
| Joel C. Stuhler | December | 24 |

