



The Compassionate Friends

South Bay/LA Chapter

Supporting Family After a Child Dies

A NEWSLETTER FOR BEREAVED PARENTS AND THEIR FAMILIES

OCT. 2015 ISSUE

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"This newsletter is sponsored by an anonymous family in memory of our children".

OUR NEXT MEETING
will be Oct. 7th, the first Wednesday
of the month at 7:00 P.M.

LOCATION:
The Neighborhood Church
415 Paseo Del Mar
Palos Verdes Estates, CA 90274
(South of Torrance Beach)

DIRECTIONS: Pacific Coast Hwy. to Palos Verdes Blvd. → Palos Verdes Blvd. becomes Palos Verdes Drive West. Veer Right. → Go to Via Corta (stop sign just past Malaga Cove Plaza). Turn right. → Go down hill to Arroyo (stop sign). Turn right. → Continue down hill to end of street. → Turn left on Paseo Del Mar. → Meetings are held at the west end of the church.

--Please remember to park in the church parking lot and not on the street.--

The Compassionate Friends
Mission Statement...

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.

The Oct. 7th meeting will start with "The Ask-It-Basket "

Upcoming Events: Mark your calendars.

November 4th, Remembrance potluck.

December 13th, World Wide Candle Lighting.

For a free Picture Button of your child, call Ken at (310) 544-6690.

TCF Lunch Group meets for lunch at Mimi's Café every Friday at 1:00. (Crenshaw and PCH). All members are invited.

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The Oct. 7th meeting will start with "The Ask-It-Basket." What is the ask-it-basket? Very simply explained, a chance to ask anonymously a question you would like answered. Each of us writes down a question about how to handle a certain problem, situation, person, or any grief related subject that they would like an answer to. Then you drop it into the basket. Later, as the basket is circulated, each of us tries to answer the question that we pull out before the whole group gets a chance at it. It's amazing how many different answers or good suggestions we come up with as a group. This is also a good opportunity to ask about something you may be privately worried about, but are afraid to mention at a regular meeting. As always, you are never required to speak, but we welcome your input if and when you feel you are ready to share. For those hesitant with coming up with the "correct" answer to a question, relax. Don't feel intimidated. You don't have to come up with a perfect solution to a problem. You can simply say "I pass this question onto the group." This is a perfect chance to cover numerous topics and multiple hurdles that we all face in our grief and to support each other in our losses.

Questions and Answers from past Meetings:

Q. Am I going crazy? I can't concentrate. I can't think, and I can't remember anything. My mind is like a sieve. Nothing sticks for long. I can barely function. I think I am losing my mind since the death of my daughter.

A. You are not losing your mind, even if it feels that way. You are simply on overload. Not only do you have to continue to go through the daily routine that life dictates, you also have to deal with the flood of thoughts and feelings that accompany the loss of your child. It is perfectly normal to question your sanity when nothing in life makes sense after burying your child. Your concentration and memory will improve with time. Until then, may I suggest carrying a tablet and pen with you at all times. That way you can write reminders to yourself. I also found that calling home and leaving myself and others messages on the answer machine helped me and other family members who were also forgetful.

Q. Will I feel like this forever?

A. No. The pain will lessen as you work through your grief. Slowly, the joy of having had your child in life will soften the pain of the loss. While you never forget, the pain lessens and allows your love

to continue. While you will change as you go through the different and often painful aspects of grief, rest assured, the love for your child never ends. You will eventually start to remember your child without the pain clouding your thoughts.

Q. Our son died in a car crash last month. My husband doesn't want to talk about it. I feel so alone in my grief. How can I make him understand how important our son still is to me?

A. One thing you will always hear stressed at our meetings is how we each grieve in our own way. Just because your husband does not want to talk about your son, doesn't mean he doesn't love him. It simply means he is not grieving the same way you are. Your son is still important to both of you, it is your reactions to the loss that are different. If he doesn't want to talk, come to the meetings alone. You need to take care of yourself. There are many parents here who also struggle with this problem. The important thing to remember is to allow each person to express their pain in their own way. Give him time to come to terms with some of his pain. It is still very fresh. With time he may open up. Until then, find a friend, family member, or special Compassion Friend at one of the meetings to share your pain and thoughts.

Q. The meetings are wonderful! I feel like they are a lifesaver, but I find it hard having to go so long between meetings. I've tried reading and talking to a counselor but it isn't the same. Any suggestions?

A. I have three. First, in the back of our newsletter is a list of bereaved parents who have listed their phone numbers so you can call anytime you need to talk. Take advantage of it or call another member you have met at a meeting. Second, go to the National website of TCF and use the various chat rooms. Their web address is www.compassionatefriends.org There is also a small group that meets at Mimi's Restaurant every Friday at 1:00. (NW corner of PCH and Crenshaw Bl.) Feel free to join us. Just tell them you are with The Compassionate Friends and they will direct you to our table.

--South Bay/L.A., CA



The Dance:

When grieving we must allow our pain to surface. We must learn to sit with it, crawl with it, walk with it, dance with it, and in time replace it with the new steps we've learned.

-- Deb Kosmer

The Harvest of Grief Work

"It isn't right! I go a month sometimes and don't cry. I actually get involved in something and don't think about my daughter for hours. I had fun at the company picnic last week. I feel so guilty. Am I forgetting my daughter?"

This mother was two years into her grief. She was doing good grief work—leaning into the pain, talking out feelings, expressing emotions and attending bereaved parent's meetings regularly. But she was hurting less. When parents begin to reap the harvest of their grief work well done, they fear they are losing their children.

The truth is they are just reaping the harvest of their grief work done well. In the first couple of years, pain ties us to our children. During that time we equate pain with love. By the time we are beginning to resolve our grief (and that is what is happening), pain has been our companion for so long we feel lost without it.

This is one of the few places in grief where our mind needs to take over for awhile. We need to look at the illogic of prolonged grieving. We need to see that we are beginning to reach the goal we hoped some day to reach.

Self talk can help us rid ourselves of this illogical emotion. Ask yourself:

- * If you believe that to keep a child in your heart for the rest of your life, you must hang onto the pain.
- * Will your prolonged misery make your child less dead?
- * Does the fact that your child is dead mean that you must die also?
- * Does your prolonged misery accomplish anything? What purpose does it serve?
- * Will hanging onto your pain make you grow and change, or will it make you unhappy and bitter?
- * What effect will your prolonged grief have on your marriage and/or surviving children.
- * Do you really want to stay in the pit indefinitely? Will your continuing grief honor your child?

These questions can help you see that beginning grief resolution is as healthy and normal after a couple of years, as is allowing yourself to enter fully into your grief in the early months after your child has died.

Rethink your reactions. Let yourself get to the other side of your grief.

Let yourself appreciate the peace and comfort that is beginning to be yours.

Most importantly, let yourself feel the joy of

remembering your child without the deep searing pain you have felt for so long.

--Margaret Gerner St. Louis Chapter, MO

Tips to Cope and Heal

Here are several ways to cope with reminders of loss and to continue the healing process:

- Be reassured that anniversary reactions are normal and that their intensity will diminish in time.
- Reminisce about your relationship with the person who died. Try to focus on the good things about the relationship and the time you had together, rather than the loss.
- Plan a distraction, such as a weekend away or a visit with friends or relatives.
- Start a new tradition in your loved one's memory. For example, make a donation to a charitable organization in the person's name on birthdays or holidays.
- If you find yourself becoming more anxious, sad or distressed by news coverage, limit your exposure to news reports about tragic events.
- Draw family members and friends close to you, rather than avoiding them. Find someone who will encourage you to talk about your loss. Stay connected to your usual support systems, such as spiritual leaders and social groups.
- Allow yourself to feel sadness and a sense of loss. Conversely, allow yourself to also experience joy and happiness as you celebrate special times. In fact, you might find yourself both laughing and crying.

--From the Mayo Clinic



I feel As Though I'm Alive Alone: Grief of a Single Parent

If you were to ask me what it's like being a single parent, by reason of the death of my husband at a very young age, and the mother of an only child, who was instantly killed, I'll take a deep breath and try to hold back the tears. I will try not to reveal the heartache that is constantly a part of me. I am so thankful, for friends and their caring, but often I feel as though I'm alive alone.

My son, Doug, was thirty-nine years old but still my child. We had a great mother-son relationship, but it ended so abruptly. My memories of him will never fade. I cherish them in my heart. Time will heal the deep wound, but when a loved one dies, we lose a part of our very selves.

When I realize I have no descendants, no grandchildren to cuddle and sing lullabies to, and be able to watch run and play, and to take pride in their accomplishments, it tears at my heart. However, I realize also, that I was blessed beyond measure when God loaned us our son. In spite of the grief I am going through because of Doug's death, I am glad he lived and I had the privilege of being his mother. The joys he brought into my life can never be taken away from me. You see, he was my most treasured possession on this earth!

His hugs aren't mine anymore and I can't cook him his favorite meals or look into his smiling face. The tools that he used over many years in his hobby of restoring old cars hang idle. He loved music and his guitar is a special keepsake.

My daily need as I awaken each morning is to ask the Lord for strength and courage for the day, and to help me to be a source of comfort for someone else. I don't ever want to be a victim of self-pity and I desire to be able to reach out to others, and offer compassion. I feel I have begun to learn the true meaning of compassion, YOUR PAIN IN MY HEART.

A task remains for me – to reflect on those qualities in Doug's life that I want to emulate. He had a gentle spirit, a caring attitude, a great love for people, a zest for life, and most of all, he gave of himself.

If I take time God will mend my broken heart. He must first have all the pieces. He knows me better than I know myself. Hopefully I'll be a better person as I journey through life, knowing that He is in control. I can look to Him for guidance at any time. MY prayer is that I can be used by Him to comfort others. We all need each other, and if my smile brightens someone else's day, perhaps I can help by sharing their burden. My life will then continue to have greater meaning.

We need to look for life's little sparkles even in the midst of life's most crippling sorrows. Pain is inevitable, but joy is optional. I want to choose to be joyful. "A merry heart doeth good, like medicine."
--Ruth, OH of *Alive Alone Support Group*, Van Wert, OH, excerpt from website: <http://www.alivealone.org>

Letting Go and Holding On

It seems to me that the one thing I see with bereaved parents is that they have a problem in that they need; somehow to let go of their dead child and yet need very much, to hold on to that child. How do you let go and still hold on?



What I see in The Compassionate Friends is people who let go by honestly facing the pain that the death and separation have brought. We let go when we let ourselves cry, when we let the pain, the missing, the loneliness and the questioning be experienced. When we allow ourselves to feel the pain, we feel the child being torn loose from us.

We also let go when we look our world squarely in the face, when we see the world doesn't have our child in it, when we see the world as a different place. When we see that people are treating us differently, we KNOW our child is gone.

We let the child go when we, at some point, allow him to be a part of something bigger. For some of us, that means to say, "OK, God, he's your's. He's in Heaven." For others, that means when we look out at nature, when we look at the woods, when we look at the ground and we say the child is part of all nature and no longer belongs to just me. He is part of something bigger.

When we say that, we let go. If we are to live as anything except as emotional cripples for the rest of our lives, we've got to look at our child died and is not coming back. That is a hard thing to do, but we must let go.

The other side of recovery is the need to hold on to our child. We can't simply let him go as if he never existed. I have observed that members of The Compassionate Friends learn how to hold on to their child, also. The first way we hold on is with our memory. We remember our child. Memory is making him part of our every day as if the child were simply in another city or away at school. At some point the child would have left home and we wouldn't have seen him every day. It is the same with our child who is dead. We remember him when we see something and we let the memory come. When we're walking in the store and we see a toy that reminds us of him or when we're walking down the street and we see a little child with a snow suit like his, or we see a child on a bike the color of his, we remember. That memory is there and when we really resolve our grief: that memory is **still** there and it's a memory that feels good. We can have good memories and hold on to the child.

Sometimes we hold on to our child by simply giving ourselves back to the pain of the child's death by reading old letters, going through the album, going to the grave, or going through their things again and again. I've noticed that many bereaved parents simply let the present go its own way and give themselves to the memory of the child when it occurs. That is it good healthy way to

hold onto the child, by immersing yourself in the memories when they present themselves. Don't long for them but give yourself over to them when they show up. Then, after briefly visiting the past, you can say, "There, I was there. I don't need to do that again for a while, but I will do it again sometime."

The most profound way we keep our child is by sharing with others what we have shared with the child. That is the secret of TCF. We learn to take the love we had for the child and turn it outward so that we're loving others. Perhaps, at first that love is directed only to other bereaved parents. As our healing progresses, that circle of caring and loving broadens. We give to the world some of what we gave to our child, and by so doing, are able to hold on to the essence of what we shared with our child.
-- Dennis Klass, Advisor, TCF St. Louis, MO



Should

SHOULD - I will not SHOULD on myself today!

I won't let others SHOULD on me today either! Immediately after my daughter Julie died, I was bombarded on all sides with lots of SHOULDs:

"You SHOULD keep a stiff upper lip; be strong for the rest of the family."

"You SHOULD not dwell on it." "You SHOULD just accept it as God's will. He knows best."

"You SHOULD not cry about it."

"Julie left a 22-month-old daughter. You SHOULD live for Autumn."

"You SHOULD not keep her paintings and photographs out in plain sight as a constant reminder."

"Above all, you SHOULD keep busy. If you kept as busy as I do, you wouldn't have any trouble sleeping."

You SHOULD work in the yard, work in the garden, work in the house, but keep busy." "You SHOULD go back to work. You SHOULD keep so busy you won't have time to think about it."

"It was fate. It was supposed to happen. You SHOULD just accept her death and try to forget about it."

"There are many deaths every day. You SHOULD think about all the people killed in wars, earthquakes, tornadoes, floods, airplane crashes, and all kinds of natural disasters and accidents."

"You SHOULD not say such things, you SHOULD not even think them."

One of my best friends now is a "new" friend. She came by the office one day and invited me to

go for a cup of coffee. Immediately after being seated, she said, "Jean, I don't know how you feel or what you are going through. I haven't experienced it. If you'd like to tell me how you feel or talk about Julie, please do."

I can tell her anything. She is never shocked. She never says any SHOULD to me. I value her friendship.

I feel many people have awarded themselves doctorates of SHOULD. One woman is particularly full of SHOULD. If I ever catch her mouth shut long enough, I'd really like to apply a generous amount of a good brand of Super Glue. This Doctor of SHOULD knows exactly what I SHOULD do to get better. But this same Doctor of SHOULD, upon hearing one of her children or grandchildren has or is planning some triviality she doesn't agree with, is so upset she's flat on her back in bed, or on occasion has had to be hospitalized over it.

Of course, I'd like to do something about this sort of person, but it's probably illegal or at least unseemly. However, it SHOULD be perfectly permissible to put a bug down her blouse or a mouse up her pants leg.

I'm sure you've all had this problem. You've heard a similar SHOULD. Most of my experience has been with "hers," but I'm sure bereaved fathers have had a lot of SHOULD from "hims", too. Have you noticed all of this should comes from people whose children are living?

So, just for today, don't let anybody SHOULD on you!

--Jean Corley Lacy TCF, Lindsey, OK

Never Ness

It's the *never ness* that is so painful. *Never again* to be here with us - *never* to sit with us at the table, *never* to travel with us, *never* to laugh with us, *never* to cry with us, *never* to embrace us as he leaves for school, *never* to see his brothers and sister marry. All the rest of our lives we must live without him.

Only our death can stop the pain of his death. A month, a year, five years - with that I could live... but not this forever.

I step out into the moist, moldy fragrance of an early summer morning and arm in arm with my enjoyment comes the realization that never again will he smell this.

One small misstep and now this *never ness*.
--From his book, *Lament For A Son* by Nicholas Wolterstoff

A Mother's Plea: Spend More Time with Your Children

Dear Abby: The letter I am enclosing with mine was written to you in March 2000 by my daughter, Kelsey Leigh Holland. She never mailed it. Kelsey died in her sleep of respiratory failure on Dec. 29, 2000. She was only 13.

'DEAR ABBY: My mother is a workaholic. She works at work, at home, after dinner and after all hours. She never has any fun. I'm afraid she's on the verge of a nervous breakdown— if not already over the edge. "I've talked to her; so have my brother and my father. How do I send the message to Mom that life is not just paperwork and deadlines, but fun and happiness?

Signed ... OUT OF IDEAS"

Oh, how I wish I could change the past and spend less time working, volunteering, etc., and more time with Kelsey! But that's impossible. What I can do is be a better mother to my son and pass along my daughter's message to your readers. Parents, PLEASE spend more time with your children. Listen to them, share with them, teach them. Every moment of life is precious, and we don't know how much time we have left. Thank you, Abby, for listening. I wish I had listened before it was too late to spend more time with Kelsey.

--Lori Holland, Riverside, CA

Dear Lori: Please accept my deepest sympathy for the tragic loss of your daughter. I'm printing your message as a reminder to other parents. The working world can be extremely demanding— and often there are not enough hours in the day to do what needs to be done. But children are young only once, and they are with us for such a little while. Readers, the tragedy that has befallen this mother may never happen to the vast majority of you - but in life, there are no guarantees. I could lecture for paragraphs, but I think you get the message. The Orange County Register, Sunday, July 29, 2001. In memory of Kelsey Leigh Holland

The clock of life is wound but once
And no one has the power
To tell just when the hands will stop
At a late or early hour.

Now is the only time you own,
Live, love, toil with a will
Place no faith in tomorrow.
The clock may then be still.

--Roz Davies TCF Regina, SK, Canada



Halloween

Halloween used to be a favorite holiday of mine running neck and neck with Christmas, but not anymore. I used to love the sights and smells of fall coming together in a celebration of the "creepies" complete with all the candy you could ever want! When I became an adult and had children of my own, I would decorate the house, shop for the perfect costume, and buy or make the best treats. I attended the school costume parades with camera and camcorder in hand. I laughed at the funny costumes and pretended to fear the scary ones. It was all in good fun.

Now it's different. My daughter died and with her, my fondness of Halloween. Yep, I've had to deal with the "real thing", so making light of death and all things associated with it are not "fun" anymore. But I have another child to raise, so somehow I needed to learn how to put my own experience with death out of my mind and try to go along with the fun. I had to walk past front lawns made to look like graveyards while taking my puppy-clad 1st grader trick-or-treating knowing full well that my other child lay in such a place.

Year after year at the school parade, I'd watch the costumes go by, but the Dorothy, (Stefanie's most favorite costume which was also her last), the skeletons, and the gruesome "living dead" with their tattered clothing and rotting flesh, were all hard to take. So I tried very hard to keep the real images of death I have emblazoned in my head, separate from the fake ones. I want Hilary to have a "normal" childhood, so I dare not ask her if she has any trouble with the images of Halloween, too. I don't want her not to enjoy herself like all the other children, so I just grin and bear it.

I realize that my aversion to Halloween is unique to me because of the traumatic death of my child, but don't we as a society tend to take death and it's images a little too lightly? Why is it that television shows like "ER" and "Six Feet Under" are so popular? I don't understand it.

So I guess once again this Halloween, I will do the best I can to just grin and bear it. Maybe one day my fondness for Halloween will return, but I doubt it.

Your compassionate friend, Nanette Jacobs,
--TCF Mill Valley, CA

Suicide

If you meet me, friend, and wonder why
 A tear is always in my eye,
 It's because I suffered the greatest loss.
 Yes, mine has been a heavy cross
 My first thought every morning
 My last thought every night,
 And every moment in between
 Somehow it doesn't seem right
 Why one so loved and cherished
 Should make the choice to die,
 I curse that medication.
 And ask my Savior why
 Part of my heart went with him,
 I struggle day by day
 To solve this life as best I can,
 Yet wonder why I stay
 Many here still love me
 And I them in return,
 But for this link-my special son
 I will forever yearn.
 The day will come - we'll meet again.
 This will be in the past
 For even death cannot conquer love.
 It will forever last.
 --Mary MacDonald/Manitoba

Why Did My Babies Die? Why Why? Why? Why? Why?



There are so many questions a parent has when their child dies. My big one was always why? Why my baby? I never drank. Why my baby? I never smoked. I went to every doctor's appointment. I did everything I was supposed to do. We wanted our babies. We would have given them a good life with lots of love. Why did God doubt my ability to be a mom? Why did my babies die and Susan Smith got to have her babies, only to betray them and kill them later? Why are there 80,000 unwanted babies dying from the lack of both physical and emotional love in Romanian orphanages?

Why are my babies dead? Why? Why? Why? Why? Why?

Then at one monthly BP/USA meeting we had a speaker, a lady pastor, who was speaking on Grief Faith, and Doubt. Had I known what that night's topic was I never would have considered attending the meeting. It's not that I was mad at God, I wasn't. I had gotten over being mad at him when I was a teenager (16) and in a two week

period had watched two different friends and a baby die.

After the funerals I had approached the pastor of my church with many questions and had been handed a book, a master's level book mind you, on the subject. It was at that time that I decided that if God did exist and would let babies die, I wanted nothing to do with him. If I only knew that one day

I had finally prayed, like I had never prayed, before to my sons. I told them I didn't know where to turn after one and half years of grieving. I no longer knew what to do or how to keep them in my life and I still had no answers as to why my babies had died. Oh, I knew the medical reasons, a Molar pregnancy and cord strangulation, but not the reason my heart and mind needed to know. I almost didn't make it to that Thursday night meeting. I had been going rather sporadically the last few meetings anyway. It was at the last minute I knew I HAD to go to this meeting. I flew the ten miles to the meeting, arriving ten minutes late yet the meeting had not started.

The lady pastor had also lost five babies before they were able to survive outside of her body and she had gone on to join the seminary and to trust in this life. I was awed by her aura of peace and love that she had for her children.

After the meeting, I approached her with my question. I wanted to know how she did not feel the need to ask Why? Her response to my question made perfect sense to this grieving mother.

I realized, she told me, that even if God came to me personally tomorrow and told me in his/her own words as to why my babies died, it would not be good enough. No reason at this time or anytime while a mother or father must live on without their children would ever be a good enough reason for that parent.

Even if God told me that my baby would be the next Christ child, it simply would not be a good enough reason for me. I am sorry, and I know that I am being tremendously selfish, but my boys should be here with me and not anywhere else. I was given a great gift at that meeting in that I no longer felt that I needed to know the answers to my questions and for any little bit of peace I can find through out these years I am thankful, tremendously thankful.

Don't get me wrong I still ask questions, especially on those really down days that can

sneak up and whammy me even after four years. I will always want to know "Why", but for now I am content to wait for the time when I am reunited with my boys.

I do not know when that will be, and I am no longer especially anxious for that time to arrive. I do believe that I will be with my children again, and I imagine that when God sees me coming he will tell his secretary to tell me he is out to lunch, for good. I also imagine that when I am holding my sons again I will no longer care what the answer is or even remember what my question was. Until next time, my wish for you is peace, hope, and love in all your days ahead.

--Kim Brundt, Bereaved Parents USA newsletter

Newly Bereaved ...

Dwelling on Our Loved One's Death

Many of us go over and over the details of our loved one's death - time after agonizing time. The days, hours, and minutes preceding their death become a kind of mental movie that replays itself endlessly. Though it is painful, reliving each incident and moment slowly helps to convince us of what is true.

We cannot change what has happened. Each time we re-experience our loss, we come a little closer to accepting our loved one's death.

--from *Remembering with Love* by Levang & Ilse

For Friends and Family...

Recipe For Recovery

♥ Start with one cup of the milk of human kindness - all those dear friends who did not turn away from me when they heard of Steve's suicide, but helped in many practical, caring ways to make the first months easier.

♥ Add several good eggs - helping professionals like any minister, the counselor who suggested TCF, and the funeral director couple who started the TCF chapter I attended in northern New York.

♥ Throw in a few heaping tablespoons full of reading materials - books and pamphlets that started my thoughts going in a positive direction.

♥ Add the "the salt of the earth" - wonderful new friends I met through TCF and other support groups. Maybe we should call them the cream of

the crop, because eventually they rise to the top. ♥ Sprinkle liberally with tears - because it's okay to cry - and generously with laughter - because we can learn to smile again. Bake in a warm oven of tender loving care. Be sure to make enough to share with others - and freeze some for later.

-- Cynthia Kelly TCF, Cincinnati, OH

Book In Review ...



Tracks of a Fellow Struggler by John Claypool is a personal and passionate testament to the pain and trauma of grief. As a pastor for almost two decades, John Claypool witnessed the devastation of death many times. Never did he truly understand it's journey until the death of his eight-year-old daughter, Laura Lue, from acute leukemia. This book is a collection of sermons of the author's journey through grief as he openly shared with his congregation. His words are honest and challenging. He emotionally expresses his struggle to find meaning and understanding in this tragic event. His ongoing confessed conversations with God include constant questions, complaints, agonies, and more. John Claypool believes that his experience of grief can widen and deepen our ability to participate in life.

--Excerpts of a book review by Susan Gagnon-Flanagan



Helpful Hint...

We can endure much more than we think we can; all human experience testifies to that. All we need to do is learn not to be afraid of pain. Grit your teeth and let it hurt. Don't deny it, and don't be overwhelmed by it. It will not last forever. One day the pain will be gone, and you will still be there. --Harold Kushner (bereaved parent) "When All You Ever Wanted Wasn't Enough"

Grief is not some clean, linear, predictable state. To the contrary, grief is messy, painful, stunningly frightening, random and suffocating. *It is also necessary for our very survival.* To grieve that which is loved and lost is as essential to our survival as breathing.

--Dr. Joanne Cacciatore Reprinted from TCF—USA Facebook page

The Last Trick or Treater

It's late Halloween night,
 The candle in the pumpkin is nearly out.
 The candy is nearly gone.
 The doorbell rings one last time.
 It's a little boy in costume
 With a jack-o-lantern for his treats.
 Only he has no candy
 And he has no one waiting for him
 In the dark.
 As he leaves, he stops, turns around
 And waves to me...
 Could it be?
 -- Barbara April, TCF, Richmond, VA

What Will Matter?

Ready or not, some day it will all come to an end
 There will be no more sunrises, minutes or days
 All the things you collected, whether treasured or
 forgotten, will pass to someone else.
 Your wealth, fame and temporal powers will
 shrivel to irrelevance.
 It will not matter what you owned or what you
 were owed.
 Your grudges, resentments, frustrations and
 jealousies will finally disappear.
 The wins and loses that once seemed so important
 will fade away.
 It won't matter whether you were beautiful or
 brilliant.
 So what will matter?
 How will the value of your days be measured?
 What will matter is not what you bought, but what
 you built... not what you got, but what you gave.
 What will matter is not your competence,
 but your character.
 What will matter is not how many people you knew,
 but how many will feel a lasting loss
 when you are gone
 What will matter is not your memories, but the
 memories that live in those who loved you.
 What will matter is how long you will be
 remembered, by whom and for what.
 Living a life that matters doesn't happen by
 accident!
 It's not a matter of circumstance, but choice.
 Choose a life that matters.
 --Michael Josephson - Creator of "Character
 Counts"

Gorillas



I found the gorilla mask in the closet.
 I was not looking for it.
 Holding the limp, black rubber head
 covered with coarse hair, I remembered your blue
 eyes peering through its empty sockets.
 We had bought it for Halloween but it came to life
 the day you wore it to the zoo.
 The huge head almost covered your shoulders.
 You kept poking your fingers into the holes to keep
 them in front of your eyes so you could see to lead
 me to the huge gorilla.
 He stopped pacing, and fixed his gorilla eyes on
 the little monkey approaching.
 He found you irresistible.
 His arms opened wide.
 He grasped the bars and began to sway side to
 side, staring at you.
 You stood at the fence outside his cage mimicking
 him.
 The two of you were dancing with him leading, you
 following, you leading, him following
 Two gorillas, two children, ignoring the crowd
 gathering.
 It was a glorious afternoon the kind only a child
 can give a parent and a gorilla.
 As we were walking away I looked back at the
 animal.
 He was pathetic, trapped in his cage.
 His chest pressed against the bars,
 His arms reaching through as though he knew
 he would never see you again.
 Now all I have is this memory
 and this mask lying collapsed in my lap
 as though the life has gone out of it,
 and it has begun slowly to decompose.
 --Shelly Wagner

Faith

You will not see me, so you must have faith.
 I wait for the time when we can soar together
 again, both aware of each other.
 Until then, live your life to its fullest and when you
 need me,
 just whisper my name in your heart, ...I will be
 there.
 by Emily Dickenson



Ron Acker
Born: 10/65 Died: 5/95
Mother: Ursula Spey-Acker
Father: Heinz H. Acker

Jonathan Adams
Born: 1/81 Died: 2/08
Parent: Siv & Eddie Adams

Troy Akasaka
Born: 1/91 Died: 2/15
Parents: Jay & Sharon Akasaka

Ramon Alvarez
Born: 10/84 Died: 2/07
Mother: Terrie Alvarez

Sumer Nicole Alvarez
Born: 5/85 Died: 7/005
Parents: Dave Alvarez & Sandy Murphy

Marie Ann Andrade
Born: 4/76 Died: 12/96
Parents: Sabino & Ana Andrade

Nancy Geraldo Andrade
Born: 8/90 Died: 8/05
Parents: Elizabeth & Rogelio Geraldo

Noah William Aragon
Born: 1/05 Died: 3/06
Parents: Rich & Michele Aragon

Brandon Armstrong
Miscarried: July 1995
Mother: Cheryl Stephens

Joshua Arevalo
Born: 7/93 Died: 8/11
Mother: Vilma Alfaro

Jason M. Bakos
Born: 9/79 Died: 12/07
Father: James Bakos

Alexandra Renee Balesh
Born: 9/73 Died: 3/95
Parents: Ron & Stella Balesh

Kimberly Barcenas
Born: 2/88 Died: 10/06
Mother: Maria Guadalupe Ixta

Christopher Barnhart
Born: 11/77 Died: 4/07
Parents: Ron & Susan Mother
Sister: Stacy Pierce

Stephen Barrington Baxter
Born: 7/61 Died: 4/99
Parents: Cash & Betty Baxter

Vincent Beagle
Born: 11/82 Died: 5/10
Mother: Angela Beagle

Tristina Ann Beale
Born: 12/80 Died: 9/08
Mother: Kathy Beale

Jeremiah Bell
Born: 9/74 Died: 6/15
Mother: Angela Albarez

Kimberly Belluomini
Born: 10/62 Died: 10/00
Parents: Joyce Anderson & Ronald Assmann

Vincent Begole
Born: 11/82 Died: 5/10
Parents: Angela & Vincent Begole

Sammy Bloom
Born: 2/59 Died: 12/82
Parents: Lois & Sam Bloom

Kurt Boettcher
Born: 12/71 Died: 06/95
Mother: Carolyn Boettcher

Todd Boettcher
Born: 2/79 Died: 10/79
Mother: Carolyn Boettcher

Robert Bolde
Born: 7/94 Died: 9/12
Parents: Diane & Paul Bolde

Alan Bolton
Born: 11/63 Died: 3/06
Mother: Helen Eddens

Kevin Border
Born: 11/88 Died: 11/09
Mother: Kelly Border

Antoinette Botley
Born: 12/67 Died: 7/10
Mother: Fredia McGrew

Renee Bouchard
Born: 3/75 Died: 5/06
Mother: Susan Bouchard

Austin Broussard
Born: 3/95 Died: 9/12
Parents: Travis & Marty Broussard

Michael Bowen
Born: 5/95 Died: 8/14
Mother: Tomasa Richmond

Tamara Lynette Boyd
Born: 12/65 Died: 12/00
Parents: Gloria & Gayle Jones

Jazzelyn Braga
Born: 11/08 Died: 5/09
Father: Leonard Braga

Lawrence Tom Brennan
Born: 11/86 Died: 12/10
Parents: Manuel & Lisa Jo Hernandez

William Joseph Britton III
Born: 3/62 Died: 7/85
Mother: Jean Anne Britton

Sayumi Claire Brower
Born: 9/08 Died: 9/08
Parents: Scott & Maiko Brower

Eric Michael Brown
Born: 11/65 Died: 9/00
Mother: Beverly Young

Benjamin Matthew Brytan
Born: 10/84 Died: 6/96
Mother: Karen Merickel & Robert Brytan

Robert L. Buckner
Born: 2/92 Died: 3/03
Parents: Brad & Cindy Buckner

Scott Buehler
Born: 3/80 Died: 2/08
Mother: Elizabeth Buehler Miller

Brittany Nicole Cail
Born: 10/88 Died: 4/08
Mother: Raquel Cail

Albert Caldera
Born: 3/78 Died: 2/10
Parents: Refugio & Maria Caldera

Christina Califano
Born: 10/90 Died: 11/06
Father: John Califano

Cesar Isaac Cancino
Born: 01/05 Died: 01/05
Parents: Claudia & Cesar Cancino

Kenneth Capparelli
Born: 1/77 Died: 1/04
Mother: Sandy Capparelli

Kevin Castaneda
Born: 4/94 Died: 4/13
Parents: Fernando & Aleda Hockenberry

Frank Christopher Castania
Born: 8/94 Died: 7/05
Parents: Frank & Debbie Castania Grandparents: Richard & Ann Leach

Vanessa Roseann Castania
Born: 2/97 Died: 7/05
Parents: Frank & Debbie Castania Grandparents: Richard & Ann Leach

Ryan Cavanaugh
Born: 6/83 Died: 11/06
Mother: Kimberly Cavanaugh

Zackary Kenneth Charlton
Born: 11/81 Died: 3/10
Parents: Christine & Kerr Sister: Allie Bentley

Nathaniel Choate
Born: 7/80 Died: 5/08
Mother: Vicki Blain

Andrew Alexander Chou
Born: 12/03 Died: 12/03
Parents: Lu-Sieng Siau & Wibawa Chou

Michelle Christian
Born: 10/67 Died: 04/13
Parents: Paul & Toni Saben

Ophelra Grace Clark
Born: 10/82 Died: 9/10
Sister: Rebecca Clark

John Francis Cleary
Born: 12/74 Died: 8/93
Mother: Pauline Cleary Basil

Kelly Swan Cleary
Born: 3/59 Died: 3/95
Parents: Dick & Bev Swan

Sarah Elizabeth Cooper
Born: 10/95 Died: 8/00
Parents: Mark & Sandra Cooper

Hugo Ignacio Corbalan
Born: 4/84 Died: 5/08
Mother: Isabel Acosta

Tiffany Corkins
Born: 7/70 Died: 8/05
Mother: Nancy Lamb

Hannah Elizabeth Cortez
Born: 9/92 Died: 7/13
Parents: Rafael & Shari Cortez

Layla Crandall
Born: 4/15 Died: 5/15
Parents: Mary Shahroodi & Shawn Crandall

Marika Critelli
Born: 3/78 Died: 11/09
Father: Michael Critelli

Adam Crow
Born: 5/70 Died: 7/15
Mother: Flora Crow

Joseph Francesco Michael Curreri
Born: 9/80 Died: 10/07
Mother: Karen Curreri

Scott Curry
Born: 8/59 Died: 7/08
Mother: Marilyn Nemeth

Justin Dalton
Born: 9/74 Died: 8/09
Mother: Janis Farran

Rodney D. Day, Jr.
Born: 4/96 Died: 6/01
Parents: Jersuha Day

Danielle Ann Davis
Born: 10/78 Died: 3/10
Mother: Jackie Davis

Michael David Deboe
Born: 12/75 Died: 5/09
Parents: Dave & Judy Deboe

Christopher deLapp
Born: 3/93 Died: 11/13
Mother: Viviana Baca-Curac

Phillip Dennis Delurgio
Born: 11/64 Died: 7/10
Mother: Denise Nolan Delurgio

Anthony Joseph Demasio
Born: 6/52 Died: 7/00
Vivian Demasio

Cori Daye Desmond
Born: 3/80 Died: 2/09
Parents: Mark & Monica Desmond

Douglas Thorn Dethlefsen
Born: 11/64 Died: 11/09
Father: Douglas G. Dethlefsen

Luke Edward Devlin
Born: 12/07 Died: 12/07
Parents: Jacqueline & Tom Devlin

Allison Jeanine Kirkbride Dewart
Born: 10/87 Died: 1/06
Parents: Z & Michael Dewart

Gary A. Dicey, II
Born: 4/82 Died: 6/98
Father: Gary A. Dicey, Sr.

Michael A. DiMaggio
Born: 10/54 Died: 7/01
Parents: Neno & Helen Di Maggio

Amy Elizabeth Dodd
Born: 1/74 Died: 7/02
Mother: Kathleen Dodd

Asa James Dolak
Born: 2/94 Died: 12/13
Mother: Andrea Dolak

Heidi Dominguez
Born: 8/68 Died: 06/13
Grandmother: Rita Menendez

Wayne Douglas
Born: 9/71 Died: 1/10
Mother: Marie Galli



Our Children Remembered



Sierra Dove
Born: Died:
Parents: Michelle & Mathew Dove

Ramsay Downie, II
Born: 2/64 Died: 10/99
Ramsay & Sally Downie

Joel Draper
Born: 1/84 Died: 5/04
Mother: Tracy Solis

Rachel Sheridan Dunlap
Born: 9/69 Died: 3/09
Mother: Janell Dunlap

Myaka Kaitana Durham
Born: 1/04/06 Died: 1/06
Parents: Jahman & Ampy Durham

Scott Michael Dykstra
Born: 7/72 Died: 10/01
Parents: Mike & Rita Dykstra

Gary Edholm
Born: 5/56 Died: 9/95
Parents: Patti & Bob White

Mark Edler
Born: 11/73 Died: 1/92
Parents: Kitty & Rich Edler

Timothy Charles Egnatoff
Born: 11/92 Died: 9/08
Parents: Rick & Cathy Reny

Lorian Tamara Elbert
Born: 5/66 Died: 10/07
Mother: Dorota Starr Elbert

Gregg Emberson
Born: 1/75 Died: 1/92
Mother: Cindy London

Luke Emery
Born: 7/89 Died: 12/99
Parents: Karen & Glenn Emery

Jeffery Mark Engleman
Born: 6/61 Died: 2/10
Parents: Janette & Laszlo Engelman

Richard Paul Engelman
Born: 02/66 Died: 03/95
Parents: Janette & Laszlo Engelman

Henry Espinoza
Born: 12/63 Died: 9/98
Mother: Virginia Espinoza

Kurt Faerber
Born: 8/63 Died: 3/87
Mother: Trudy Faerber

Jarod Ryan Faulk
Born: 8/86 Died: 12/08
Father: Joe Faulk

Chase Feldkamp
Born: 5/05 Died: 3/06
Parents: Buddy & Jessica Feldkamp

David Joseph Ferralez
Born: 2/74 Died: 12/02
Parents: John & Rebecca Ferralez

Michella Leanne Matasso
Fincannon
Born: 8/86 Died: 1/06
Parents: Bill & Cheryl Matasso

Emma Nicole Fisher
Born: 11/99 Died: 7/06
Parents: Nancy & Elliott Fisher

Casey Owen Flint
Born: 5/75 Died: 7/09
Mother: Catherine Flint

April Lou Flynn
Born: 4/61 Died: 1/05
Mother: Peggy Flynn

Mark Fraze
Born: 5/79 Died: 7/07
Mother: Kathy Cammarano

Hunter Rebecca Bloem Freese
Born: 1/02 Died: 4/12
Parents: Brian & Michelle Freese

Donald A. Funk
Born: 12/41 Died: 9/00
Parents: William & Norma Jean Funk

Mark Scott Galper
Born: 2/62 Died: 5/97
Mother: Sheri Schrier

Marilyn Gardner
Born: 6/53 Died: 1/14
Mother: Pat Gardner

Melinda "Peeper" Gardner-Collins
Born: 6/56 Died: 8/07
Mother: Pat Gardner

Justin Brian Gartland
Born: 10/81 Died: 4/05
Parents: Brian & Paulette Gartland

Richard Lamar Gibbs
Born: 3/84 Died: 5/05
Mother: Ann Wasecha

Steven Paul Giuliano
Born: 4/55 Died: 4/95
Mother: Eleanor Giuliano

Jacob Seth Goar
Born: 1/79 Died: 5/01
Parents: Michael & Venus Nunan

Morgan Leeann Gomez
Born: 1/08 Died: 1/08
Parents: Amanda & Louie Gomez

Nicholas Gonzalez
Born: 2/63 Died: 10/01
Parents: Nick & Gloria Gonzalez

Evan Leonard Grau
Born: 8/82 Died: 5/04
Parents: Maria & Wayne Grau

Christopher Dudley Gray
Born: 5/83 Died: 2/04
Parents: Dudley & Laurie Gray

Matthew Ryan Gregory
Born: 3/80 Died: 1/11
Parents: Carol & Fred Gregory

Adam Francois Guymon
Born: 4/89 Died: 4/06
Mother: Eileen Guymon

Anthony Joel Guzman
Born: 5/87 Died: 1/08
Mother: Teresa Guzman

Andrew John Gvist
Born: 7/88 Died: 5/05
Father: Mark Gvist

Justin Todd Gwizdala
Born: 10/75 Died: 6/96
Parents: Kathy & Gary Gwizdala

James Burman Hahn
Born: 11/68 Died: 12/05
Mother: Berna Hahn & J. Thomas Hahn

Josephine Olivia Haman
Born: 6/98 Died: 2/10
Aunt: Caroline Ozimok

Grant Henry Hampton
Born: 3/79 Died: 7/05
Parents: Jeri & George Medak

Brandon Allen Hanson
Born: 5/75 Died: 5/10
Mother: Yolanda Alepe

Robert Belmares Harris
Born: 12/66 Died: 12/95
Parents: Bea & Larry Harris

Leslie Geraci Hart
Born: 6/66 Died: 7/11
Father: John Geraci

Caleb Haskell
Born: 6/78 Died: 9/06
Parents: Karen & Kim Haskell

Daniel Hassley
Born: 2/71 Died: 2/90
Parents: Eila & Richard Hassley

Alicia M. Hayes
Born: 1/81 Died: 5/96
Parents: Beke & Dave Jordan

Jason Patrick Healey
Born: 10/84 Died: 2/09
Mother: Sharon Sykes Healey

Emma Joy Heath
Born: 5/98 Died: 6/07
Parents: DJ & Phil Heath

Maddison Grace Herrera
Born: 5/14 Died: 5/14
Parents: Gabriela Partida & Jesse Herrera

Kent Hisamune
Born: 6/00 Died: 6/00
Parents: Toshi & Hideko Hisamune

Jesse Hoffman
Born: 1/86 Died: 8/10
Mother: Gina Hoffman

Hope Ann Honeycutt
Born: 12/62 Died: 6/00
Mother: Donna Honeycutt

Adria Horning
Born: 12/91 Died: 3/07
Parents: Gary Horning & Linda Cipriani

Jeremy Michael Howard
Born: 7/83 Died: 6/94
Mother: Donna Howard-Scruggs
Grandmother: Charlotte Crager

Jennifer Nicole Hower
Born: 6/75 Died: 12/04
Brother: Jeff Hower

Miranda Howells
Born: 8/91 Died: 11/09
Father: Walter Howells III

Rachel Suzanne Hoyt
Born: 2/70 Died: 1/95
Sister: Laura Hoyt D'anna

Tara Hudson
Born: 1/86 Died: 1/07
Mother: Mari Hudson

Chad Michael Huisinga
Born: 10/74 Died: 12/95
Parents: Alan & Melinda Huisinga

Hannah Nichea Hupke
Born: 9/87 Died: 6/05
Parents: Bruce & Joni Hupke

Zane Austin Hutchins
Born: 9/03 Died: 2/04
Parents: Mae Rivera & Jon Hutchins

Casie Leean Hyde
Born: 3/89 Died: 12/05
Mother: Kelli Rigby-Hyde

John Joseph Iacono
Born: 5/02 Died: 5/04
Parents: Nancy & Anthony Iacono

Ben Francisco Inez de la Cruz
Born: 1/71 Died: 11/91
Parents: Francesca Inez & Emmanuel de la Cruz

John E. James
Born: 6/62 Died: 9/93
Parents: Marilyn & Lupe Arvizo

Kalaea Jennings
Born: 4/07 Died: 9/07
Parents: Nacio & Maria Jennings

Melissa Gale Jetton
Born: 5/58 Died: 7/84
Parents: James & Cathie Jetton

William Jimenez
Born: 3/94 Died: 5/04
Sister: Adrianna Jimenez

Angela Johnson
Born: 4/92 Died: 3/15
Parents: Dennis & Maria Johnson

Daniel A. Jones V.
Born: 5/92 Died: 10/09
Father: Daniel A. Jones IV.

David B. Jones
Born: 3/50 Died: 3/01
Mother: Lucille Jones

Jeff Joyce
Born: 2/68 Died: 4/01
Mother: Wadene Duffy

Lance John Juracka
Born: 10/69 Died: 4/06
Parents: Frank & Nancy Juracka

Heather Mary Kain
Born: 6/83 Died: 2/10
Mother: Maura Kain

Edwin J. Kaslowski
Born: 11/67 Died: 7/96
Mother: Carolyn Kaslowski



Emily Matilda Kass
Born: 6/95 Died: 3/06
Mother: Susan Kass

Scott Ira Kaufman
Born: 4/68 Died: 7/95
Mother: Renee Kaufman

Douglas Drennen Kay
Born: 3/72 Died: 9/06
Parents: Steve & Diane Kay

Kalin Marie Keech
Born: 10/90 Died: 6/09
Richard & Kris Keech

Kathryn Anne Kelly
Born: 12/72 Died: 1/91
Parents: Dick & Timmy Kelly

Sean A. King
Born: 7/63 Died: 12/07
Parents: Catherine & Michael King

Kay Dee Kinney-Palser
Born: 6/87 Died: 6/99
Grandmothers: Diana Palser & Kay Kinney

Colby Joshua Koenig
Born: 6/84 Died: 1/10
Parents: Cindy Tobis & John Koenig

Scott Koller
Born: 10/83 Died: 3/15
Mother: Betty Benson

Keith Konopasek
Born: 1/63 Died: 7/95
Parents: Ken & Mary Konopasek

Michael Kropfman
Born: 12/88 Died: 3/12
Parents: Brenda & Greg Kropfmann

Susan Ann Kruger
Born: 9/64 Died: 6/08
Mother: Gloria Swensson

Kyle Kubachka
Born: 1/89 Died: 11/08
Parents: Keith & April Kubachka

Natalie Samantha Large
Born: 6/05 Died: 6/05
Parents: Burke & Maya Large

Dolores LaRue
Born: 8/57 Died: 11/08
Mother: Maggie Ramirez

Cherese Mari Lauhere
Born: 9/74 Died: 3/96
Parents: Larry & Chris Lauhere

Bernard Lawrence
Born: 2/63 Died: 11/06
Mother: Jackie Bowens

Bryan Yutaka Lee
Born: 12/70 Died: 9/07
Mother: Kathee Lee

Steven J. Lee
Born: 1/63 Died: 10/06
Mother: Donna Lee

Jessica Leffew
Born: 9/96 Died: 4/14
Parents: Jarrad & Omica Jelsma

Avery James Lent
Born: 12/03 Died: 7/06
Parents: Crystal Henning & Dan Holly

Quinn Frances Leslie
Born: 12/12 Died: 9/14
Parents: Ian & Katie Leslie

Brian Lopez
Born: 9/93 Died: 4/14
Parents: Jarrad & Omica Jelsma

Kevin Le Nguyen
Born: 5/88 Died: 6/14
Mother: Tracy Le Nguyen

Wendy Levine
Born: 10/65 Died: 11/95
Parents: Paul & Sharon Levine

Michael Lococo
Born: 2/55 Died: 1/10
Mother: Patrina Lococo

Richard Lee Luthe
Born: 11/76 Died: 1/98
Parents: Jeff & Lorraine Luthe

Shauna Jean Malone
Born: 8/70 Died: 1/13
Parents: Tom & Mary Malone

Michelle Marie Mandich
Born: 5/89 Died: 2/05
Parents: Michael & Lori Mandich

Daniel Edward Manella
Born: 9/67 Died: 10/98
Sister: Kathleen Manella

Elizabeth Mann
Born: 7/60 Died: 5/05
Parents: David & Olivia Mann

Janet Sue Mann
Born: 10/61 Died: 9/10
Mother: Nancy Mann

Gabriella Mantini
Born: 5/85 Died: 8/06
Mother: Martha Mantini

Alex J. Mantyla
Born: 3/89 Died: 8/08
Parents: Jarmo & Bonnie Mantyla

Kyle Jeffrey Martin
Born: 11/80 Died: 7/04
Parents: David & Joanne Martin

Jason Lee Martineau
Born: 9/79 Died: 12/07
Father: James Bakos

Audrey Sinclair Marshall
Born: 2/00 Died: 3/00
Parents: Don & Kimberly Marshall

Paul Martinez
Born: 1/86 Died: 3/08
Mother: Lorraine Martinez

Daniel George Mateik III
Born: 12/84 Died: 6/09
Mother: Stefanie Hudak

Daniel McClernan
Born: 7/53 Died: 2/07
Mother: Lee McClernan

Joseph McCoy
Born: 9/11 Died: 11/14
Mother: Amy McCoy

Kirk McMulty
Born: 7/84 Died: 2/14
Mother: Elaine Mc Multy
Sister: Reme Mc Multy

Jeremy Stewert Mead
Born: 10/61 Died: 11/14
Mother: Carol Mead

Robert Andrew Mead
Born: 5/65 Died: 4/11
Mother: Carol Mead

Nicole Marie Megaloudis
Born: 10/84 Died: 2/04
Mother: Gail Megaloudis-Rongen

Alexis Melgoza
Born: 3/90 Died: 6/11
Mother: Gina Melgoza

Shawn Mellen
Born: 05/81 Died: 8/99
Godmother: Rose Sarukian

Damion Mendoza
Born: 7/76 Died: 6/92
Parents: Carlene & Paul Mendoza

Shannon R. Middleton
Born: 2/77 Died: 5/94
Mother: Candy Middleton

Steven Douglas Millar
Born: 2/70 Died: 10/00
Parents: David & Suzanne Millar

Patricia Acha Miller
Born: 1/62 Died: 11/10
Mother: Christina Acha

Angel Flores Misa, Jr
Born: 10/69 Died: 7/06
Parents: Roland & Luscita Dilley

David F. Mobilio
Born: 7/71 Died: 11/02
Parents: Richard & Laurie Mobilio

Jacki Montoya
Born: 10/89 Died: 7/15
Mother: Theresa Montoya

Joshua Montoya
Born: 4/15 Died: 7/15
Grandmother: Theresa Montoya

Anthony Moreno
Born: 2/91 Died: 11/13
Mother: Ivette Romero

Danielle Ann Mosher
Born: 8/78 Died: 6/97
Parents: Paul & Rose Mary Mosher

Benjamin A. Moutes
Born: 3/07 Died: 5/10
Parents: Kevin & Claudia Moutes

Peter Anthony Murillo
Born: 11/72 Died: 10/04
Mother: Stella Murillo

Marily Murney
Born: 6/53 Died: 1/14
Parents: Herb & Pat Gardner

Christopher Myers
Born: 10/86 Died: 5/06
Parents: Janet & Larry Myers

Edward W. Myricks II
Born: 4/72 Died: 10/11
Parents: Edward & Sandra Myricks

Annamay Rebecca Celine Naef
Born: 4/95 Died: 10/11
Parents: Heinz & Ursina Naef

Christian Paul Nagy
Born: 5/02 Died: 5/02
Parents: Paul & Teresa Nagy

Lisa Nakamaru
Born: 12/93 Died: 10/14
Mother: Grace Nakamaru

Richard Paul Negrete
Born: 6/43 Died: 2/04
Mother: Sally Negrete

Joy Ellen Nelson
Born: 1/97 Died: 1/97
Parents: Mary Desmond & David Nelson

Eric M. Neuan
Born: 1/79 Died: 3/09
Parents: Eric & Lynn Neuman

William Samuel Nicassio
Born: 1/88 Died: 1/14
Mother: Pearl Nicassio

Danielle Nice
Born: 7/81 Died: 8/04
Parents: Daniel & Debbie Nice

Monique Nicholson
Born: 7/71 Died: 1/08
Sister: April Nicholson

Denise Northbrook
Born: 2/67 Died: 8/31
Parents: Mike & Barbie Schafer

Geoff James Nowak
Born: 11/97 Died: 2/98
Parents: Christen Murphey & Geoff Nowak

Logan Kay Nunez
Born: 1/95 Died: 4/05
Parents: Mike & Laura Nunez

Michaela Grace Nunez
Born: 2/05 Died: 7/05
Parents: Roger & Jennifer Nunez

Sally Anne O'Connor
Born: 12/62 Died: 2/11
Mother: Grace "Darline" Dye

Thomas Jinkwang Oh
Born: 2/72 Died: 6/03
Sister: Barbara Oh

Tyiri Ojose
Born: 9/10 Died: 7/12
Mother: Maureen Ojose

Dominique Oliver
Born: 5/85 Died: 3/02
Mother: Cheryl Stephens

Elliott Shawn Oliver
Born: 8/75 Died: 2/13
Parents: Elliott Joseph Oliver Jr. & Linda Barcelá

Henry Ortega
Born: 5/97 Died: 7/08
Parents: Henry & Wendy Ortega



Our Children Remembered



Masahiro Ozaki
Born: 5/78 Died: 8/09
Sister: Etsuko Moromi

Richard R. Reyes
Born: 12/65 Died: 12/08
Mother: Terry Reyes

Andrew Patrick Sakura
Born: 3/90 Died: 3/08
Parents: Bruce & Karen Sakura

Anthony Tanori
Born: 8/82 Died: 8/12
Parents: Chuck & Sylvia Tanori

Crystal Pagan
Born: 6/74 Died: 3/14
Mother: Sunny Honsinger

Mallory Richards
Born: 8/92 Died: 1/11
Mother: Lisa Richards

Jeffrey Alan Sampson
Born: 3/86 Died: 5/05
Parents: Claude & Paula Sampson

Joseph Tauaefa
Born: 2/85 Died: 7/10
Parents: Loi & Sioka Tauaefa

Lucas Hunter Palar
Born: 11/89 Died: 5/06
Parents: Hugh Palar & DeAnna Williams

Aaron Rico
Born: 12/89 Died: 12/10
Parents: Cameron & Annette Rico

Lisa Sandoval
Born: 9/76 Died: 12/92
Parents: Susan & Ruben Sandoval

Jacqueline Taylor
Born: 1/83 Died: 7/11
Mother: Jennifer Flynn

Armon Parker
Born: 4/72 Died: 3/04
Mother: Sabrina Parker

Keith Patrick Riley
Born: 3/69 Died: 10/99
Parents: Kevin & Debby Riley

F. Marlow Santos
Born: 10/84 Died: 7/93
Parents: Fred & Julie Gillette

Kristi Nicole Taylor
Born: 5/80 Died: 9/94
Parents: Kathy & Cory Taylor

Maddison Grace Partida
Born: Died:
Mother: Gabriela Partida

Christopher Rivera
Born: 10/67 Died: 1/06
Mother: Katherine Wagner

Patrick C. Shillings Jr
Born: 1/88 Died: 10/09
Parents: Patrick & Rena Shillings

John Teresinski
Born: 12/67 Died: 1/00
Parents: Beverly & Victor Teresinski

Annemarie Pellerito
Born: 9/73 Died: 8/03
Parents: Vicki & Pete Pellerito

Ryanne Robles
Born: 10/12 Died: 10/12
Mother: Glenda Osborne

Dylan Elwood Sievers
Born: 8/08 Died: 8/08
Parents Daren & Marne Sievers

Ryan William Thomas
Born: 2/82 Died: 4/04
Mother: Linda Thomas

Joseph Ryan Persh
Born: 1/03 Died: 2/03
Parents: Gary & Jane Persh

Edwin Rodriguez
Born: 3/64 Died: 12/14
Sister: Nancy Garcia

Tyson Donald Sievers
Born: 8/08 Died: 9/08
Parents: Darren & Marne Sievers

Ryan William Thomas
Born: 2/82 Died: 4/04
Mother: Linda Thomas

Daniel Andrew Peterson
Born: 1/78 Died: 5/85
Mother: Gay Kennedy

Ruth "Vanny" Rodriguez
Born: 10/73 Died: 5/01
Parents: George & Ruby Rodriguez

Michael William Schlarb
Born: 4/61 Died: 7/14
Parents: Bill & Sharon Schlarb

Laura C. Toomey
Born: 1/69 Died: 12/78
Mother: Michael & Elizabeth Toomey

Richard Phillips
Born: 9/81 Died: 3/11
Mother: Lisa Grant

Christine E. Rojas
Born: 6/64 Died: 12/94
Parents: Ray & Esther Rojas

Karen Ailegra Scholl
Born: 8/64 Died: 4/99
Mother: Kay Scholl

Michael D. Toomey
Born: 4/62 Died: 2/05
Mother: Michael & Elizabeth Toomey

Jennifer Pizer
Born: 10/69 Died: 4/91
Parents: Janis & Bud Pizer

Jamie (James) Lloyd Roman
Born: 4/78 Died: 2/97
Mother: Carolyn Roman

Matt Scholl
Born: 2/73 Died: 4/08
Parents: Bill & Kay Scholl

Nathan Torbert
Born: 1/78 Died: 12/05
Mother: Rebecca Williams

Chris Pierce
Born: 11/77 Died: 4/07
Sister: Stacy Pierce

Frankie Romero
Born: 10/81 Died: 9/93
Mother: Magdalena Hilda Salas & Francisco L. Romero

Candace Arond Schonberg
Born: 3/98 Died: 11/00
Parents: Andrene & Arond Schonberg

David Torres
Born: 6/66 Died: 3/06
Mother: Joyce Whirry

Steven Randall Prather
Born: 9/62 Died: 8/10
Parents: Stu & Evalyn Prather

Dominic Niall Pennington Roque
Born: 8/02 Died: 9/09
Parents: Kerrie & Ren Roque

Jonathan "Jamie" Schubert
Born: 7/65 Died: 12/06
Parents: Lynn & Roy Schubert

Marcelo Torres
Born: 8/81 Died: 9/03
Parents: Jaime & Carmen Torres

D'Juan Marcel Pratt
Born: 12/79 Died: 11/06
Mother: Gwendolyn Elaine Maiden

James Garrett Ross
Born: 12/74 Died: 10/05
Parents: Jim & Sharon Ross

Melissa Lauren Schweisberger
Born: 10/84 Died: 11/99
Parents: John & Margarita Schweisberger

Brian Gregory Trotter
Born: 10/78 Died: 8/94
Mother: Abby Trotter-Herft

Steven Quesada
Born: 8/77 Died: 7/14
Mother: Esther Quesada

Michael William Roth
Born: 6/71 Died: 12/08
Parents: Karen & William Roth

Spencer Simpson
Born: 1/80 Died: 6/13
Parents: Rich & Shelly Simpson

Vance C. Valdez
Born: 10/90 Died: 3/12
Parents: Carlos & Maria Valdez

Shannon Quigly
Born: 112/68 Died: 1/09
Mother: Kathleen Shortridge

John Patrick Rouse
Born: 1/78 Died: 7/02
Mother: Sharon Rouse

Gerald Slater
Born: 2/71 Died: 8/94
Parents: Bob & Gwen Slater

Lexi Noelle Valladares
Born: 4/04 Died: 7/10
Parents: Fausto & Erica Valladares

Daniel Paul Rains
Born: 4/72 Died: 3/91
Mother: Janet Ferjo

Giovani Rubalcava
Born: 4/95 Died: 8/14
Parents: Gina & Dennis Diviak

Jennine Steen
Born: 7/05 Died: 9/10
Father: Donya Steen

Mark T. Vasquez
Born: 5/75 Died: 5/11
Parents: Manuel & Blanca Vasquez

Jeffrey Alan Rakus
Born: 10/86 Died: 7/06
Parents: Tony & Donna Rakus

Michael B. Ruggera, Jr.
Born: 4/51 Died: 4/96
Parents: Michael & Frances Ruggera

Nancy Sterger
Born: 8/57 Died: 6/12
Mother: Ann Leer

Tommy Villanueva
Born: 10/68 Died: 5/02
Parents: Jennie & Edgar Villanueva

Julius Ramirez JR.
Born: 8/09 Died: 8/10
Parents: Bridie & Jules Ramirez

Shannon Quigley Runningbear
Born: 12/68 Died: 1/09
Mother: Kathleen Crowley Shortridge

Jonathan David Streisand
Born: 1/87 Died: 2/13
Parents: Pricilla & David Streisand

Justin Alexander Velasquez
Born: 7/12 Died: 7/12
Parents: Ricardo & Marcie Velasquez

Leo Joshua Rank II
Born: 3/11 Died: 4/12
Parents: Roberta Redner & Leo Rank

Joseph Sahu
Born: 6/89 Died: 4/12
Parents: Ron & Cathy

Daniel John Swiggum
Born: 6/88 Died: 7/08
Parents: Stewart & Marian Swiggum

Eric Douglas Vines
Born: 7/77 Died: 7/91
Parents: Doug & Lynn Vines

Cindy Ranftl
Born: 8/68 Died: 7/97
Parents: Pat & Bob Ranftl

Armando Sainz
Born: 6/76 Died: 2/02
Mother: Jennie Hernandez

Elizabeth D. Szucs
Born: 4/72 Died: 6/11
Parents: Dolores & Frank Szucs

Mark Daniel Vinson
Born: 11/78 Died: 7/10
Mother: Virginia Vinson

Tejal Pati Reddy
Born: 6/86 Died: 12/08
Parents: Pranitha & Krupa Reddy



Our Children

Serena Yasmeen C. Viveros
Born: 11/05 Died: 11/05
Mother: Brenda Viveros

Marisa Ann Vuoso
Born: 7/83 Died: 3/93
Parents: Debbie & Marco
Vuoso

Kristopher Wadman
Born: 11/82 Died: 10/00
Parents: Michael & Melodie Wadman

Carl Alan Wagenknecht
Born: 7/70 Died: 8/04
Parents: Tom & Janis Wagenknecht

Jeffrey Sinclair Wagstaff
Born: 9/80 Died: 4/99
Parents: Johnny & Barbara Walker
Sister: Sheimekia Wagstaff
Cory Dylan Walker
Born: 8/76 Died: 3/01
Parents: Jim and Susan Walker

Eric Webb
Born: 6/85 Died: 10/07
Parents: Jim & Vickie Webb

Dennis William Webber
Born: 5/85 Died: 3/05
Parent: Blaine & Sin Young Webber

Sharon Ann Wendt
Born: 6/54 Died: 4/99
Parents: Mr. & Mrs. Carmel Doucet

Brian Scott West
Born: 8/70 Died: 4/08
Parents: David & Connie
Schlottman

Michelle Whitaker
Born: 6/72 Died: 4/06
Mother-in-law: Karen Scott

Taylor Whitaker
Born: 4/00 Died: 4/06
Mother: Karen Scott

Andreas Wickstrom
Born: 12/83 Died: 12/01
Parents: John & Inge Wickstrom

Victoria Winchester
Born: 2/57 Died: 2/84
Mother: Erin Adams

Jennifer Winkelspecht
Born: 7/75 Died: 8/95
Parents: Brian & Lisa
Winkelspecht

Jordan Michael Witte
Born: 1/87 Died: 11/08
Parents: Licha & Mike Witte

Bob Woodyard
Born: 7/55 Died: 10/08
Bill & Barb Woodyard

Amy Woolington
Born: 10/85 Died: 1/07
Parents: Pam Weiss & John Woolington

Christopher Wootton
Born: 11/86 Died: 5/08
Father: Jim
Wootton

Cristofur Daye Wroten-Kennedy
Born: 2/75 Died: 9/01
Mother: Dusty Wroten
Father: Joe Kennedy

Remembered



Brett Yodice
Born: 11/89 Died: 5/13
Parents: Sam & Susan Yodice

Aaron Young
Born: 9/74 Died: 6/15
Mother: Sheila Young

Steve R. Young
Born: 7/57 Died: 2/90
Mother: Marjorie Young

Whitney Marie Young
Born: 8/87 Died: 11/06
Parents: Marlene & Steve Young

Thomas Zachary
Born: 12/85 Died: 7/11
Father: Bob McGaha

Kevin Zelik
Born: 11/85 Died: 6/10
Parents: Joe & Linda Zelik

Birthday Tributes...



In honor of your child's birthday, we welcome you to submit a birthday tribute. Though your child is no longer here to buy a present for, think of this as a birthday present about your child. This tribute is an opportunity to share your child with us all. (We thank you for any birthday donations that help offset chapter expenses.)

* Please remember we are always working a month in advance and need your tributes by the first of the month preceding the actual birthday.

Sorry, no birthday tributes were submitted this month.

For Siblings...



Please Don't Overlook Me!

I know my size is smaller
my hands are littler
my legs are shorter,
but my HEART
can hurt just like yours.
I'm a CHILD
You're an adult...
Please don't overlook me!

I know my vocabulary isn't the
greatest
my attention span lacks longevity
my logic sometimes seems

irrational,
but my MIND
can question death just like yours
can.
I'm a TEENAGER
you're an adult
Please don't overlook me!

I know my needs seem less
important
my feelings seem less controlled
my actions are hard to
understand,
but my BODY
needs a hug just like yours does.
I'm YOUNGER
you're older, Please don't
overlook me!

I know tears are hard to show
fears are difficult to face,
death means not coming back,
but my SOUL
searches for reassurance just
like yours does.
I'm HURTING
and you're hurting too...
Please don't overlook me!
--TCF Sibling Page, Carson City,
NV

The Unique Nature of Sibling Loss

I can still remember the call that told me my younger brother was dead. It was from my grandmother. Funnily enough, I'd been contemplating that my grandparents were getting old and that I needed to prepare myself for their deaths. I never expected that I would receive a call from them to tell me that my brother had crashed his car into a lamp post on the way home from a concert and was killed immediately. He was 17; I was 22.

The death of a sibling is strange. Everyone asks how your parents are, but everyone seems to forget about you. It's

as if you are not important. Your role is there to provide support to everyone else. Somehow it didn't surprise me when I went looking for information on the internet and found that siblings were known as "the forgotten mourners."

The relationship between siblings is unique. There is no one else in the world that you have such a love-hate relationship with. I know that I would curse my brother harshly but if anyone else did, I would attack them for it. Siblings have a right that no one else has. It means that you can show your worst to them and know that they will still forgive you afterwards and speak to you like nothing was wrong. Some people attribute this gift to parents too. Yet it is different.

As a sibling you are allowed to know hidden activities, beliefs, attitudes and dreams that are never shared with parents. As your sibling grows older, this perspective can be transferred to partners but siblings seem to share the most information.

When you lose a sibling, you also lose your identity. Your sibling has always been part of your life. They have helped define who you are and your role within the family. It leads you to question who you are and what your life purpose is.

If you are younger like myself, you also lose the chance to develop a relationship based on friendship with someone who has known you your whole life. I know that my relationship with my brother was changing as he died. Although he was my younger brother, his wisdom at times made him appear to be my older brother. I was grateful for someone who was looking out for me. And I was so angry that I would never see him get married, have children or grow old - so I could tease him- about how ugly he was getting.

Your sibling is also your peer, so it leads you to question your own mortality. It also leads you to question why them and not me. In my attempt to make sense of this question, I moved into the realm of helping others affected by loss transform grief, find peace and feel more positive about the future. It was my way of justifying my brother's death.

It's now been over 8 years since my brother died, and I am at peace with it. It's ok that I'll never fight with him again, or hug and make up. It's ok that I'll never know what man he would have grown into. I still think about him every day and I talk to him a lot. I've created a new relationship with him that continues on after death.

After all, he is my brother and always will be. Not even death can take that away from me.
--Tabitha Jayne 2011, posted in Death of a Sibling

For Grandparents...



When a Grandchild Dies

No one expects to outlive their own children, much less experience the loss of a much-loved, much-wanted grandchild. It is so difficult to raise a family, see your children do the same and see the cycle broken in this out-of-order way. No one is prepared for the grief that follows. As a grandparent, you have a double grief. You grieve for your grandchild who has died, as well as for your own child who is now a bereaved parent. You not only feel your own pain and sadness, but also feel helpless and frustrated at not being able to help your bereaved child.

It helps to remember that there is no timetable for grief. Don't expect too much of your child, his or her spouse or of yourself. At first, no one believes it. When the reality "hits" everyone feels even more devastated. It is important to consider your needs as well as those of your bereaved child. Acknowledging and working on your grief will help you and, indirectly, your grieving child.

Don't be surprised if at first you can't reach out to your grieving child. Remember that you are grieving. Be patient with yourself. Eventually you may be able to talk, listen and help. If you find that you can't help specifically with the grief you can send cards, tell them that you love them, etc. Explain that you wish that you could be of more help but that you don't know what to do.

Suggestions for Helping Yourself and Your Grieving Child (the Parents)

- Read about grief. It is important to understand what you and your child are experiencing.
- It helps to be open and share your feelings. Your openness sets a good example for your child.
- Share the good memories and the good days as well as the pain of grief and the bad days.
- Talk about your dead grandchild. Mention his or her name.
- Find someone with whom you can talk freely — a friend, support group member, clergy or counselor.
- Be available to LISTEN frequently to your child. Respect your child's way of handling the pain and

expressing the grief. Don't tell your child how he or she should react.

- At special times (anniversary of death, holidays) write and/or call your bereaved child. Mention that you realize what day it is. You are calling to say you love them and you wish that you could take some of their pain away.
- When adults are grieving, the child's siblings often feel neglected — plus they don't understand the grief that they themselves are experiencing. Try to spend extra time with your other bereaved grandchildren, offering to listen and reminding them that they are very important and much loved.
- If possible, offer to take surviving grandchildren for an afternoon or a day; help with practical matters, such as preparing food, doing laundry, shopping; spend time alone with your child.
- Most of us need hugs, even if we don't recognize that we do. It helps to hug and hold your child if you both are comfortable doing so.
- Allow yourself and encourage your child to cry when needed. Crying offers relief.
- Let the family know that you care; that you love them.
- Hold on to HOPE that eventually you all will enjoy life again. Offer HOPE to your grieving child and family.

From Hope Bereaved Handbook, available from HOPE FOR BEREAVED; 1342 Lancaster Avenue; Syracuse, New York 13210; (315) 472-6754; Adapted from the website of the Alliance of Grandparents, A Support in Tragedy, 2004.

My grief and pain are mine. I have earned them. They are part of me. Only in feeling them do I open myself to the lessons they can teach.

--Anne Wilson Schaefer

From Our Members...



The Things We Did Last Summer

It was summer
I remember it well
We played by the lake
Not a cloud in the sky
The birds were there
Soaring overhead
We held hands
As we walk along the shore
There was a light breeze
It brushed its warm touch

On our faces

We wanted this day to last forever

You smiled

You touched my heart

All the things we did last summer

I will remember them all winter long

-- Richard Leach, TCF South Bay/L.A., CA

We welcome and encourage you to submit contributions you found meaningful to you in your grief. We prefer your original poems and thoughts, but we can also print other material if proper credit is given to the author. Please take the time to submit a poem or article you found helpful.

TCF Is On Facebook Please visit and help promote The Compassionate Friends National Organization's Facebook page by becoming a fan. You can get there by clicking on the link from TCF's national website home page at www.compassionatefriends.org. Or, you can log into Facebook and search for The Compassionate Friends/USA. In addition to the social support aspect, The Compassionate Friends/USA Facebook page will have information about upcoming events.

Our Website... Joe Zelik is hosting the website and updating it with the current newsletter and chapter information. Thank you to those who are willing to get you newsletter online. To be able to send a reminder each month to let you know when the latest issue of the newsletter is available, we need your e-mail address. To update our files, please call Lynn at (310) 530-3214 to update by phone. You can also log onto our website at www.tcf-sbla.org if you want to do it electronically. Thank-you for your understanding and help.

TCF South Bay/LA

The National Office of TCF has an ongoing support group for parents and siblings online. For a complete schedule and to register for Online Support, visit <http://compassionatefriends.org> and follow the directions to register. There is also a closed group chat room for specific topics that you need to register for.

Closed Group Chat... TCF National has several closed Facebook groups you may find helpful on your grief journey. Click the blue links to be connected and request to join.

TCF - Loss to Substance Related Causes

Moderators: Barbara Allen and Mary Lemley

TCF - Loss to Suicide Moderators: Cathy Seehuetter and Donna Adams

TCF - Loss to Homicide Moderators: Debbie Floyd and Kathleen Willoughby

TCF - Infant and Toddler Loss Moderators: Susan Peavler and Tiffany Barraso

TCF - Sibling Loss to Substance Related Causes Moderators: Andrea Keller and Barbara Allen

The Compassionate Friends Sounds of the Siblings (for bereaved siblings) Moderators: Tracy Milne and Keith Singer

TCF – Loss of a Grandchild Moderators: Betty Farrel and Jennifer Sue Hale

TCF – Loss to Miscarriage or Stillbirth Moderators: Kelly Kittel and Kenzie Janzen

TCF – Loss of an Only Child/All Your Children Moderators: Lisa Ridge and Vicki Woods-Ozias

TCF – Loss to a Drunk/Impaired Driver Moderators: Robin Landry and Rebecca Perkins

TCF – Loss to Cancer Moderators: Lee Meyerson, Michelle Setzer,, Marguerite Caraway Ward

Healing the Grieving Heart... Featuring experts who discuss the many aspects of grief, with a main focus on the death of a child and its effects on the family. "Healing the Grieving Heart" can be heard on the Web live at www.health.voiceamerica.com.

Welcome New Members ... We welcome our new members to our chapter of TCF. We're sorry you have a need to be with us, but we hope you feel you have found a safe place to share your grief and will return. It often takes a few meetings to feel at ease in a group setting. Please try attending three meetings before deciding if TCF is for you. Each meeting is different, and the next one might be the one that really helps.

We encourage you to take advantage of our resources. We have a well stocked library of grief materials, a phone friend committee that welcomes calls at any time, and a members' directory to call another parent you have met at the meetings.

Thank You ... Thank you to all those who donate to our meeting basket or send donations to our chapter. Since there are no fees or dues to belong to TCF, your donations keep us functioning, and we appreciate your help.

Birthday Tributes... During your child's birthday month, you may place a picture and either a short personal message, poem, or story about your child in the newsletter. (Less than 200 words, please.) Do not cut your picture. We will block off unused areas. If it is a group photo, identify the person to be cropped. This tribute is an opportunity to tell a short story about your child, so we will be able to know them better. Photos must have identification on the back. Enclose a SASE in order for photos to be returned by mail. (Please do not send your only picture.)



Tributes must be in by the 1st of the month preceding your child's birthday month or at the prior meeting. (Example: Oct. 1st for Nov. birthdays). Otherwise they will appear if space permits or in the following month's issue.

Phone Friends ... Sometimes you want or need to talk about the life and death of your child with someone that understands and can share your pain. The following friends are on the telephone committee, and are available to talk when ever you need someone who understands.

Cheryl Stephens.....(323) 855-2630
 Kitty Edler.....(310) 541-8221
 Karen Merickel.....(310) 375-2498
 Richard Leach (grandchild).....(310) 833-5213
SIBLING PHONE FRIENDS
 Kristy Mueller..... (310) 373-9977
REGIONAL COORDINATOR
 Olivia Garcia.....(818) 736-7380



Memory Book... Our chapter has an ongoing Memory Book that is on display at each meeting. Each child is given a page in the book. Pictures, poems, or a tribute you choose that will help us to remember your child can be included. Feel free to add your picture to the Memory Book at any of our meetings. This is one way we can meet and remember the new member's children.

Library Information... At each meeting we have a library table. It is on the honor system. You may borrow a book and can bring it back at the next meeting. Many of you have books you got when you were newly bereaved and may no longer need. Perhaps you would like to donate books on grief that you found helpful. If you wish to donate a book to our library, please let Linda know so we can put your child's name on a donation label inside the book.

Newsletter... For those of you who are receiving the newsletter for the first time, it is because someone has told us that you might find it helpful. We warmly invite you to attend one of our meetings. Please let us know if you know of someone who could benefit from our newsletter which is sent free to bereaved parents. We do ask that professionals, friends, and family members contribute a donation to help offset the costs involved. If any information needs to be changed, or if you would like your child included in the "Our Children Remembered" section, please contact the editor at (310) 530-3214.



Additional Grief Support

Bereavement Organizations and Resources:

TCF National Newsletter: For all bereaved parents and siblings. Published quarterly; subscription fee. Contact TCF Inc., P.O. Box 3696, Oak Brook, IL 60522-3696 (630) 990-0010

FAMILY & FRIENDS OF MURDER VICTIMS:

Rose Madsen, (909) 798-4803 Newsletter and support group, e-mail Roseydoll@aol.com

ALIVE ALONE: For parents who have lost their only child, or all their children. 1112 Champaign Dr., Van Wert, OH 45891 Newsletter available. www.Alivealone.org

SURVIVORS AFTER SUICIDE: Support Group for families that have lost someone to suicide. Contact Sam & Lois Bloom (310) 377-8857

OUR HOUSE/BEREAVEMENT HOUSE: 1950 Sawtelle Blvd., Suite 255, L.A., CA (310) 475-0299

PATHWAYS HOSPICE: Bereavement support and sibling group. Bill Hoy (562) 531-3031

NEW HOPE GRIEF SUPPORT COMMUNITY:

Grief support and education groups for adults and children. Susan K. Beeney, P.O. Box 8057, Long Beach, CA 90808, (562) 429-0075

PROVIDENCE TRINITY CARE HOSPICE AND THE GATHERING PLACE:

Various bereavement support groups including support for loss of a child, support group for children 5-8, 9-12, and teens. Call Patty Ellis (310) 546-6407—new number

Torrance Memorial Bereavement Services: (310) 325-9110 Weekly grief support.

THE LAZARUS CIRCLE: Monthly grief support. Meets third Thurs of each month, 6-7:15 at First Lutheran Church, 2900 W. Carson St. Torrance

SHARE Pregnancy & Infant Loss: Contact:

Megan Heddlesten (800) 821-6819

Walk With Sally: Cancer loss bereavement & art therapy for children- Monica Fyfe (310) 378-5843

Other Grief Support Websites...

agast.org (for grandparents)	groww.com
goodgriefresources.com	childloss.com
beyondindogp.com	griefwatch.dom
angelmoms.com	babysteps.com
healingafterloss.org	webhealing.com
survivorsofsuicide.com	opentohope.com
taps.org (military death)	alivealone.org
bereavedparentsusa.org	save.org
pomc.com (families of murder victims)	
grasphelp.org (substance abuse deaths)	

LOCAL TCF CHAPTERS

Los Angeles: (310) 474-3407 1st Thurs.

Orange Coast/Irvine: (949) 552-2800 1st Wed.

Orange Co./Anaheim: (562) 943-2269

Pomona/San Gabriel: (626) 919-7206

Redlands: (800) 717-0373 3rd Tues.

Riverside-Inland Empire: (909) 683-4160

South Los Angeles: (323) 546-9755 last Tue

Ventura Co. TCF: (805)981-1573 1&3 Thurs.

Verdugo Hills: (818) 957-0254 4th Thurs.

San Fernando Valley: (818) 788-9701 2nd Mon.

A SPECIAL THANKS TO:

Staples for their help in printing our newsletters each month and to The Neighborhood Church for the use of their facilities for our meetings.

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Lori & Dudley Gray

Cheryl & Bill Matasso

Nancy & Elliott Fisher

Kitty Edler

Susan Kass

Linda Zelik

Cheryl Stephens

Lynn Vines

Ken Konopasek

Crystal Henning



DONATIONS TO THE SOUTH BAY/L.A. CHAPTER OF THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS

Thank you Jacqueline Nason, for the book donations to our chapter library.

In loving memory of our beloved son and brother, Marcelo Torres who passed away on September 5, 2003, at age 22. We would like to share a link to a short film, done by his brother, Jamie Torres Jr., with all the Compassionate Friends newsletter readers. It is about a mother who mourns the loss of her son in a car accident. Go online to <http://angustia-shortfilm.com/#!/angustia/>

With all our love, The Torres Family

With sincere gratitude and deep appreciation, we acknowledge the generosity of the previous individuals and companies. Your tax deductible donation, given, in memory of your loved one enables us to reach bereaved parents with telephone calls and information, and they also help defray newsletter and mailing costs. Please help us reach out to others in this difficult time. Indicate any special tribute you wish printed in our newsletter.

When making a donation, please make checks payable to: The Compassionate Friends South Bay/L.A. Chpt.

Mail to: The Compassionate Friends So Bay/ L.A. Chapter

P.O. Box 11171
Torrance, CA 90510-1171

In loving memory of _____

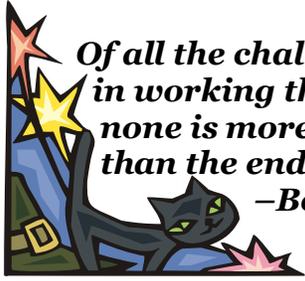
Birth date _____ Death date _____ Sent From _____

Tribute _____

To include your donation in the next newsletter, we must receive it by the first of the month
or it will appear in the following issue.

The Compassionate Friends
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*Of all the challenges you face
in working through grief,
none is more demanding
than the endurance it requires.*
—Bob Deits

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THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS CREDO

We need not walk alone. We are The Compassionate Friends.
We reach out to each other with love, with understanding, and with hope.

The children we mourn have died at all ages and from many different causes,
but our love for them unites us. Your pain becomes my pain,
just as your hope becomes my hope.

We come together from all walks of life, from many different circumstances.
We are a unique family because we represent many races, creeds, and relationships.

We are young, and we are old.

Some of us are far along in our grief, but others still feel a grief so fresh
and so intensely painful that they feel helpless and see no hope.

Some of us have found our faith to be a source of strength,
while some of us are struggling to find answers.

Some of us are angry, filled with guilt or in deep depression,
while others radiate an inner peace.

But whatever pain we bring to this gathering of The Compassionate Friends,
it is pain we will share, just as we share with each other
our love for the children who have died.

We are all seeking and struggling to build a future for ourselves,
but we are committed to building a future together. We reach out to each other in love
to share the pain as well as the joy,
share the anger as well as the peace, share the faith as well as the doubts,
and help each other to grieve as well as to grow.

WE NEED NOT WALK ALONE. WE ARE THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS.
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