



THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS

NORTHEAST LOUISIANA CHAPTER

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APRIL / MAY / JUNE 2010

PRAYER FOR SPRING

Like Springtime, let me unfold
And grow fresh and new
From this cocoon of grief
That has been spun around me.
Help me face the harsh reality of
Sunshine and renewed life
As my bones still creak from
the winter of my grief.

Life has dared to go on around me.
As I recover from the insult
Of Life's continuance,
I readjust my focus to
Include recovery and growth
As a possibility in my future.

Give me strength to break out of
The cocoon of my grief.
But may I never forget it as
The place where I grew my wings,
Becoming a new person
Because of my loss.

Janice Heil
TCF Vancouver



EARTH ANGEL

Tears In my eyes
My nightmare begins.
My angel is in heaven,
Earth Angel walks in.

I look in her eyes
She grabs my hand.
I start to scream why,
She understands.

My angel in heaven,
No hope in my sight.
Earth Angel worked hard
To get me through that night.

She didn't have wings
Or fly in heaven above.
A person here on earth
So full of compassion and love.

As my angel flew to heaven, I wondered
How I ever would have survived
Without my Earth Angel
right by my side.

Anne Musial

There is no answer
To the questions—Why?
Did our precious children
Have to die?
.. So ..
Let the joyful memories
Of your girl or boy
Permeate your aching heart
With joy
.. And ..
If these memories make you cry
Remember—with love
Our butterfly

Ruth George
TCF Kingston Ontario

Monthly Meetings

Thursday, April 1

Thursday, May 6

Thursday, June 3

6:30 PM
St. Paul's United Methodist Church
1901 Lexington Ave.
Enter through the back parking lot off Milton St.

For Siblings

An outlet for siblings is the TCF Sibling Forum. It is available online and is a place where siblings from all over can share and help each other cope with the unique grief of losing a brother or sister. Siblings are able to ask questions, make a comment or leave a thought for others to respond.

Visit the Sibling Resources Page at www.compassionatefriends.org
Email tcfsiblingrep@compassionatefriends.org for the password

HE DID NOT WANT TO GO

He did not want to go tonight,
his eyes turned red in the bright light.

The pressure was on him now;
he must succeed somehow, somehow.

But why? He's just a little boy.

They want him to come to them.
But he doesn't know if he should give in.

Fighting his nerves, he won the prize,
of going to heaven for future tries.

Although, he felt quite brave and strong.
His family was not there to see him slip away.

He did not want to go.

But GOD said NO, tonight is your night, come
with me and everything will be all right.

Rebecka Solar
Lawrenceville, GA

SPECIAL TRIBUTE TO A BROTHER.... INNOCENT AND BOUND TO DIE

No tears left for me to cry.
Decaying thoughts of his love inside,
and whispers of our last good-byes.



Can't run, nor hide, because
there is no escape.
There's nothing left to me.
Of love and beauty, have been
raped.
No longer are we free.

Into the eyes of pain I stare.
What mirrors back to me?
Stares from people who recollect,
LIFE how it use to be.

If only I could understand,
LIFE'S long lesson of pain.
But yet I know there's know one there to blame.

Rebecka Solar
Lawrenceville, GA

BECAUSE

Because you can't feel me,
Doesn't mean I don't speak.
Because you can't see me,
Doesn't mean I'm not there.

Because I am dead,
Doesn't mean I'm gone.

Beth Oldani
TCF Arlington Heights, IL

"Heart hath its own memory, like the mind. And in it
are enshrined the precious keepsakes, into which
is wrought the giver's loving thought."

—H.W. Longfellow

BENCHMARKS

Good bye would be too difficult,
Although I know you are gone.
Instead, I keep you in my heart
And your memory lives on.
I have redefined my purpose, son,
Since you are no longer here.
With your death I faced a choice
To die, exist or to live free.
My life has changed forever, child,
I'm redefined each week,
You would call these "benchmarks"
Of goals set and then achieved.
And so I set my benchmarks,
Achieving many, reshaping some..
But everything is different now
Except your mother's love.

Annette Mennen Baldwin
In memory of my son, Todd Mennen
TCF Katy, TX

FINDING HOPE

Some find hope in butterflies,
and some in children's smiles.
Some find hope in photographs,
and some in walking miles.

Some find hope in quietness
and solitary reflection.
Some find hope in helping others
and sharing friendly affection.

Some find hope in holding tight
to all the old traditions.
Some find hope in the creation
of a special new variation.

Some find hope in family gathered,
some in cherished friends.
Some find hope in seeking God,
feeling peace in worship again.

Beyond the sad and beyond the past,
beyond the ache that lasts and lasts,
there is a path that winds its way
into your future and a hopeful day.

Karen Pope

REMEMBER

When you remember me, it means that you have
carried something of who I am with you; that I have
left some mark of who I am on who you are.

It means that you can summon me back to your mind
even though countless years and miles may
stand between us.

It means that if we meet again, you will know
me.

It means that even after I die, you can still see
my face and hear my voice and speak to me in your
heart.

Frederick Buechner,
Whistling in the Dark



WHEN FATHERS WEEP AT GRAVES

I see them weep
the fathers at the stones
taking off the brave armor
forced to wear in the work place
clearing away the debris with gentle fingers
inhaling the sorrow
diminished by anguish
their hearts desiring
what they cannot have--
to walk hand in hand
with children no longer held--
to all the fathers who leave a part
of their hearts at the stones
may breezes underneath trees of time ease their pain
as they receive healing tears
...the gift the children give.

Alice J. Wisler

Chapter co-leaders

Marilyn & French Smith

Steering Committee

Henry Cole, Facilitator

Beverly & Charles Wall, Treasurer

Dianne & Frank Bruscatto, Library

Ann Cole & Marilyn Smith, Hospitality

Frances & Jim Gregory, Outreach

Julie & Danny Petty, Newsletter

Betty Jean & Johnny James, Memorial Park

Sandy Chester, TCF Regional Coordinator

REFLECTIONS OF A MOTHER'S DAY DENIED

On this, my first Mother's Day, I asked myself, Do I have the right to celebrate Mother's Day? Have I truly been a mother this past year? The answer is yes.

Each day I have cared for my child as every mother does, except differently. In every way possible I have mothered him.

I have mothered him with every tear shed; through the agony of longing to hold him. I have rocked him in my heart if not in my arms. I have kissed his little cheeks in my mind if not with my lips. Smelled his sweetness with my hopes if not my nose. Felt his skin with my memory, if not my hands. Tickled him with my wishes, if not with my fingers.

Am I a mother? I truly am. My physical mothering has been limited to lovingly tending his grave. But I am a mother all the same.

Michelle Parrish
TCF Baltimore, MD



AFTER SOME TIME - IT IS STILL OKAY TO CRY?

It seems to be acceptable to go for counseling or therapy during the early months of grief. But what happens after a certain amount of time has passed and you feel yourself being —ambushed by the first raw feelings of grief? Most people think you should just —buck up and look around you and count the blessings you have left.

These are worthy and meritorious attitudes, but sometimes they are simply unattainable, at least for a little while. We have lost much when we lost our child. Sometimes we have to remind ourselves that it is okay to relapse, that there is nothing wrong with us when we feel alone and sad, that there is no shame in backtracking to the dark recesses of grief, for it is in those times when we give way to the hurt and pain that we acknowledge how much our child continues to matter to us.

We sometimes have to allow ourselves —space to be sad and permission to cry over the simple sadness of no longer having our child with us. They mattered to us. They still do. We continue to remember them, to love them, and to miss them. —IT IS STILL OKAY TO CRY.

May each of you weep tears of release for the child that you so deeply continue to love and miss.
With the deepest respect and compassion for my fellow grievers,

Faye McCord
TCF Jackson , MS



Everyone is encouraged to contribute to the newsletter to keep our chapter going strong. Please contact Julie Petty with your ideas.



Also, remember you can bring your child's favorite snack for refreshments to our monthly meeting or do a flower arrangement for the table. Please contact Marilyn Smith one month prior to the meeting.

Our Children Always Loved and Remembered



A special table is set up at our meetings to honor children whose special days are in that month. We invite you to bring a picture or memento of your child to share during that significant month.

OUR CHILDREN'S APRIL BIRTHDAYS

<u>Child</u>		<u>Parent(s)</u>
Jason Garrett	04/02/67	Sandra Garrett
Lee Deal	04/13/83	Melanie Deal
Rod Taliaferro	04/17/64	Shirley Taliaferro
Ashley Loflin	04/22/74	Katie Loflin
Eddie Hoy, Jr.	04/24/67	Martha Fontenot

OUR CHILDREN'S APRIL ANNIVERSARIES

<u>Child</u>		<u>Parent(s)</u>
Lauren Hemphill	04/04/06	Kitty McDougal & Tommy Hemphill
Krista Corrent	04/08/00	Anna Ruth Hill
Pamela Ford	04/10/04	Leona Upton
Martha Mickel	04/13/84	Ruth Mickel
Michael Johns	04/19/06	Nell Book
Robin Gates	04/24/06	Nora & Darwin Gates

OUR CHILDREN'S MAY BIRTHDAYS

<u>Child</u>		<u>Parent(s)</u>
Bo Best	05/02/84	Charlene Best & Charles West
Justin Petty	05/07/82	Julie & Danny Petty
Melissa Blankenship	05/08/65	Peaches Cathey
Kelly Boles	05/08/85	Paula Gilliam
Jason Hutts	05/12/81	Carol & Greg Hutts
Derrick Sadberry	05/15/65	Belinda Sadberry
Kelly O'Neal	05/28/70	Nancy Oliver
Brian Gregory	05/28/73	Frances & Jim Gregory
Makayla Street	05/30/06	Christopher Street

OUR CHILDREN'S MAY ANNIVERSARIES

<u>Child</u>		<u>Parent(s)</u>
Clifton Scarborough	05/04/99	Tina Scarborough
Patrick Loflin	05/10/05	Katie Loflin
Ashley Loflin	05/10/05	Katie Loflin
Lee Deal	05/16/06	Melanie Deal
Carrie Peters	05/17/05	Florence Peters
Dwain Whitehead	05/22/07	Mary & Ralph Whitehead
Justin Petty	05/26/01	Julie & Danny Petty

OUR CHILDREN'S JUNE BIRTHDAYS

<u>Child</u>		<u>Parent(s)</u>
Travis Lowery	06/07/78	Joyce & Dale Lowery
Sean Hanemann	06/09/67	Susan Tingle
Caroline Cole	06/11/70	Ann & Henry Cole
Andrew Rinicker	06/16/72	Dale Rinicker
Alice Rains	06/18/70	Marie Rains
Jackson Kennedy	06/18/00	JonAnn Layton & Jeff Kennedy
Mike Hayes	06/20/63	Margaret & George Hayes
Kelly Chapman	06/23/78	Judy & Bennie Chapman
Carrie Peters	06/24/64	Florence Peters

OUR CHILDREN'S JUNE ANNIVERSARIES

<u>Child</u>		<u>Parent(s)</u>
Melissa Blankenship	06/14/04	Peaches Cathey
Kody Spann	06/14/07	Cindy & Larry Spann
Wesley Canterbury	06/15/07	Dewanna Canterbury
Michael Prichard	06/23/07	Jo Lynn & Paul Prichard

TO OUR LONG TIME MEMBERS:

We need your encouragement and support. You are the string that ties our group together and the glue that makes it stick. Each meeting when new parents arrive with a fresh hurt and frightened eyes, I remember how we felt at our first meeting. Think back ... what would it have been like for you if there had not been any "oldies" to welcome you, share your grief, and encourage you? It was from them you heard, "your pain will not always be this bad; it really does get softer." They were the ones who wanted to really listen when you talked about your child. Can you be an "oldie" for someone else? By helping someone else, you help yourself and share your child with someone who never got to know them. Come out and share with newly bereaved parents to help them heal. Our own healing happens when we are reaching out to others.

**WE NEED NOT WALK ALONE;
WE ARE THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS**

OUR CREDO

We need not walk alone.
We are The Compassionate Friends.
We reach out to each other with love, with understanding and with hope.
Our children have died at all ages and from many different causes,
but our love for our children 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 and creeds.
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 we feel helpless and see no hope.
Some of us have found our faith to be a source of strength;
some of us are struggling to find answers.
Some of us are angry, filled with guilt or in deep depression;
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 our children.
We are all seeking and struggling to build a future for ourselves,
but we are committed to building a future together
as we reach out to each other in love
and 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.

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WE ARE THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS

www.tcfnortheastla.org

THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS
Northeast Louisiana Chapter
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Return Service Requested