



The Compassionate Friends of Northeast Louisiana Supporting Family After a Child Dies

Apr / May / Jun 2017

MOTHER'S DAY FOR BEREAVED MOMS

A day of joy and celebration
for all mothers on this earth
who love their children unconditionally
from adoption or from birth

This love lasts a lifetime
but if your child should die
the day is marked with sadness
stained with tears that you will cry

God bless you special mothers
whose children have donned wings
our thoughts are with you this bittersweet day
and the melancholy that it brings

No matter how many years will pass
your heart will hurt this day
like a glowing ember flaring up
the pain returns your way.

There is nothing that can be said
nothing anyone can do
no one can heal the pain
so deep inside of you.

It is your pain
the greatest burden a mother can bear
imbedded within all the joys of Motherhood
there will always be some despair.

Find solace the best you can in knowing a
mother's love transcends all time and space
and no matter where your child is
they will feel your heart's embrace.

Mitch Carmody
TCF Minnesota
author of "Letters to My Son"



I AM SPRING

I am the beginning.
I am budding promise.
I spill cleansing tears of life
from cloudy vessels
creating muddy puddles
where single cell creatures abide
and splashing children play.

I am new green growth.
I softly flow from winter's barren hand.
On gentle breeze I fly – embracing sorrow.
With compassion, we feather nests
where winged voices sing winter-spring duets.
As frozen ice transforms to playful stream
I whisper truth ~ life is change.

I am spring.
I bless long, dark wintry days.
I crown mankind's pain
with starry skies
in deepest night
lighting solitary paths from sorrow to joy
as the wheel of life turns 'round and 'round.

Carol Clum
TCF National

Monthly Meetings

Thursday, April 6

Thursday, May 4

Thursday, June 1

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 tcsiblingrep@compassionatefriends.org for the password

REFLECTIONS

With the death of my sister came some painful realizations: that life isn't always fair or predictable; that sometimes even my best still isn't good enough; and that from the day of her death, the happy events in my life would always be tinged with sadness.

Despite the pain and loss, death has also left me with some valuable lessons and precious gifts. As a result of my sister's death, I have a greater appreciation of life and a greater compassion for those who hurt. I have learned to be a survivor and to have a successful career and productive life in the face of tremendous grief and loss. I have been gifted with good friends and special people to help me through the rough times. But most of all, I have been given the gift of time ~ time to heal and time to replace those painful memories of death with priceless memories of my sister's life.

Cathy Schanberger
from *This Healing Journey*
~ An Anthology for Bereaved Siblings
The Compassionate Friends

MY SISTER, MY FRIEND

Within our hearts
You will always be.
Our minds will be filled
With sweet memories.

Your spirit and love
Will never be gone,
For each life you touched
Will carry them on.

Catherine Hall
TCF Hinsdale, IL

GET WELL SOON POEM



I know our loss is very great
But I'm sure many people can relate
I know it's hard to say good-bye
don't hold back your tears! It's ok to cry
Just hold my hand and we will stand
up high

We will gather strength from one
another
hugging and holding each other
we will find each other and
together we will be once again, a family

Alyssa Flora
In Loving Memory of my brother, Bryson
TCF National

A TRIBUTE

I think of you in silence,
But my feelings seldom show,
But how it hurts to lose you
Know one will ever know.

I hope there is eternal life,
so we can meet again.
I not only lost my brother,
I lost my very best friend.

The reason you left so early
I'll never understand why.
I just wish I'd known you were never coming back,
Cause I would have said good-bye.

Marta King
TCF Concorde, NH

FIX IT?

Parents are taught to fix things.
Parents fix toys, bikes, cuts, and bruises.
Some times with success, some times
not.
So many things parents are able to
fix.
So many things I would like to fix.
Fix you, so you didn't pass away.
Fix other children, so they could live
long long lives.
Fix the holes in parent's hearts and lives
after their
child passes away.
But this type of grief is not fixable.
Parents will stay broken ... broken forever.
Their lives, like mine, filled with grief, and loss.
Emptiness where happiness once was.
Missing loves ones, forever.
So many all broken.
Too many.
All wishing they could have fixed their loved one.
All wishing not to have this pain.
All missing and loving their child forever.
Their child forever in their heart,
Like my son ... Forever in my heart.
I miss you, and will always love you, David.

Dad

George Carafos
TCF Rochester, NY



But the heart knows what
The mind cannot accept
That when all is lost,
It is love that is left.

Love knows no barriers
Time or distance recognize.
Love does not diminish,
But is constant in our lives.
And like a summer breeze
Uplifts and inspires us
With healing memories.

Peggy Walls
TCF Alexander City, AL
In Memory of my son, Eddie

BECAUSE

Because you can't feel me,
Doesn't mean I'm not there.
Because you can't see me,
doesn't mean I'm not near.
Because you can't hear me,
doesn't mean I don't speak.
Because you can't see me,
doesn't mean I'm out of reach.
Because I am dead,
doesn't mean I'm gone.

Beth Oldani
TCF Arlington Heights, IL

SEASONS OF THE HEART

Your special days are unchanging
Seasons of the heart I celebrate.
Your birth, forever spring,
Tender memories relate,
New and green, a dream
From which too soon I awake.

The summer of your life was bright
Laughter needed no reason,
Seemingly endless days of sharing.
Sixteen summers. Short in season.

Your death brought winter without warning,
What sense in all this can be found?
Summer dreams replaced with mourning.
Where is hope now?

Chapter co-leaders

Marilyn & French Smith
Luann & James Butler

Steering Committee

Henry Cole, Facilitator
Johnny James, Treasurer
Dianne & Frank Bruscatto, Library
Maggy & John Dobbs, Outreach
Ann Cole, Outreach
Julie & Danny Petty, Newsletter

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, Canada



A FATHER'S PRAYER

I am a man, God, and I have been taught that I should be strong and show no weakness. My wife needs me to be strong; I cannot and I must not be weak and lean on her.

It is only with you that I can be honest, Lord, and even with you I am ashamed to admit it, but I want to cry. I can feel the tears securely dammed up behind eyes that want to burst. There is a voice in me that shouts, BE STRONG! BE A MAN! SHOW NO WEAKNESS! SHED NO TEARS! But there is another voice inside that speaks softly and somehow I feel it is your voice, Father.

Is it you who tells me that I am also a feeling human being who can cry if I need to? Is it your voice that tells me that maybe my wife needs the tenderness of my tears more than she needs the strength of my muscles?

You are right, Lord, as always. My wife needs to see my grief, she needs to feel the dampness of my tears and know the aching in my heart. Then, just as we became one to create this life, we become one in our grief which mourns this death. I think I understand now, Lord, it is in sharing the awful pain of my grief that I become an even stronger man. It is in sharing my tears that I share my true strength.

O God, help me communicate my deepest and most sensitive feeling to my wife so we may become whole together.

Norman Hagley
TCF Omaha, NE



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>	
Jason Garrett	04/02/67
Chris Pauley	04/02/77
Chris Culpepper	04/04/69
Shannon Scharf	04/06/62
Robby Jenkins	04/10/88
Thomas Stephens	04/12/95
Chris Travis	04/13/72
Rod Taliaferro	04/17/64
Wendi Janway-Jones	04/23/78
Ashley Loflin	04/23/73
Ethan Massey	04/25/01

<u>Parent(s)</u>
Sandra Garrett
Sharon & Gary Pauley
Noel Culpepper
Robert S. Green
Beverly Jenkins
Susan & Gray Stephens
Gloria & Kenneth Travis
Shirley Taliaferro
Rosalyn & Tom Janway
Katye Loflin
Michelle Massey

OUR CHILDREN'S APRIL ANNIVERSARIES

<u>Child</u>	
Chris Pauley	04/05/95
Michael Stephens	04/05/68
Krista Corrent	04/08/00
Pamela Ford	04/10/04
Martha Mickel	04/13/84
Pamela Wimbish	04/14/16
Danny Morgan	04/18/16
Michael Johns	04/19/06
Courtney Cole	04/22/12
Mickey Loflin	04/23/73
Anne Barham	04/25/91

<u>Parent(s)</u>
Sharon & Gary Pauley
Maggie & John Stephens
Anna Ruth Hill
Leona Upton
Ruth Mickel
Pam Wimbish
Jeanie Morgan
Nell Book
Ann & Henry Cole
Katye Loflin
Pat Barham

OUR CHILDREN'S MAY BIRTHDAYS

<u>Child</u>	
Bo Best	05/02/84
Tonya Bell	05/05/69
Justin Petty	05/07/82
Melissa Blankenship	05/08/65
Jason Hutts	05/12/81
Mickey Chambers	05/13/62
McKenzie Hudson	05/13/88
Will Lensing	05/13/83
Bobby Starnes, Jr.	05/13/86
Derrick Sadberry	05/15/65
Hunter Carr	05/21/91
Jill Whitaker	05/21/82
Timothy Smith	05/26/61
Brian Gregory	05/28/73
Kelly O'Neal	05/28/70
Scott Thompson	05/29/78

<u>Parent(s)</u>
Charlene Best & Charles West
Ann Smith
Julie & Danny Petty
Peaches Cathey
Carol & Greg Hutts
Merrell & Mike Chambers
Dayna Hudson
Cindy & Bill Lensing
Edwina Starnes
Belinda Sadberry
Juanita Carr
Cynthia Machen
Mary & Buddy Smith
Frances & Jim Gregory
Nancy Oliver
Tammy Thompson

OUR CHILDREN'S MAY ANNIVERSARIES

<u>Child</u>	
Mickey Loflin	05/10/05
Ashley Loflin	05/10/06
Will Lensing	05/11/11
Shontavious Foster	05/12/13
Ethan Massey-Rydi	05/13/10
Lisa Giovingo	05/15/15
Leigh Ann White	05/15/05
Barry Kirby	05/18/13
Lance Thomas	05/18/08
Bobby Starnes, Jr.	05/18/12
John Dobbs	05/21/08
David Webb	05/22/05
Justin Petty	05/26/01

<u>Parent(s)</u>
Katye Loflin
Katye Loflin
Cindy & Bill Lensing
Sarah Foster
Michelle Massey
Frances Giovingo
Janet & Ken White
Lisa Kirby
Connie & Danny Thomas
Edwina Starnes
Maggy & John Dobbs
Paula Webb
Julie & Danny Petty

OUR CHILDREN'S JUNE BIRTHDAYS

<u>Child</u>	
Justice Farrar	06/05/98
Lauren Lang	06/08/93
Caroline Cole	06/11/70
Jenna Johnson	06/12/88
Katie Joyce	06/25/08
Blade Gilbreath	06/13/05
Debbie Pope	06/14/52
Andrew Rinicker	06/16/72
Jackson Kennedy	06/18/00
Mike Hayes	06/20/63
Kelly Chapman	06/23/78
Walker Dayton	06/23/81
CW2 Bryan Henderson	06/29/85

<u>Parent(s)</u>
Martha Anderson
Lisa Lang
Ann & Henry Cole
Sandy Johnson
Kathryn & Jeff Joyce
Dawn & Brandon Gilbreath
Jean Hamilton
Dale Rinicker
Jonann Layton
Margaret & George Hayes
Judy & Bennie Chapman
Vickie & Ed Dayton
Kim Bryan Henderson

OUR CHILDREN'S JUNE ANNIVERSARIES

<u>Child</u>	
Melissa Blankenship	06/13/04
Kody Spann	06/14/07
Wesley Canterberry	06/15/07
Terry Watson	06/21/13

<u>Parent(s)</u>
Peaches Cathey
Cindy Spann
Dewanna Canterberry
Henrietta/Paul Watson

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.

WE NEED NOT WALK ALONE
WE ARE THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS

www.tcfnortheastla.org

THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS
Northeast Louisiana Chapter
P.O. Box 6114
Monroe, Louisiana 71211

Return Service Requested