

April 2006



# The Compassionate Friends



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## Beatitudes for Those Who Comfort

May 1989

Blessed are those who do not use tears to measure the true feelings of the bereaved.

- Blessed are those who stifle the urge to say, "I understand," when they don't.
- Blessed are those who do not always have a quick "comforting" answer.
- Blessed are those who do not make judgments on the bereaved's closeness to God by their reaction to the loss of their loved one.
- Blessed are those who hear with their hearts and not with their minds.
- Blessed are those who allow the bereaved enough time to heal.
- Blessed are those who admit their uncomfortableness and put it aside to help the bereaved.
- Blessed are those who do not give unwanted advice.
- Blessed are those who continue to call, visit, and reach out when the crowd has dwindled and the wounded are left standing alone.
- Blessed are those who know the worth of each person as a unique individual & do not pretend that they can be replaced or forgotten.
- Blessed are those who realize the fragility of bereavement and handle it with an understanding shoulder and a loving heart.



This style corsage indicates you're a bereaved mother. For more information on the history of Mother's Day go to:

<http://www.lauriekris.com/mothersday.html>

### Our Mission

The mission of The Compassionate Friends is to assist families toward the positive resolution of grief following the death of a child of any age, and to provide information to help others to be supportive.

The Compassionate Friends is a national nonprofit, self-help support organization that offers friendship, understanding, and hope to bereaved parents, grandparents, and siblings. There is no religious affiliation and there are no membership dues or fees.

The secret of TCF's success is simple: As seasoned grievers reach out to the newly bereaved, energy that has been directed inward begins to flow outward and both are helped to heal.



## Our Children, Loved and Remembered



### *Birthdates*

### *Anniversary Dates*

**Nicole Chapman**                      **5/2/1980**  
**Daughter of Ron & Jan Chapman**

**Christian John DeMarco**            **5/5/1972**  
**Son of Gus DeMarco**

**David Anthony Anderson**           **5/8/1984**  
**Son of David Anderson**

**Connie Ann Hablutzel**                **5/9/1957**  
**Daughter of Mary Alice Mainini**

**Jacqueline White Knight**           **5/18/1950**  
**Daughter of Mildred White**

**Aaron Grof**                                **5/20/1977**  
**Son of Marie Grof**

**Tanya Ranee Mitchell**                **5/22/1977**  
**Daughter of Teresa & Dennis Mitchell**

**David Paul Plamondon**                **5/16/2003**  
**Son of Janet Plamondon**

**Jesus Salinas**                            **5/11/2001**  
**Son of Sergio G. & Patricia Salinas**

**Kenneth Priem**                         **5/28/1999**  
**Son of Merle Holoubek**

### *Why Butterflies?*

Since early times, the butterfly has symbolized renewed life. The caterpillar signifies life here on earth; the cocoon, death; and the butterfly, the emergence of the dead into a new, beautiful and freer existence. Frequently, the butterfly is seen with the word "Nika" which means victory. Elisabeth Kubler-Ross movingly tells of seeing butterflies drawn all over the walls of the children's dormitories in the World War II concentration camps. Since Elisabeth believes in the innate intuitiveness of children, she concludes that these children knew their fate and were leaving us a message. Many members of The Compassionate Friends embrace the butterfly, a symbol—a sign of hope to them, that their children are living in another dimension with greater beauty and freedom—a comforting thought to many.

\*\*If we have inadvertently missed your child's Birthday or Anniversary Date or made any other errors, please accept our deepest apologies. Do call us at 287-5968 or email [anne.rinaldi@comcast.net](mailto:anne.rinaldi@comcast.net) to make an immediate correction.

**Dear Friends, To receive this newsletter by email, which will help us save on the cost of printing and postage, please send an email to me at: [anne.rinaldi@comcast.net](mailto:anne.rinaldi@comcast.net). On the subject line insert "TCF Email Newsletter" and your name and you're done.**

**For those of you who would like to share your ideas, growth, insight, stories or poems, please email your material for the newsletter. Or if you prefer, mail it to my address: 168 Lake Point Lane, Naples, FL 34112.**

**Sincerely, Anne Rinaldi-Nonamaker**

## Thank you for your Gifts of Love

All donations are gratefully accepted and assist the chapter in its mission to help bereaved families following the loss of a child.

### *Loving Listeners:*

For those times when you need to speak to someone who will listen with understanding and who can offer hope and support from their own process of healing in grief please call us:

Annette Carruli 250-4071  
Teresa Walker 353-3215  
Anne Kithcart 775-5640

## A Grieving Father Looks At Mother's Day

*Will the circle be unbroken by and by, Lord, by and by? Maybelle Carter*

On Sunday, May 13, 2001, religious and secular institutions across our western hemisphere will celebrate Mother's Day. Corporate America will eagerly open its arms, that is its doors, to embrace Mom with sales. Florists will be working over time to insure that floral bouquets arrive on time. Restaurants will be offering special Mother's Day meals so families can honor mom by eating out. In synagogues, temples, and places of worship, mothers will be honored in a variety of ways. There will be silent, invisible mothers on that day. They will go unrecognized for the most part. They will be generally unnoticed. They will even be ignored. They are the grieving mothers. For them, the day is not a celebration, but endurance. Mother's Day changes completely for them after the death of a child. The pain is a pain only another grieving mother can relate too. All of the imagery that is conjured up doesn't necessarily help either. The pages of the hymnbook flutter with the images of a mother and her children. Read the titles of the songs as you flip the pages: "My Mother's Old Bible Is True," "Will The Circle Be Unbroken?," "Mother's Prayers Have Followed Me," and, "Are All The Children In?" Religious guidebooks and holy texts are filled with thousands of references and pictures of mothers nurturing their children. This motherly love is central to all the religions of the world. The implied message is that a mother's love for her children is a bond quite unlike any other. So the death of a child, to them, must feel quite unlike any other loss. These wonderful words and images which are meant to comfort, end up tormenting them. I write this column as a grieving father. I share my insights from my personal experiences and my readings on child-loss. But a lot of my education has come from the truest source off all, my forever-best friend, Debby. She has taught me that a mother's pain is so inexplicable, except to other grieving mothers, because when their child dies, a unique bond is broken. I cannot understand this bond, because like all Dads I am an outside observer so many times in the birthing process. But I do know that this bond exists. My many hours of watching The Discovery Channel and Animal Planet with my son, Carl, taught me one lesson, nature's lesson. Never mess with mothers. There's a reason why mother bears have notorious reputations. They fiercely protect their young. There is a deep, mysterious, and unique relationship that a mother has with her child. Pregnancy is the start of a bond, which men cannot fully understand. The intricacies of feeding, nurturing, and protecting that new life, is beyond the scope of male experience. It just boggles my mind that my wife did all those jobs 24 hours a day, and still worked a regular job too. Fathers are sort of detached observers in the birth process. Mothers are participants in the clearest meaning of the word. Their bodies work all day and night. They feel the movements of the new life within them; endure the hardships and sicknesses. Go through intense ups and downs. Live with the sheer terror of the unknown. Mix all these ingredients together and the result becomes a spiritual umbilical cord of great durability between a mother and the new life within her. Nothing can sever that cord. It survives all the troubles and turmoil in life that children can bring. Nothing can break through that cord. Nothing, that is, except a child's untimely death. Now, I am trying to understand all of this in my finite, male mind, and frankly, I can't. I can't begin to understand a mother's keen sense of suffering when a child dies. I am left only to my inadequate imagination of her emptiness within. I caught glimpses of this suffering watching Debby sob and repeatedly cry out, "I can't protect him anymore! I can't comfort him anymore. I can't treat his hurts anymore!" Truly, a big part of a mother dies when her child dies. I share these thoughts with grieving family members and friends so there can be some sort of understanding. Mother's Day will never be the same. If it is a first time after the passing of young one, anxiety and grief will be severe, frequent, and intense. Expect those feelings, but they will also pass. Here are some suggestions, which come from grief counselors and experienced grieving parents. Keep the level of anxiety and anticipation low. Let the grieving mother set the tone for the day. Let it be her day to observe in her fashion. Have a plan for the day. It can be the simplest of plans, and it should be. Elaborate plans can cause more grief, not less. Communicate the family plans with all family members and friends. Be assertive. Stick to those plans. If a quiet day is needed, do it. If many friends and family are the answer, do it. Words can hurt or heal. So choose the words of encouragement wisely. Resolve to be a good listener that day. Remember that the best gift to give to a grieving mother can't be bought. It is priceless. It can't be wrapped. It is too immense. That gift is you. Now, I close with something for all you precious, compassionate mothers. Please be good to yourselves, you have surely earned it. Aaron.

*The Compassionate Friends*

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The Compassionate Friends Newsletter  
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Regional coordinator: Sally Migliaccio (561)747-2691



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TCF meets **EVERY** first Monday of the month, unless otherwise noted

***Next Meeting: Monday, May 1, 2006***

**MEETINGS BEGIN AT 7:00 P.M.**

**MOORINGS PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
791 HARBOUR DR., NAPLES**

GOING NORTH ON U.S.41, HARBOUR DR. IS A LEFT TURN  
ABOUT A MILE NORTH OF COASTLAND MALL AND GOLDEN GATE PARKWAY.

Please don't hesitate to call me at 239-287-5968 if you need information of any kind or email: [anne.rinaldi@comcast.net](mailto:anne.rinaldi@comcast.net)

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