



# THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS

A self-help organization offering friendship and understanding to bereaved families

## NOVEMBER 2018

### Inside Valley Forge

Meetings are on the first Thursday of every month at 7:45PM (ending at 9:30PM). We meet at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church Founders Hall, Valley Forge and Henderson RDs, King of Prussia, PA. For information please call Rhonda at 484-919-0820.

#### Meeting Schedule and other TCF Events of interest

- Nov 1 General Sharing
- Dec 6 General Sharing
- Dec 9 Candle Lighting Service (see page 3)

We encourage newsletter writings from our members. You may also submit articles written by others, please include the author of all articles submitted. **The cut-off date for newsletter entries is the 15th of the preceding month.**

**ARTICLES SHOULD BE SENT TO THE NEWSLETTER EDITORS.**

There are no dues or fees to belong to The Compassionate Friends, or to receive our newsletter. Your tax deductible donations (which we call love gifts) given in memory of your loved one enables us to defray the cost of chapter expenses, particularly the newsletter, meetings, and our outreach to the newly bereaved.

**Please include any special tribute you wish printed in the newsletter along with your gift.**

If you donate to **United Way** at your place of work, and wish your contribution to go to the Valley Forge Chapter of The Compassionate Friends, you may do so by entering: **The Compassionate Friends - Valley Forge Chapter United Way ID# 04-104.** on your pledge form.

**PLEASE MAKE ALL CHECKS PAYABLE TO:  
TCF VALLEY FORGE CHAPTER  
SEND TO: CHAPTER LEADER  
RHONDA GOMEZ**

#### Chapter Leaders

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#### Love Gift Acknowledgements

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#### TCF 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.

**INSIDE VALLEY FORGE CHAPTER**

**REFRESHMENTS**

**Refreshments** may be donated in memory of loved ones, please call **Rhonda (484-919-0820)**, or you may sign the refreshment chart located on the refreshment table.

**Nina Bernstein** in memory of my son, *Andrew Voluck* on his birthday

**Dale Pearlstein** in memory of my son, *Jeffrey* on his birthday

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**LOVE GIFTS**

**Marcia Epstein** in loving memory of my grandson, *Andrew Voluck* on his birthday.

**Joanne & Thomas Lennen, Jr.** in loving memory of our son, *Scott Lennen* on his 55th birthday.

Always in our thoughts and forever in our hearts. Miss and love you always. Mom & Dad

**Mary & Donald Rose** in loving memory of our daughter, *Margie Rose Cottetta* (44).

**TO ALL MEMBERS OF TCF VALLEY FORGE CHAPTER**

The time has come for us (Marie & Ken Hofmockel) to pass the Newsletter Editor position on to someone else.

We wish to inform you of our resignation effective December of this year, or as soon as possible. The chapter leaders, Rhonda and Frank Gomez, are aware of our decision prior to this notice.

The Newsletter Editors can be an individual, or a couple. Fresh ideas and different styles are welcome, as long as the basic rules set by TCF National are not violated. It is the willingness to reach out to the newly bereaved that is important.

The best part of healing is reinvesting by giving back. It is a tremendous reward to give hope to the newly bereaved and see their fragmented lives find meaning in living again. Please volunteer to either of the persons listed below, it can be very healing.

Marie & Ken Hofmockel  
Phone: 610-337-1907  
Email: Kendall.Hofmockel@gmail.com

Rhonda & Frank Gomez  
Phone: 484-919-0820  
Sugar@TCFValleyForge.org  
Frank@TCFValleyForge.org

**COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS WORLDWIDE CANDLE LIGHTING**



The Compassionate Friends Worldwide Candle Lighting unites family and friends around the globe in lighting candles for one hour to honor the memories of the sons, daughters, brothers, sisters, and grandchildren who left too soon. As candles are lit at 7:00 p.m. local time, hundreds of thousands of persons commemorate and honor the memory of all children gone too soon.

Now believed to be the largest mass candle lighting on the globe, the 22nd annual Worldwide Candle Lighting, a gift to the bereavement community from The Compassionate Friends, creates a virtual 24-hour wave of light as it moves from time zone to time zone. Started in the United States in 1997 as a small internet observance, but has since swelled in numbers as word has spread throughout the world of the remembrance.

**The Valley Forge Chapter of The Compassionate Friends will hold a candle lighting remembrance service on December 9th at 2 PM at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in the Founders Hall. (same place as our monthly sharing secessions are held).**

**We chose 2 PM for our local service so that it would be available to everyone, including those who do not drive at night. We also urge you to light a candle in your home at 7PM.**

**We hope you will take this opportunity to join us in remembering our children & siblings who have died, but will never be forgotten. Let us ensure that their light may always shine.**

Joe Purifico became a member of The Compassionate Friends upon the passing of his only child 15 years ago. It was his attendance at TCF meetings that incredibly began to start the journey to the healing process that all of us need as members of the club that no one wanted to join.

Since we have all experienced our losses in different ways, Joe has been a friend to and a mentor for many families that have lost their precious children, as a way to help him deal with his own loss. He has also lectured at many area high schools on a substance abuse program entitled " Never To Late".

His message of how to accept the reality of our tragedies, begin the healing process and move forward, creating positive endeavors from the most devastating emotional crises that we as parents can experience, will be the topic of his discussion.

Joe is a local business attorney helping entrepreneurs to start , buy, sell , finance and grow their companies.

**THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS 2019 NATIONAL CONFERENCE  
"HOPE RINGS IN PHILADELPHIA, PA" JULY 19-21, 2019**

It has been traditional to offer a Butterfly Boutique at TCF National Conferences. Betty Valentine and Pam Bennett-Santora will be co-chairing the 2019 Butterfly Boutique. We have been asked to print the following request, asking for donations, in our newsletter.

*In order to be successful and raise funds ... we need donations of items to sell. We would like to have new and gently used pre-owned items. We need anything that you have purchased or were given that has angels, butterflies, hearts, hummingbirds, dragonflies, or any other appropriate subject matter. It could be jewelry (pins, earrings, rings, necklaces, anklet bracelet) or jewelry box ... maybe a scarf or a tote bag ... a candle or coasters ... could be a Christmas ornament or decoration ... kitchen or bath towel (new of course), framed pictures, artwork or handmade items ... Seraphim angels or Susan Lordi Willow Tree, Butterflies on anything ... a chair or lamp ... a night light or magnet ... note paper, a pen, something you may have purchased at the national conference and never used ... even heart things ... wallet, a watch. At the national conference they even sold items that did not have butterflies or hearts like Coach wallets and Vera Bradley items ... so any and all items that can be sold would be greatly appreciated.*

*If you'd like a donation receipt, please let us know. TCF is a 501(c)3 tax exempt organization. Please send items to Betty Valentine or small items can be brought to the Valley Forge monthly meetings. They have to be sorted, cleaned, marked for sale, and listed prior to the Conference. Please call numbers listed below, if you have any questions. We at TCF would be so appreciative.*

Betty Valentine  
302 Llangollen Blvd.  
New Castle, Delaware, 19720  
Home Phone: 302-328-5727  
Cell Phone: 302-602-1121  
Email: bettybuop19720@gmail.com

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Morristown, NJ, 07960  
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Email: Jpamp010@aol.com

### God Looked Around His Garden

God looked around His garden & found an empty place.  
He then looked down upon the earth & saw your tired face.  
He put his arms around you & lifted you to rest.  
God's garden must be beautiful; he always takes the best.  
He saw the road was getting rough & the hills were hard to climb,  
So he closed your weary eyelids & whispered, "Please be thine".  
It broke my heart to lose you, but you didn't go alone,  
For part of me went with you the day God called you home.

Author unknown.

Submitted by: *Mary Lou Harrison*

**OUR CHILDREN & SIBLINGS LOVED, SADLY MISSED AND REMEMBERED**

Each month some of us must face those special, but difficult days of birthdays and anniversaries. This month we ask your thoughts and prayers for the parents/siblings/relatives of the following. children:

**NOVEMBER BIRTHDAYS**

**Gloria Bello, son *Joseph* 11/24**  
**Marbeth Blocklinger, grandson *Bryam Jr.* 11/4**  
**Cindy Brikley, son *Timothy* 11/14**  
**Jackie & Steve Brown, son *Doug Brown* 11/28**  
**Sally Cahill, grandson *Tim* 11/14**  
**Catherine Chan, son *Chanlan Lee* 11/27**  
**Lisa Connolly, daughter *Elyce Pindjak* 11/14**  
**Liliana Couchara, friend *Christian* 11/22**  
**Franklin & Patricia Cox, daughter *Christen Fox* 11/2**  
**Antoinette & John DiDonato, son *John Jr.* 11;24**  
**JoAnne Forman, son *H. Scott Hartman, Jr.* 11/21**  
**Sharon & Francis Gailey, daughter *Danielle Marie Gailey* 11/7**  
**Angela Giannantonio, son *Anthony* 11/11**  
**Melissa Greco, daughter *Gabrielle* 11/11**  
**Enid M. Irizarry, daughter *Lisette M. Molina* 11/16**  
**Tash Jackson, cousin *Peter Simmons Jr.* 11/20**  
**Vern & Joyce Kaiser, son *Brian* 11/19**  
**Luann Kalamon, son *Adam Michael* 11/12**  
**Sandi Kensicki, sister *Rose* 11/7**  
**Barbara Kirk, son *Eric* 11/29**  
**John & Eileen Kostic, son *John E.* 11/29**  
**Rhoda & Melvin Kreiner, daughter *Anna Kreiner* 11/19**  
**Joanne & Thomas Lennen, son *Scott C. Lennen* 11/14**  
**Dan Logan, daughter *Joanie* 11/15**  
**Mary & Bob Matcovich, son *Christian* 11/22**  
**Eileen & Chris McKeown, son *Eric* 11/16**  
**Thelma Miller, sister *Geraldine Weiner* 11/4**  
**Joanne Morasco, son *Robert* 11/4**  
**Anthony & Mary Morrell, son *Andrew Michael Morrell* 11/28**  
**David & Donna Morrell, son *Matthew Morrell* 11/9**  
**Fred & Marilyn Mountjoy, daughter *Marian Mountjoy* 11/11**  
**Betsy Oakes, son *Bruce Schaeffer* 11/19**  
**Carol & Dennis O'Connor, son *Michael O'Connor* 11/21**  
**Patricia Peraino, brother *Anthony* 11/11**  
**Susan Pollock, son *Brendan* Rosko 11/14**  
**Robert & Barbara Pontician, son *Rob Pontician* 11/28**  
**Roy Redman, daughter *Carol* 11/20**

**NOVEMBER BIRTHDAYS continued**

Debbie Repas, daughter *Stacy Lynn* 11/26  
Daune Ring, daughter *Chloe* 11/14  
Lois Robinson, son *Randy* 11/5  
Ilene & Sy Rockower, daughter *Amy Rockower* 11/22  
Andrea Rohloff, son *Jim* 11/14  
Priscilla Shober, son *Gregory Shober* 11/7  
Edie Smith, son *John Seddon "Sed" Wilson* 11/15  
Elaine & Tim Thomas, son *Seth Peterson* 11/21  
Judy Tomarelli, husband *Bert* 11/2  
Marilyn Toole, son *Ted Toole* 11/3  
Jack, Bobbie and Ross Trotter, daughter/sister *Megan* 11/25  
Weldon & Marie Tyson, son *Ronald C. Stewart* 11/12  
Harry & Lynne Urian, son *Mike* 11/14

**NOVEMBER ANNIVERSARIES**

Nancy Althouse, daughter *Donna Lee Althouse* -11/4  
Victoria Bayle, husband *Robert D. Bayle II* - 11/9  
Julie Beasley, son *Aaron* - 11/5  
Stephen & Barbara Billings, daughter *Laura Elizabeth Billings* - 11/26  
Jacqueline Bonney, daughter *Genevieve* - 11/5  
Scott & Gail Campbell, daughter *Chelsea* - 11/4  
Joyce Caperilla, daughter *Jennifer* - 11/22  
Libby Cavallaro, sister *Theresa* - 11/19  
Loretta & Ken Cericola, son *Anthony Cericola* - 11/10  
Becky & Frank Clark, daughter *Lisa* - 11/25  
Thomas & Janet Cleary, son *Ryan* - 11/14  
Kathy Concannon, daughter *Tracey* - 11/9  
Anita Conway, son *Daniel* - 11/29  
Lisa & David Dibello, son *Joey* - 11/13  
Julie & Joe Fabrizio, brother *John Russel Bryant* - 11/9  
Rochena & Pat Fatale, son *Mark Longan* - 11/15  
Abigail Figueroa, son *Jose C. Figueroa* - 11/11  
JoAnne Forman, son *H. Scott Hartman, Jr.* - 11/12  
Sharon & Francis Gailey, son *Francis E. Gailey, III* - 11/24  
Linda & Steven Gilbert, daughter *Pamela Gilbert* - 11/6  
Laura Giordano, son *Peter* - 11/7  
Melissa Greco, daughter *Gabrielle* 11/11  
Elizabeth Haney, son *Christian* - 11/28  
Othell & William Heaney, son *Roger Heaney* - 11/22  
Carl & Catherine Helwig, son *Michael Helwig* - 11/24

## NOVEMBER ANNIVERSARIES CONTINUED

John & Eileen Kostic, son *John E.* - 11/18  
 Karen Lapera, son *Michael* - 11/26  
 Julie Lauderback, son *Donovan Lauderback* - 11/20  
 Marlene & Jerry Lener, *Daniel* - 11/16  
 Susan & Richard Leoni Cutler, son Kevin - 11/6  
 Ed & Linda Lincul, son *Matthew* - 11/27  
 Bonnie MacDonald, son *R. Scott Geddes* - 11/28  
 Jennifer & Michael Magee, sister *Jacqueline Ann Rogers* - 11/7  
 Pete Mihalek, son *Andy* - 11/21  
 Alexandra Milas, daughter *Nicole Penelope Wiseley* - 11/5  
 Thelma Miller, sister *Geraldine Weiner* - 11/13  
 Pat Miller, son *Nathan* - 11/8  
 Audrey Morasco, husband *John J. Morasco* - 11/19  
 Kelly & Hank Murray, son *John Murray* - 11/22  
 Rose & Mike Orlando, son *Michael* - 11/21  
 Sheldon & Joan Plam, son *Michael Tobiah Plam* - 11/7  
 Tony & Laurene Quercetti, daughter *Christine L. Quercetti* - 11/7  
 Ruth Richardson, grandson *Nicholas Richardson* - 11/14  
 Gina & Brian Richardson, son *Nicholas Richardson* - 11/14  
 Skipp & Kathy Robinson, daughter *Carrie Robinson* - 11/16  
 Mike & Diane Rogers, daughter *Jacqueline Ann Rogers* - 11/7  
 Donald & Mary Rose, daughter *Marjorie Rose-Cotteta* - 11/24  
 Priscilla Shober, son *Gregory Shober* - 11/3  
 Cathy Siciliano, son *Anthony* - 11/24  
 Robert & Sigrid Snow, son *Kevin Snow* - 11/26  
 Jen & Alex Soutos, daughter *Alexi* - 11/22  
 Harry & Merrily Spiess, son *F. Ryan Spiess* - 11/29  
 Judy Tomarelli, husband *Bert* - 11/18  
 Esperanza & Libardo Toro, daughter *Maria Eugenia Toro* - 11/3  
 Steven Tucker, son *Steven II* - 11/1  
 Lynn & Tim Tumminello, daughter *Natalie* - 11/12  
 Mary Walker, daughter *Susan* - 11/19  
 Linda Weaver, daughter *Krista "Binky" Weaver* - 11/4  
 Bill & Patti Whitehead, daughter *Maria* - 11/1  
 John & Linda Wilson, son *Sean* - 11/3

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*There is love in our pain ...*

*Memories in our grief ...*

*Hope in our sharing*

*Author unknown*

**SHARED THOUGHTS ON THANKSGIVING**

Thanksgiving is the beginning of our holiday season. This once joyous time can become a horrendous anticipation for us. This is the season we like **all** our children and siblings gathered around us. We enjoy the togetherness, for it is a time to be thankful for each of our family members. We find it difficult for such a large piece to be missing from our family circle.

We suggest you try to discuss your plans with your immediate family, your spouse and children. It not only makes them feel part of the family, but it also removes the tremendous burden of making all the decisions from your shoulders. This also sends the message you know they are hurting, by acknowledging their pain you open up the door of communication.

You have to decide what is best for your family. You may choose to keep it traditional or make changes. These changes can be temporary or permanent. It may help to talk about what you are doing just for the sake of tradition. If they aren't meaningful and are painful, you may choose to drop them.

Some find it helpful to go away, others want to be home. Some have found it very peaceful to devote time to helping others. There are many organizations that need help to serve a meal to others who have no one to spend the holiday with. It is a way of bringing the love for your child or sibling to life. For some it is impossible to give thanks when your grief is very fresh, this is normal for many. Allow yourself to cry and grieve, if that is all you are capable of this year. In time you will be able to think beyond your pain, don't feel guilty for something you cannot do. Remember it helps others to feel good when they can do small physical chores for us, if you are in need of their help, ask for it.

We can't avoid Thanksgiving and often we even feel some guilt for not being thankful for what we have left. Our overwhelming grief crowds out our appreciation of what we have. We are human, and it is normal to lament our loss. Perhaps this is the season to enumerate and be thankful for friends and family who have helped us through these devastating times. We all wanted more time, but we must remember our pain is so very great because we were given someone very special to share a segment of our life with. For this we are thankful. We also are very thankful for all the friends and support we have in The Compassionate Friends. Your sharing with us has gotten us through many holidays, gave us strength and healing from having passed through another painful event. Each passing event tells us we can survive, and doing our grief work softens our pain. We wish you peace of mind and love as you remember your child or sibling this Thanksgiving.

God Bless, *Marie Hofmockel*, TCF Valley Forge, PA

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Hold on to what is good even if it is a handful of earth.

Hold on to what you believe even if it is a tree, which stands by itself.

Hold on to what you must do even if it is a long way from here.

Hold on to life even when it is easier letting go.

Hold on to my hand even when I have gone away from you.

*Nancy Wood*, "Many Winters"



**IT'S NOT FAIR**

It's not fair that my only sibling, my older brother, my best friend died.  
But I have to survive this.

It's not fair that I won't have nieces or nephews, nor will my future children have Michael as the wonderful uncle that he would have been.  
But I have to survive this.

It's not fair that he wasn't here to give me a hard time about turning 30.  
But I have to survive this.

It's not fair to have to deal with such a heart wrenching blow.  
But I have to survive this.

As all of us know at TCF, life sometimes isn't fair. We all have to survive the pain of losing a sibling or a child. It is not fair that we have to, but we do. It has been one year and three months since my brother died, and I have to survive this. But you know what, every day that passes and every morning that I wake up, I realize that I AM surviving this!

So will you!

*Renee Highsmith* TCF Valley Forge Chapter  
In memory of my brother, **Michael Highsmith** 1/22/66 - 6/16/97

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**QUESTIONS/ANSWERS FROM BEREAVED SIBLINGS**

**All of a sudden I burst into tears and cannot control crying.**

You have the freedom to cry when you need to. Crying is a normal reaction. You may feel embarrassed, but most people will react with sympathy and wish for themselves that they could cry freely. Crying is a natural outlet to grieving.

**Why am I so mad at my sister for dying? She left me alone. I know it wasn't her fault, but I feel so guilty for being angry.**

At some time everyone is angry at the person who died. Anger does not mean you loved them less; it means the loss is so great that you want the terrible pain to end.

**I can't concentrate. I can't think and I can't remember anything. I think I am losing my mind.**

You are not losing your mind, although it may feel that way. Your mind is probably overloaded. Not only do you have to go through your daily routine, but your mind is flooded with thoughts and feelings for your brother or sister. This is temporary; your memory and concentration will return over time.

**I have terrible nightmares. Sometimes I dream I am dying. I can't tell anyone because they will think I am crazy. Am I?**

Some grieving people experience intense dreams. Dreams serve as a healthy outlet for the intense feelings you have during the day. As time goes on and you deal with your feelings, your dreams will become less frightening.

**I feel so guilty for the way I yelled at my brother. We would fight about the silliest things. I'll never be able to tell him how sorry I am.**

Brothers and sisters in every family quarrel and don't apologize after every argument. Even though you fought, you still loved your brother and he loved you.

**Suddenly my parents expect me to parent them. I just can't handle it.**

This is truly one of the most unfair positions your grief puts you in. Try to share these feelings with your parents. Hopefully you will be better able to understand one another.

*This Healing Journey*  
*an Anthology for Bereaved Siblings*

## STRANGE WORDS WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

I am always amazed at the instant empathy we each feel as new member come to their first meeting. We have the strangest welcome for these parents: "We are sorry you have to be here.

In other organizations the questions are probing: "Where did you go to school, where do you work, where do you live?" All designed to "size up" the newcomer, put him or her in the proper perspective of a neatly ordered world. For us this information is meaningless. We know the world isn't neat and orderly; we discovered that when we lost our children. We care about you, the newly bereaved parent, whose life was tossed into a cosmic blender when your child died. We care because we are you. We have been here a while, in this purgatory of pain. We have learned to live our lives in a different way, to place value on understanding and hope, the intangibles of the purest meanings of life. We have learned to value each other, to reach out and talk, to wait patiently during the silences needed to form thoughts. We listen intently as you quietly say your child's name, tell your child's story, speak of your heartbreak.

Yes, this is a different kind of welcome. But it is the most deeply sincere welcome we ever receive. We are kindred souls, you and I. Each of us lives in the "after death" world of losing our child. Each of us has learned gradually that the hope we have attained has made life better, lessened the pain, moderated the isolation, tears, emotional devastation and pure mayhem that once overtook us. Each of us has learned this slowly, in our own time and in our own way.

Each month new parents who have suffered the most horrific loss that a human can endure are welcomed into our group. We reach out, we listen with our heart and we remember.

**Annette Mennen Baldwin**, In memory of my son, *Todd Mennen*, TCF,

## HOW TO HELP ME GRIEVE

### **Be there for me:**

I feel alone, in pain.

I need a friend.

### **Share my sorrow:**

Speak from your heart.

I have to talk about my feelings.

### **Let me grieve:**

Listen to me, I need to cry.

We all grieve in our own way  
and in a different time frame.

### **Keep the memory alive:**

It is always on my mind.

I have so many memories.

### **I need your help:**

Help me, call me, pray for me.

Do whatever you can.

### **Don't desert me:**

Don't desert me after the 1st or 2nd week.

I need you especially on holidays.

### **Take care of yourself:**

I need to depend on you.

### **Help me to heal:**

Involve me, listen to me months later.

I need your interest and invitations.

### **Be my friend:**

Don't be afraid of me or my grief.

It's okay to cry.

Lastly, please don't criticize until you've  
walked in my shoes.

### **Instead: Pray for me.**

*Vivian Sagert*

TCF, Minitonas, Manitoba, Canada

For those of you who are newly bereaved, it is difficult to be thankful. But for us who are further removed from the poignant early stages of grief, and have found the pain has softened, may find Darcie's thoughts very helpful.

**FOR THAT, I AM THANKFUL**

It doesn't seem to get any better ...  
but it doesn't get any worse either.  
For that, I am thankful.

There are no more pictures to be taken ...  
but there are memories to be cherished.  
For that, I am thankful.

There is a missing chair at the table ...  
But the circle of family gathers close.  
For that, I am thankful.

The turkey is smaller ...  
but there is still stuffing.  
For that, I am thankful.

The days are shorter ...  
but the nights are softer.  
For that, I am thankful.

The pain is still there ...  
but it last only moments.  
For that, I am thankful.

The calendar still turns,  
The holidays still appear  
And they still cost too much ...  
but I am still here.  
For that, I am thankful.

The room is still empty,  
The soul still aches ...  
but the heart remembers.  
For that, I am thankful.

The guests still come,  
The dishes pile up ...  
but the dishwasher works.  
For that, I am thankful.

The name is still missing,  
The words still unspoken ...  
but the silence is shared.  
For that, I am thankful.

The snow still falls,  
The sled still waits,  
and the spirit still wants to ...  
For that, I am thankful.

The stillness remains ...  
but the sadness is smaller.  
For that, I am thankful.

The moment is gone ...  
but the love is forever.  
For that, I am blessed,  
For that, I am grateful ...

Love was once (and still is)  
A part of my being ...  
For that, I am living.

I am LIVING ...  
and for that, I am thankful.

May your holidays be filled  
with reasons to be thankful.  
Having loved and having been loved  
is perhaps the most wondrous reason  
of all.

*Darcie D. Sims*



# THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS, INC.

Valley Forge, PA Chapter  
Rhonda & Frank Gomez  
Chapter Leaders  
12 Brook Circle  
Glenmoore, PA 19343

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**...A bereavement organization**

**For parents, siblings & families**

**We offer friendship, love and understanding**

**We talk, we listen, we share, we care**

### **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. ©2007