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Loving Outreach to Survivors of Suicide

The LOSS Program
Loving Outreach to Survivors of Suicide

Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Chicago
721 North LaSalle Street
Chicago, Illinois 60654
(312) 655-7283
catholiccharities.net/loss

Daring to Hope in the Wake of Loss

Kristen Coe

June 7, 2025, marked 10 years since we lost our brother, grandson, nephew, and son, Hunter, to suicide. It seemed like both yesterday and ages ago that our world changed irrevocably. What is amazing is that both can be true at once.

Our “party of six” immediately became a “party of five,” and that sense of ruptured identity was profoundly dislocating. Our bedrock in the world was no longer, and this new reality defied traditional expectations where parents pre-decease children, high school students matriculate to college, and college grads move on to pursue anticipated career paths. With Hunter’s death, those norms were shattered, and, in their wake, we stepped tentatively forward, fell more than a few times, engaged fitfully with one another and sometimes reluctantly with others outside our immediate experience until we gradually but consistently made forward movement.

A central tenet of “grief work” is that every relationship with the deceased is unique and thus, so too, must be every expression of grief. While immobilized at first, we eventually claimed our own agency to determine how

to connect with Hunter, and through these connections, to define each singular “love after loss” relationship with him. How? Walking, talking, therapy, college, exercise, ultramarathons, sailing, meditation, writing, grad school, board games, service to others, work, the distraction of work, nature, sobriety, moves across the U.S., marriage and partnership. And through it all, it’s been OK to not be OK if still on the path toward being OK.

Through it all, it’s been OK to not be OK if still on the path toward being OK.

Ten years ago, we would not have dared to imagine our present state, our stability, the children’s engagement with and reliance on one another (including their welcomed partners and spouses), the utter joy we feel in being in proximity to one another. Yes, we would have hoped for all of this, but our imagination, dulled in the morass of loss, was not capable to yet see this potential for resilience, growth, and fortitude. Our children are beacons of hope to all who’ve been wounded by life’s vicissitudes, most especially to Mark and me.

OBELISK

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Catholic Charities partners with mission-driven people and organizations across Cook and Lake Counties to witness a message of mercy and hope to a world in need. We are called to serve and accompany anyone, regardless of their faith, gender, race, or ethnicity.

@ccofchicago     

Memorial Squares *and* Lifekeeper Quilts

Over the decades, LOSS members have created quilt squares that have been sewn into 24 memorial quilts. In each issue, we print the names of those who are memorialized on two of the LOSS Lifekeeper Quilts. We also display quilts at LOSS special events, including the Blossoms of Hope Brunch in April and the Evening of Remembrance in November. We encourage LOSS members to consider creating a quilt square.

We are displaying Lifekeeper Quilts in the St. Louise de Marillac Chapel at the Catholic Charities central office at 721 N. LaSalle Street, Chicago, Ill. 60654.

Currently on Display at Catholic Charities: Quilt #11

Herbert D. Altergott	7/21/1956	1/22/1997
Christopher Elliot Bruce	8/23/1977	10/26/1993
Sheri Ann DeLuca	5/10/1967	8/7/1998
Joseph DeStefano	7/11/1964	6/29/1986
Gabe	1980	1997
J. Donald Graff, Jr.	1948	1975
Kevin Gustafson	12/14/1966	10/16/1997
Patricia A. Higgins	8/30/1950	3/8/1981
Charles A. Hundley	2/28/1970	1/7/1998
Tiffany Jacobs	5/4/1964	7/16/1985
Angela M. Leofanti	5/24/1979	5/21/1998
Ronald A. McCormack, Jr.	10/19/1977	1/20/1998
John McKechney	2/14/1947	9/13/1989
Cassandra Ann Roach	7/23/1976	9/5/1996
Steven Michael Spano	3/5/1967	6/30/1998
Phillip C. Stoklasa		
Joseph Christian Westphal	1962	1997

Quilt #23

Beth Biagi	1/18/1995	3/16/2012
Margaret A. Braun	4/20/1957	2/01/2017
Ralph J. Contacessi	4/26/1955	8/25/2018
Mark Edwards II	1986	2005
Ryan Elwood		
Michele Fowler	12/16/1974	1/16/2017
Tim Hughes	1979	2015
Todd Jaworek	10/25/1976	9/29/2009
Ron Kalmeta	3/04/1964	3/05/2007
Lenny R. Kamenjarin		
Andre G. Kwiatek	10/28/1989	1/22/2016
Roy Michael McDonough	May 1976	April 2012
David Moscinski	4/28/1961	5/16/1995
Mariah Alexa Soeder		
Joel Tegenkamp	1985	2014
Lauren Taylor Vitrano	12/29/1992	10/09/2017
Michael Weber	9/01/1979	6/28/2018
Robert Joseph Wertz	6/24/1989	5/18/2007

Quilt Square Guidelines

Cut a piece of material (heavy cotton materials suggested) to a 12" X 12" square. You can be as creative as you like (many people add pictures and messages). Leave 1" X 1" along the sides so the squares can be sewn together. When finished, mail your quilt square to: LOSS Quilt Project, c/o Catholic Charities, 721 N. LaSalle Street, Chicago, IL 60654.

From the Desk of Cynthia Waderlow, MSE, LCSW

A new year is upon us. Grieving people often approach this time with an increased sense of loss. The new year can be a challenging milestone. Each year of publication, the *Obelisk* has included articles for those who are coping with loss during this highly charged time of year. We mark the passage of time here, a potent theme for those of us living without a dearly loved person who died from suicide.

In my relationships with deeply grieving people, particularly parents of a deceased child, I have noticed concern, even panic, at the concept of passing time. For the newly bereaved, the deepest pain represents connection, but as integration develops (a normal part of grief), there is sometimes a feeling that the loved one is farther away.

Integration follows intensive processing of the death, the relationship, and a narrative that tells the story of the grieving person's experience of the loss. Resistance and disbelief in response to the loss have softened with time, and the lived experience becomes a new normal. And usually, conversation and memories about the loved one are revisited more easily, with birthdays and holidays a context for tender reflections.

The process leading to grief integration is about entering loss and absence, about love and longing, desperately wanting back the person who died. Yet, we may experience avoidance in looking at pictures or videos of the one who died, as the longing can be piercing. Dreaming of the loved one can persist with an atmosphere that clings to us. In response, we may fear those dreams. So, the grieving person might vacillate

between the respite of distractions and a sense of self as missing a vital piece. With grief ambivalence, we may be accompanied by a sense of unease or even guilt as we move further through time, which seems to separate us from the loved one.

Holding the loved one is an intentional, intimate experience of mindfulness, a solitary exercise in which we can take comfort and renew the sense of longing fulfilled by connection, a connection once shared with the person that we loved and lost, a deep part of our experience while they lived.

Holding can activate the primitive attachment and seeking that we experienced as infants and also what we felt in body and mind as new parents. Attachment survives conflict, distance, and time and can even persist as an obstacle to ending other relationships that are not helpful. Proximity to those with whom we share deep attachments is so precious that we learn to create it with a sense of visualization, because anxiety is often aroused when that sense of proximity is interrupted.

Holding through mindfulness creates an experience that uses visualization and sensory memories of the one who is absent to allow an experience of comfort and closeness. I engage in intentional holding with my eyes closed before sleep or even in a passive, comfortable spot like my couch when it is quiet. I fold my arms over my chest, as if holding close the person I love while shielding from distractions. I visualize the voice, the hands, eyes, all the physical features I cherish. I also visualize implicit memories of the loved one's presence,

like coming down the stairs or making a sandwich. I can hear the loved one's breath. We don't often talk about these intimacies, but we do hold them and can access them in this powerful way of engaging with a presence that is no longer physical. Allow it to be a loving, imperfect practice. There is no right or wrong way to hold your deceased loved one, but dedication to holding allows the visualization and connection that becomes familiar and more vivid over time.

Holding as a mindfulness exercise reaches into an uncomplicated, pure connection that is accompanied by compassion, enlarging a timeless knowing of the person we long for. Through deep visualization that recalls moods and growth, milestones and vulnerabilities, we are holding, keeping, cherishing our unique, irreplaceable loved one.

Dedicated holding may not be for everyone, in which case other ways of memorializing the loved one may be more appropriate. Self-care is key. If you notice that trauma or re-experiencing or excessive rumination is a result or side-effect of the holding experience, it is best to let this go for an alternative. With self-care, we allow for our own uniqueness or differences.

Even as our grief mind drives us to care for and preserve our relationship with a loved one who has died, time does play a role. It is possible that the practice of holding can mitigate the effects of time. In the deepest sense, even beyond our own life span, it is our shared attachment with the person we lost and will one day join that remains timeless.

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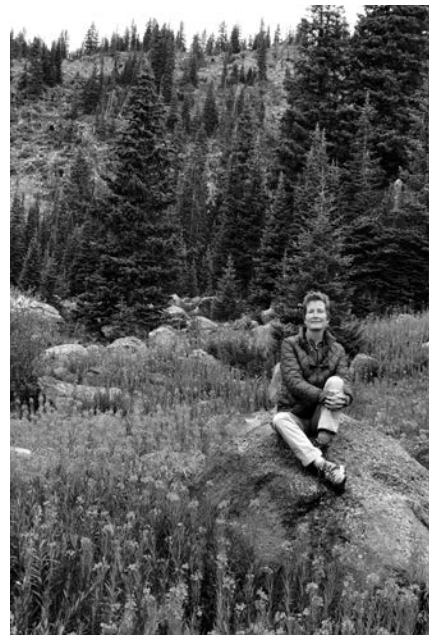
With that stability, we have found the space to miss Hunter for who he was and not simply to struggle with how he died. This past spring, we gathered for a milestone birthday with one of the children’s cousins and together sorted a few remaining boxes of Hunter’s things. We marveled at his taste in clothing (good and bad), laughed at childhood memories sparked by his K-8 yearbooks, modeled his St. Patrick’s Day kit, and located a treasured disco ball to be returned to a beloved cousin. The mood was light, irreverent stories were savored, and Hunter’s exuberance was in the forefront.

Hunter lived a life full of complexity. He was a sweet towheaded little boy who grew — according to his sibs — into a playful, empathetic, charismatic, curious, loyal, stubborn, impulsive, grateful, creative, and rule-bending raconteur. He loved fiercely and found joy in both the quotidian and the extraordinary. He would have adored PJ, Regan’s partner, and Alyssa, Lawlor’s spouse. An elementary school pal wrote in a condolence note that “a hug from Hunter could turn your day around.” That memory — utterly physical and metaphysical at the same time — holds as true today as when Colleen wrote it. And that is the memory we hold most dear.

We have found the space to miss Hunter for who he was and not simply to struggle with how he died.

On behalf of Mark and our children, thank you to all who’ve walked with us these last 10 years. Accompaniment — standing alongside one another with no purpose but to be present, to witness, without the capacity to fix — is among life’s most difficult tasks, and we are so very grateful to each of you. We’ve *seen*, yes, but more importantly *felt* the generosity of your hearts and have been uplifted by your presence, your murmurings of affirmation, and the joy you’ve re-ignited in us. The power of community is real, and we thank you for joining ours.

Kristen and Mark Coe lost their 24-year-old son, Hunter, to suicide in 2015. This remembrance was shared with family and friends on the 10-year anniversary of his passing.



Serotinous

Even the word surrender suggests some agency, but perhaps what is asked of us is zero. Perhaps we are like the seed of the lodgepole pine that opens through no effort of its own. It needs the heat of a wildfire blaze. Then the seed is released into the very blackened, desolate world that seemed hellbent on destroying it, but it is the carbon-rich soil left by the fire that feeds the seed and helps the tree grow. No surrender. No effort. Who could ask for the fire? The seed did not. It did nothing at all. And now, the pine, how green, how tall.

*By Rosemary Wahtola Trommer (2024)
Reprinted from her book, The Unfolding,
with permission from the author*

Grief and Family Development

How Long Do Your Children Need Grief Services?

Cynthia Waderlow, MSE, LCSW

Because each bereaved child and each bereaved family is different, it's challenging to make prescriptive comments about how much professional support to arrange for children and adolescents, and how long that commitment should last. Time seems to be the currency for grief. As adults, we commonly doubt that we can manage without something big and well-informed to support us for this formidable journey. So when LOSS began offering services for children, our initial thoughts about a course of grief support for children were similar to the configuration we were offering for adults. We liked the idea of ongoing individual and group offerings but soon realized that children need parental accompaniment; they need dinner, and they usually have homework. Add to these needs, sports and after-school activities and the normal fatigue experienced by bereaved parents. We initially envisioned longer courses of individual counseling because suicide loss creates attachment disruption that can have developmental implications. We envisioned that teenagers could address individuation issues through a lengthy grief process, and younger children could heal through the gradual building of a cohesive narrative around the loss. Because trauma is often treated this way in therapeutic settings, we saw its application for traumatic loss in an intimate, long-term clinical setting. But based on observations of many children and teens, we are adjusting our thinking and recognizing variability in the time young people need for this work.

The rapid development of children and teens seems to require a different lens for looking at their grief processes, and maybe not as much time as we had originally thought. But to cover what is necessary, we want to provide a safe and intimate setting for children to understand suicide, to assist the growing sense of self to integrate the loss while minimizing a sense of abandonment and discouraging absorption of the despair they may have sensed in the person who died. We want to support skilled conversations between parents and children that keep them connected to their loved one. We still want to assess and monitor children and teens for healthy grief with minimal impact on academic, social, and emotional development. We also observe that the most vital messages, comforts, and supports regarding the loss are influenced over time by the caregiver. The bereaved caregiver's mindset and ability to be present to the child's needs and experiences are powerful ways of responding to each child as an individual.

A specialized service for children serves important needs at the outset of a loss. Caregivers call the LOSS Program because the grief associated with suicide is a milestone for young people, and because suicide can be unfamiliar territory. Parents are overwhelmed and disoriented with their own grief and may have little idea how to talk to their children about the loss. They may wonder if their children's behavior is normal, whether they should be crying, staying close to their parents, seeking comfort at home, etc. It can be difficult to ascertain the scope of your child's

grief response because of the child's need to appear strong, to self-censor, to distract from the pain or to take care of the grieving parent. We always recommend that parents consider an assessment and some initial individual sessions within months of the loss. This allows a pair of experienced eyes and ears to provide an opinion regarding how your child can benefit from grief support. We want to listen carefully to the story children tell themselves about the suicide because the story has the potential to harm or to help.

So how can bereaved parents balance intuitive care for their children with professional intervention? General advice suggests starting with a program with expertise in suicide loss. The clinician will address the psychoeducational aspect of suicide and attempt to find out what the child is telling herself about the death. How does the child make sense of the suicide, and how does she understand her relationship with the deceased? This is part of the narrative that becomes the grief story, a story that may evolve over time. Is the child stuck on feelings of responsibility, anger, or a sense of abandonment? Does the child blame someone else for the suicide? If so, it is best if these issues are processed and worked through with professional services. It makes sense to reassess every child's adjustment based on the parent's perceptions and the therapist's feedback. After a few months, we hope you see a trend in which your child is returning to normal functioning. Is there a comfortable flow of conversation regarding the loved one? Can your child tell you about feelings

How Long Do Your Children Need Grief Services? | continued from page 5

other than sadness, such as anger, fear, or embarrassment? We look for each child's opportunities for shared communication of feelings that can be heard and accepted by the caregiver. We also look at the child's trend toward social re-engagement at a level that fits her personality. You may be ready to deal with the loss within your support system when you notice the following signs: your child is feeling fairly open about sharing comments related to the loss; she has had opportunities to ask questions and has been exposed to the perspective that suicide is the result of an illness that may have been difficult to identify, and is not about

the deceased's relationship with family members; you feel confident that your child is in the process of re-entry and able to find comfort in family and friends. Understand that grief is revisited as children enter different developmental stages, and consultation or services may become helpful again at a later time.

We understand that services can be experienced as welcome support but may also feel burdensome. After any respite from service, we invite clients to return, and parents to seek consultation as needs arise. When bereaved families are fairly supportive to begin with,

healing can often be found in the intuitive, caring interactions that happen between family members. Families don't have to be perfect for this to happen. There can still be fatigue and uncertainty about the future, but security can be nurtured in the communication we promote and the compassion we show for ourselves and others. When you find yourself considering the benefits of ending grief therapy for your children, trust your instincts, consider the growth your family has made on the grief journey and consult, if necessary, as you make this hopeful transition.



More than 75 members of the Loving Outreach to Survivors of Suicide gathered for an Evening of Remembrance on November 3, 2025, at St. John of the Cross Catholic Church in Western Springs and lit candles in honor of their lost loved ones.

Photo by Kathleen Hinkel

Announcements

At Peace Memorial

Queen of Heaven Catholic Cemetery & Mausoleums, Hillside, Illinois

A collaboration between Catholic Cemeteries of Chicago and The LOSS Program of the Archdiocese of Chicago has resulted in the construction of a first-of-its-kind memorial for survivors of suicide loss at Queen of Heaven Cemetery that we hope will bring some peace and healing to those who have been impacted by suicide. We are waiting for the arrival of special artwork created for the memorial. Once the artwork has been installed, and pending suitable weather, we will invite everyone to join us at Queen of Heaven Cemetery for a special dedication service. We anticipate a dedication service in April or May of 2026.

LOSS Program 8-Week Groups

LOSS offers 8-week groups on a rolling basis throughout the year. Readings and other resources are provided. Participants are asked to commit to attending all 8 sessions to build and maintain group cohesion. If you would like to join the list for an upcoming 8-week group or want additional information, please contact us at loss@catholiccharities.net or (312) 655-7283.

Men Are Suicide Survivors (MASS) Men's Group

MASS is for men who have lost a family member or friend to suicide. We offer a confidential setting to talk about your experiences and learn how others have dealt with similar situations. The next meeting is **Monday, January 12, 2026, at 7:00 p.m.** at Gorton Community Center, 400 E. Illinois Road, Lake Forest, Illinois. To register, contact Bill Teskoski at wteskoski@sbcglobal.net or (312) 560-3119.

Writing Group for Newly Bereaved with Sharon Bibro, LCSW

Writing about your grief is an excellent way to process your emotional response to loss. All you need is paper and pencil. We encourage all types of writing: journaling, freestyle, poetry, and any other form you like. This can be a meaningful addition to counseling and other LOSS groups. If you are interested, please contact LOSS at loss@catholiccharities.net or (312) 655-7283.

STAR Group for First Responder Families

STAR is for family members of police officers and firefighters who have died by suicide. You will be in the company of other first responder families who understand the unique stress faced by your loved one. To receive the zoom link or for more information, contact Alicja Bochenek-Schultz at abochenek@catholiccharities.net or (773) 739-4341.

Pastoral Support

Father Rubey, and Deacon Jesus Casas, pastoral care liaison for LOSS, are available to say home Masses, perform blessings, offer prayers and provide counsel around questions of faith following a suicide loss. Contact loss@catholiccharities.net or call (312) 655-7283 to learn more.

Blossoms of Hope Brunch Planning Committee Needs You!

Are you interested in volunteering to help promote the LOSS Blossoms of Hope brunch scheduled for Sunday, April 26, 2026? The brunch planning committee is looking for new members to plan and promote the event across your social networks. If you are interested in joining us, please contact loss@catholiccharities.net or Cristin Clifford at cclifford@catholiccharities.net

Would You Like to Support the LOSS Program Financially?

There are several ways to do that. If you would like to make an online donation, please visit catholiccharities.net/give/donate-form/. At this site, please click "Other Designation" and then type "LOSS Program" in the box that asks where you want your donation to be applied.

If you prefer to mail a check, checks can be mailed to our secure bank lockbox. Please make your check payable to the LOSS Program and mail it to:

Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Chicago
PO Box 7154
Carol Stream, IL 60197-7154

We thank you in advance for your generous gift.

LOSS Support Group Update

Our in-person groups are held in the following locations: **Downtown Chicago** (721 N. LaSalle Street, 7th Floor), **Marist High School in Chicago** (4200 W. 115th Street), **St. Joseph's Church in Wilmette** (1747 Lake Avenue), **St. Francis de Sales Church in Lake Zurich** (135 South Buesching Road), **St. Joan of Arc Church** (820 Division Street, Lisle), **St. John the Evangelist Church Narthex** (10701 Olcott Avenue, St. John, Indiana).

January 2026 Meetings

In-Person

1st Thursday Group
**** Holiday Schedule**

January 8; 7:00 p.m.
St. John the Evangelist,
St. John, Indiana
Group meets in Church
Narthex
Facilitators: Steve Costa,
Jim and Kris Kazmierczak

2nd Monday Group

January 12; 6:00 p.m.
Downtown Chicago
Clinician: Deborah Major
Facilitators: Cherie Emling
and Eileen Hurn

3rd Wednesday Group

January 21; 6:00 p.m.
St. Francis de Sales,
Lake Zurich
Clinician: Sharon Bibro
Facilitator: Sandy Bourseau

3rd Thursday Group

January 15; 6:30 p.m.
St. Joan of Arc, Lisle
Clinician: Mary Novak
Facilitator: Kathleen Sergent

4th Tuesday Group

January 27; 7:00 p.m.
Marist High School, Chicago
Clinician: Michele Nowak
Facilitators: Patty LaPorta and
Lance Beigh

4th Sunday Group

January 25; 6:00 p.m.
St. Joseph's Church, Wilmette
Clinician: Laraine Bodnar
Facilitators: Katie Graff and
Lori Grennon

Online

2nd Tuesday Group

January 13; 7:00 p.m.
Clinician: Sharon Bibro
Facilitators: Jim and Tina Kranz

3rd Tuesday Group

January 20; 6:00 p.m.
Clinician: Sharon Bibro
Facilitators: Cherie Emling
and Tish Guinter

Special Interest

Spousal Loss Group

2nd Wednesday
January 14; 7:00 p.m.
Clinician: Cheryl Joseph-Lukz
Facilitators: Gina Petit and
Keith Kozer

Parent Support Group

3rd Thursday
January 15; 6:30 p.m.
Clinician: Deborah Major
Facilitators: Mary Edwards and
Lori Grennon

Spanish-Speaking Group

2nd Tuesday
January 13; 6:30 p.m.
Clinician: Victor Alvarez
Facilitator: Yolanda DeLeon

STAR Group for first responder families

1st Tuesday
January 6; 6:00 p.m.
Clinician: Alicja Bochenek-Schultz
Facilitator: Tish Guinter

February 2026 Meetings

In-Person

1st Thursday Group

February 5; 7:00 p.m.
St. John the Evangelist,
St. John, Indiana
Facilitators: Steve Costa,
Jim and Kris Kazmierczak

2nd Monday Group

February 9; 6:00 p.m.
Downtown Chicago
Clinician: Deborah Major
Facilitators: Cherie Emling
and Lori Grennon

4th Tuesday Group

February 24; 7:00 p.m.
Marist High School, Chicago
Clinician: Michele Nowak
Facilitators: Katy Wertz and
Barb Murphy

3rd Wednesday Group

February 18; 6:00 p.m.
St. Francis de Sales,
Lake Zurich
Clinician: Sharon Bibro
Facilitator: Sandy Bourseau

3rd Thursday Group

February 19; 6:30 p.m.
St. Joan of Arc, Lisle
Clinician: Mary Novak
Facilitators: Kathleen Sergent
and Lance Beigh

4th Sunday Group

February 22; 6:00 p.m.
St. Joseph's Church, Wilmette
Clinician: Laraine Bodnar
Facilitators: Lori Grennon and
Marion Kahle

Online

2nd Tuesday Group

February 10; 7:00 p.m.
Clinician: Sharon Bibro
Facilitators: Jim and Tina Kranz

3rd Tuesday Group

February 17; 6:00 p.m.
Clinician: Laraine Bodnar
Facilitators: Patty LaPorta and
Tish Guinter

Special Interest

Spousal Group

2nd Wednesday
February 11; 7:00 p.m.
Clinician: Cheryl Joseph-Lukz
Facilitators: Eileen Hurn and
Yvonne Papciak

Spanish-Speaking Group

2nd Tuesday
February 10; 6:30 p.m.
Clinician: Victor Alvarez
Facilitator: Yolanda De Leon

Parent Support Group

3rd Thursday
February 19; 6:30 p.m.
Clinician: Michele Nowak
Facilitators: Jim Lampa and
Lori Grennon

STAR Group for first responder families

1st Tuesday
February 3; 6:00 p.m.
Clinician: Alicja Bochenek-Schultz
Facilitator: Tish Guinter

To register for any group or event, call (312) 655-7283 or email loss@catholiccharities.net

LOSS WEATHER LINE

In case of severe weather, please call the LOSS weather line to ensure that meetings will be held as scheduled.

(312) 948-7902

Upcoming March 2026 Meetings

In-Person

1st Thursday Group

March 5; 7:00 p.m.
St. John the Evangelist,
St. John, Indiana

2nd Monday Group

March 9; 6:00 p.m.
Downtown Chicago

3rd Wednesday Group

March 18; 6:00 p.m.
St. Francis de Sales,
Lake Zurich

3rd Thursday Group

March 19; 6:30 p.m.
St. Joan of Arc Church, Lisle

4th Tuesday Group

March 24; 7:00 p.m.
Marist High School, Chicago

4th Sunday Group

March 22; 6:00 p.m.
St. Joseph's Church, Wilmette

2nd Tuesday Group

March 10; 7:00 p.m.

3rd Tuesday Group

March 17; 6:00 p.m.

Special Interest

Spousal Loss Group

2nd Wednesday
March 11; 7:00 p.m.

Parent Support Group

3rd Thursday
March 19; 6:30 p.m.

Spanish-Speaking Group

2nd Tuesday
March 10; 6:30 p.m.

STAR Group for first

responder families
1st Tuesday
March 3; 6:00 p.m.

A Prayer for Survivors

—Therese Gump

Lord, I need your help to survive,

A part of me's gone, but I'm still alive.

Let me not be obsessed with "if onlys" and "whys"

Only you know the reason that somebody dies.

I must take time to weep, and smile when I can,
And not be concerned with the judgments of man.

Can I learn how to numb the everyday pain,

So the hollow inside me will not remain?

May I substitute goals for my feelings of guilt,

And not be ashamed of the life I have built.

Make me believe that the sadness will pass,

That joy will return to my being at last.

Finally, show me the way to reach others like me.

Then I'll know my survival was destined to be.



*The Obelisk publishing fund is
dedicated to the memory of*

Steve Beck



Mention My Name

Dan Mahoney
 2/19/1962 — 1/23/2010

Happy Birthday Dan!
We miss you daily.
Love, Your family and friends

Maria Catherine Barr
 10/19/1983 — 1/24/2011

Missing you every day.
Love, Mom

Steve Beck
 2/6/1989 — 2/24/2014

*Twelve years of missing
 and loving you.*
You and Dad are together again.
*Love, Mom, Peggie, Colleen &
 Mary Kate*

Ryan Rodgers
 8/28/1997 — 7/29/2017

The day our lives changed forever.
*Saturday July 29, 2017, in our
 thoughts and hearts forever.*
*We miss you. Love, Dad, Mom,
 Richie & Tyler*

Kevin Colley
 11/27/2002 — 8/3/2025

*We love and miss you so much,
 Kevin.*
Continue to rest in eternal peace.
Love, Mom, CJ and Seven

Mention My Name submission form

Survivors need to be able to hear, see, and speak the names of the persons they have lost. To ensure your request is included, please send your submission at least two months before publication. Late submission will automatically be included in the next edition unless otherwise indicated. We always do our best to accommodate your request.

Mail your submission to: LOSS Program Catholic Charities, 721 N. LaSalle Street, Chicago, IL 60654

(Allow two months for publishing.) *A donation of any size is appreciated to defray the cost of printing and postage.*

 Name of loved one

 Date of birth

 Date of death

 Month requested

 Requested by

 Relationship

Share your message below. Please limit to 20 words or less; longer messages may be edited as space is limited.

Obelisk Dedication Fund

To ensure continued publication, we have established an Obelisk Fund, which enables LOSS members to assist with the expenses of this newsletter. **There are three ways in which to contribute to our fund:**

1. Dedication of one month's Obelisk: To dedicate a specific month to your loved one, a family may contribute \$2,560, which will cover the total cost of that month's newsletter. Please send this form back with your donation and the name of your loved one, as well as the month you are requesting. Please add a second month choice as sometimes we have more than one member requesting the same month.

I would like to contribute \$_____ in memory of _____.

For the month of _____ or _____.

2. Postage: To make a donation to cover one month's postage, we ask that you send a minimum contribution of \$300. There will be a special section for those who contribute to our postage fund, and your loved one's name will also be on the Mention My Name page.

I would like to contribute \$_____ to cover one month's postage

in memory of _____.

3. Publishing Fund: To be listed as a donor for our publishing fund, a member may contribute any amount to the Obelisk Publishing Fund and have your name listed as a donor. Your loved one's name will appear on the Mention My Name page as well.

I would like to contribute \$_____ to the Obelisk Publishing Fund

in memory of _____.

Your name: _____

Name of your loved one: _____

Date of birth: _____ Date of death: _____ *Note: Please fill out for the Mention My Name page*

Check here if you wish your donation to remain anonymous

Make checks payable to **Catholic Charities LOSS Program**. All donations to the LOSS Program are tax deductible.

Mail to LOSS Program, 721 North LaSalle Street, Chicago, IL 60654



LOSS Program/Area 281
721 N. LaSalle Street
Chicago, Illinois 60654

POSTMASTER:
DATED MATERIAL
PLEASE DO NOT DELAY



Why the Obelisk?

The Obelisk was chosen as a symbol for the LOSS Program to describe the grief process. The symbol came from the definition of an obelisk: a solid upright four-sided pillar gradually tapering as it rises. The original obelisks were erected in Egypt. The monuments were constructed by many people working together to pull a single block of

granite into place. On the sides of the obelisk, writings were carved into the stone, recording battles and victories of great kings; a permanent testimony to the rulers of Egypt in approximately 1400 B.C. The LOSS Obelisk contains the writings of survivors and survivor-related issues. This is a record of our struggles, our battle to survive. It

represents the support that we gain from meeting with other survivors so that we are not alone on our journey of grief. As we gain strength, the grief tapers off. Our spirits rise and we are able to look up again, to have hope for the future.

