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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

Putting Survivors in Control

Short and Powerful Ways to Respond

Ronnie Walker MS, LCPC

*“I’m afraid to talk about how she died.
I’m afraid of what people will think.”*

“I can’t talk about it without crying.”

“It’s just too painful. I can’t go there.”

In the aftermath of suicide, talking about what happened can be very painful for survivors. Members of our community often tell me that they feel great trepidation at the thought of having to answer others’ questions about the death of their loved ones. Survivors’ concerns generally fall into two areas.

Some survivors fear that talking about the loss will open the lid on a well of fierce, debilitating emotions and they will lose control. This is particularly true when the loss is very new. I suggest that survivors not feel that they have to talk about it just because someone asks, if it’s too painful. One can politely say “I’m sorry ... it’s just too painful for me to discuss right now.”

I suggest that survivors not feel that they have to talk about it just because someone asks, if it’s too painful. One can politely say “I’m sorry ... it’s just too painful for me to discuss right now.”

Other survivors tell me they worry a great deal. They aren’t sure what to say and fear that they, their family — or their loved one — will be judged because of the suicide. When survivors are willing to talk about the death, but aren’t quite sure how to do it, I suggest they prepare something ahead of time to fall back on. I suggest they create something akin to an “elevator speech.”

For those who aren’t familiar with the term: an elevator speech is “a short summary used to quickly and simply define a person, profession, product, service, organization or event The name ‘elevator pitch’ reflects the idea that it should be possible to deliver the summary in the time span of an elevator ride, or approximately 30 seconds to two minutes.” – *Wikipedia*

I suggest to survivors that they design a response that they can use time and again, if they choose to let casual acquaintances know about the death of their loved one. That response can be short, to the point, and contain only the information that the survivor chooses. By its very nature, it creates the “reality” one chooses to present.

OBELISK

LOSS STAFF

Rev. Charles T. Rubey
Founder & Director

Deborah R. Major
Director

Cynthia Waderlow
Child Therapist

COUNSELING TEAM

Rev. Charles T. Rubey

Deborah Major

Laraine Bodnar

Sharon Bibro

Mary Novak

Cynthia Waderlow

Michele Nowak

Victor Alvarez

Alicja Bochenek-Schultz

Cheryl Joseph-Lukz

CONTRIBUTORS

Ronnie Walker, MS, LCPC

Father Charles T. Rubey

Cynthia Waderlow

EDITOR

Deborah R. Major

ART DESIGN/LAYOUT

Jane Tomlinson



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.



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 #1

Joe Cavaliero	8/17/1953	11/11/1997
Eric Deerwester	12/1/1971	2/26/1995
Dan-o Gogotz	6/28/1981	8/8/1997
Randi Marie Haack	2/5/1963	12/12/1997
Brendan Sean Hillery	2/9/1968	1/30/1990
Kevin Kieran Kelly	4/16/1965	1/29/1995
Richard Kohler	4/21/1957	6/6/1994
Mark Lampertz	1977	1995
Deane Lyons	9/23/1924	8/9/1997
Jay W. Macek	5/18/1973	6/9/1997
George Parich	6/6/1945	5/19/1993
Steven Pasquerelli	5/11/1959	11/3/1997
Carol Phillips McElyea	11/20/1948	8/27/1997
Ricky Scott	10/2/1965	6/25/1985
Dave Simon	4/28/1958	8/31/1996
Bill Steiner	4/18/1974	5/27/1994

Quilt #13

Michael Callahan	10/2/1965	8/5/1986
Amy Calvin	1/11/1968	7/6/1994
Arthur John Cholly	8/5/1962	3/18/1989
Daniel Couch	1968	1986
David Lee Coy	7/3/1930	10/10/1969
Merritt M. Day IV	12/18/1972	3/12/1998
Dorothy Marie Doney	4/26/1934	1/16/1984
Robert Dunsing	1949	1989
Richard James Fox	4/24/1963	2/5/1988
Geri Foy	11/12/1966	3/20/1985
Elden W. Holdorf	10/14/1927	7/2/1975
Richard Patrick Mestas	5/3/1977	6/13/1997
Robert O. "Bud" Peterson	3/27/1922	8/15/1980
Paul Roach	1978	1995
Alma Rossi	2/14/1916	5/23/1996
Robert G. Sauer, Jr.	1/25/1962	5/24/1989
Mark John Wanner	5/3/1967	12/29/1984

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 **Father Charles T. Rubey**

In June, we celebrate Father's Day. This is an especially painful day for those fathers who are grieving the death of a child from suicide as well as for those children who are grieving the death of a father or father figure from suicide. There is no easy way to get through this day, but it is important to have a plan for the day. I always suggest that there be a ritual to remember the missing person even though they are part of the hereafter. Don't pretend that this is a day like any other Father's Day. It isn't, and it never will be. Everything is different since the suicide.

Popular gift items for this day come from Home Depot or Ace Hardware or other such stores. There are ties and shirts, but popular gift items are tools or other utensils that are used to fix things around the house. Without stereotyping, men very often are categorized as having the ability and the agility to be able to fix things around the house. Call in the handyman and the broken piece or part will be fixed.

They hid the desperation and the hopelessness that was engulfing their lives at this particular time in their lives. They were not open to having their illness "fixed" or talked about. They might have thought that they were beyond help, and that suicide was the only way out.

One of the most frustrating aspects of grieving a death from suicide is that this person and his/her problem or illness could not be fixed. For a person who is a fixer by nature, this is an extremely upsetting experience to have to live with. "Why couldn't I fix this or figure out a way to have it fixed?" cries out the grieving loved one. One response is that the person who completed suicide never let on that something was seriously out of order or broken. They hid the desperation and the hopelessness that was engulfing their lives at this particular time in their lives. They were not open to having their illness "fixed" or talked about. They might have thought that they were beyond help, and that suicide was the only way out.

Their vision of life had become so distorted and convoluted that suicide makes all the sense in the world. The tragedy is that they didn't give their loved ones the opportunity to try to "fix" the problem. The question that survivors ask is, "Didn't my loved one trust me enough to 'unload their problem on me?'" "Why didn't I see this coming?" "How could I have missed this?"

The question that survivors ask is, "Didn't my loved one trust me enough to 'unload their problem on me?'" "Why didn't I see this coming?" "How could I have missed this?"

Without appearing to be simplistic, my response is that the loved one did not or could not articulate the severity of the pain that was in their life at this particular moment. They made a decision to solve their pain in a way that was permanent, and they decided to do this on their own without involving any loved one to help them out of the dark, black hole that was swallowing them up. They were beyond fixing and beyond help — so they thought. Survivors are of the opinion that they could have helped their loved one if only they had the chance to intervene. Maybe yes and maybe no. We will never know the answer. That is one of the uncertainties that survivors wrestle with.

...my response is that the loved one did not or could not articulate the severity of the pain that was in their life at this particular moment.

As always, I want to assure all members of the LOSS family of my thoughts and prayers for you — especially those fathers who are grieving the loss of a child and for those grieving the loss of a father or a father figure. I encourage all members of the LOSS family to pray for each other — especially those who have recently joined our family.

Keep On Keepin' On,

Charles T. Rubey

Putting Survivors in Control | continued from page 1

As an example, I am often asked how I began my work in this area. That brings up the death of my stepson, Chan, in 1995. From the get-go, I took a stand that Chan’s memory would be respected. His life would not be summed up only by the way in which he died. What I say reflects that.

I say: “My stepson Channing was an extraordinary young man. When he was 16, he developed bi-polar disorder. It was a devastating genetic disease that caused his moods to swing. He rose to the challenge of the disease for four years, but at the age of 21, when he was a junior at Stamford, he fell into a deep depression and ended his life. It was a devastating loss for our whole family.”

That’s it. 71 Words.

By what I’ve chosen to say (and not say), I’ve set the tone. Chan was an extraordinary young man. A glimpse into his life as a student at Stamford. Devastating disease. We grieve his absence.

Invariably, the listener will extend their compassion and condolences and then ... almost always, share about someone they know who ended his or her life: A child, sibling, extended family member, neighbor, or friend.

I’ve helped many survivors find a short yet powerful way to respond to questions and remain in control of the conversation. Here are four components to include if you want to put together your own ready response.

- **Who was your loved one?**
(Examples: A talented musician/a brilliant student/the kindest person you could ever meet, etc.)
- **What challenge did they face?**
(Examples: Debilitating depression/addictions resulting from self-medication/chronic pain/business reverses/failed marriage)
- **How did they struggle against that challenge?** (Example: they tried to _____)

• **How was it for their family/friends when they ended their life?** (We miss her every day/we wished he could have found better help/there is a hole in our hearts that will never be filled.)

In closing, I want to be clear, as we all know, there is much more to be said than just 70 words when we lose a loved one. Our hearts and minds are filled with words and emotions that need to be felt and expressed. Hopefully, all survivors will find access to healing support that provides a safe opportunity for full self-expression in whatever manner and for as long as they need it. There is no right or wrong way to talk about the loss of your loved one, just as there is no right or wrong way to grieve. Be guided by your heart.

Ronnie Walker, MS, LCPC, lost her stepson Chan, in 1995. She credits the Catholic Charities LOSS program with “saving her life in the aftermath of that loss.” Ronnie went on to found the Alliance of Hope for Suicide Survivors, which has become a leading online source of support for survivors from across the world. You can find their website at www.allianceofhope.org



blossoms of hope brunch

**Benefiting the
Loving Outreach to Survivors of Suicide (LOSS) Program**

Thank you to all of our LOSS members and friends of LOSS for your support of the Blossoms of Hope brunch event on April 26, 2026. We thank you for your participation, generosity, and ongoing support of the LOSS Program. A very special thank you goes to the outstanding Blossoms of Hope Brunch Committee and the Catholic Charities Institutional Advancement team, without whom this event would never have been possible. We look forward to seeing you all next year!

**2027 Blossoms of Hope Brunch
Sunday, April 25, 2027**

Loss and Learning

Cynthia Waderlow, MSE, LCSW

After a sudden loss like suicide, families are reeling. Parents may feel like they have lost energy and find that hopeless feelings, apathy or frustration are affecting their interactions with children and teens. Children, in response, may be furtive and watchful of your tears and despair at home, while looking for normalcy in school or with friends outside the home. Grief reactions to loss are diverse in relation to personality and developmental stage, so closeness and intimacy are not necessarily direct outcomes of mutual loss experiences.

But to suggest that profound loss can offer growth experiences to families who are struggling to contain shock and despair, to just make it day to day, can sound patronizing. Still, the message is meant to offer hope. As you begin your survival process, you will find ways to truly take care of yourself and each other by understanding each other's emotional experiences.

Grief reactions to loss are diverse in relation to personality and developmental stage, so closeness and intimacy are not necessarily direct outcomes of mutual loss experiences.

Empathy allows you to relate to what another is feeling. It is a skill that is learned, especially in situations where emotions are driving individuals' reactive behaviors. And in this loss, the accompanying emotions can bring family members closer or pull them farther apart. Empathy is subtle and powerful in its ability to reach and connect. There is a great deal to be said for focusing in on the family's capacity for interactive empathy as a primary means to survive this life-changing loss together.

Empathy is subtle and powerful in its ability to reach and connect. There is a great deal to be said for focusing in on the family's capacity for interactive empathy as a primary means to survive this life-changing loss together.

Because all intentional growth is a practice, building empathy through loss will be a gradual and healing process of awareness, modeling, and teaching. The more often parents and children operate with empathy, the more empowered they will feel. Empathy creates emotional safety at home. When children observe a parent who is present to their emotional experience, they will see that parent as strengthened and responsive in that moment.

Parents can teach and model empathy for their children at a young age, but it can begin again at any time when you place value and recognition on emotional experience in general, that is, experiences that connect you, children and teens with the world.

Parents can teach and model empathy for their children at a young age, but it can begin again at any time when you place value and recognition on emotional experience in general, that is, experiences that connect you, children and teens with the world. With younger children, you might notice a reaction, then ask, "Are you feeling scared of the dog? Were you lonely out there by yourself in the sandbox? Was it hard for you when you saw other kids with their dads?" Healing through loss extends way beyond grief reactions. During grief, feeling awareness about everything may feel flattened or more intense. All feelings can be a subject for empathic sharing, even the passive, "I don't know."

With regular exchanges, you will normalize conversations about what others might be feeling and how children can show empathy: "Do you think that little boy wants to be invited to play?"

Read stories about feelings of all kinds, but especially those of loss and coping.

Be a role model. Use "I" messages: "I'm sad tonight. When bedtime comes, I miss Daddy even more."

Practice validating your child's difficult emotions: "You were so upset when it was time to turn off the TV. The TV can distract us from sad feelings, so I understand why you would want to watch TV for longer when we are all feeling so sad."

| continued on page 6

Loss and Learning | continued from page 5

By age five, you can address empathy with more inquiry: “How would you feel if you were that child in that situation?”

Starting around age eight, a capacity for empathy figures into more complex and moral issues. We all need to learn when other people feel embarrassed or sensitive or shy or feel different. We can offer inclusion, or a smile, or just acceptance. We can take positions against bullying behavior, tell an adult when another person or animal is being mistreated. We advance our empathy skills when we realize that someone’s feelings may be different from our own. When we allow this difference, we are not only affirming our own experience and values but respecting those of the other person.

We advance our empathy skills when we realize that someone’s feelings may be different from our own.

Most of these are routine examples of normal empathy, but immediately following a major loss experience, everyone may feel emotionally shut down to the life moving around the family. It is healing to bridge understandable reactions of confusion, anger, or withdrawal with an empathic response. Be prepared to hear that you have read an emotion in error. Look for feedback without pushing.

It is healing to bridge understandable reactions of confusion, anger, or withdrawal with an empathic response. Be prepared to hear that you have read an emotion in error. Look for feedback without pushing.

Again, empathy is a practice with small, intentional steps. As survivors, you will continue to feed the pets, move yourselves out of the house, and interact with other people, eat together, and check in with each other. Each time empathy is offered, you step beyond your own pain to validate someone you care for.

Serotinous

By Rosemerry Wahtola Trommer

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 Rosemerry Wahtola Trommer (2024)
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an imprint of Wildhouse Publishing
(www.wildhousepublishing.com)

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LOSS WEATHER LINE

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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 Catholic Cemetery & Mausoleums in Hillside that we hope will bring some peace and healing to those who have been impacted by suicide. The special artwork created for the memorial has been installed. You are all invited to join Bishop Larry Sullivan and Father Charles Rubey at Queen of Heaven Cemetery for a special dedication service. We anticipate a dedication service in May 2026 and we will notify you.

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, May 18, 2026, at 7 p.m.** at Gorton Community Center, 400 E. Illinois Road, Lake Forest, Illinois 60045. To register, contact Bill Teskoski at wteskoski@sbcglobal.net or (312) 560-3119.

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.

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.

Blossoms of Hope Brunch Planning Committee Thanks You!

Thank you to all LOSS members and friends of LOSS for your support of the Blossoms of Hope brunch honoring Father Charles Rubey on April 26, 2026. We thank you for your participation, generosity, and ongoing support of the LOSS Program.

The planning committee welcomes new members to plan and promote the 2027 Blossoms of Hope event. If you are interested in joining us, please contact loss@catholiccharities.net or Cristin Clifford at cclifford@catholiccharities.net

We look forward to seeing you all next year at the 2027 Blossoms of Hope Brunch on Sunday, April 25, 2027.

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 use this link that will take you to the donation form on the Catholic Charities website. Click Other Designation and then type LOSS Program in the box that asks where you want your donation to be applied.

<https://www.catholiccharities.net/give/donate-form/>

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
P.O. 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 in Lisle** (820 Division Street), **St. John the Evangelist Church Narthex in St. John, Indiana** (10701 Olcott Avenue).

May 2026 Meetings

In-Person

- 1st Thursday Group**
May 7, 2026; 7 p.m.
St. John the Evangelist,
St. John, Indiana
Group meets in Church Narthex
Facilitators: Steve Costa,
Jim and Kris Kazmierczak
- 2nd Monday Group**
May 11, 2026; 6 p.m.
Downtown Chicago
Clinician: Deborah Major
Facilitators: Eileen Hurn and
Kristen Coe
- 3rd Wednesday Group**
May 20, 2026; 6 p.m.
St. Francis de Sales,
Lake Zurich
Clinician: Sharon Bibro
Facilitators: Sandy Bourseau
and Tish Guinter
- 3rd Thursday Group**
May 21, 2026; 6:30 p.m.
St. Joan of Arc, Lisle
Clinician: Mary Novak
Facilitator: Kathleen Sergent
- 4th Tuesday Group**
May 26, 2026; 7 p.m.
Marist High School, Chicago
Clinician: Michele Nowak
Facilitators: Barb Murphy and
Lance Beigh
- 4th Sunday Group**
May 24, 2026; 6 p.m.
St. Joseph's Church, Wilmette
Clinician: Laraine Bodnar
Facilitators: Marion Kahle and
Lori Grennon

Online

- 2nd Tuesday Group**
May 12, 2026; 7 p.m.
Clinician: Sharon Bibro
Facilitators: Jim and Tina Kranz
- 3rd Tuesday Group**
May 19, 2026; 6 p.m.
Clinician: Sharon Bibro
Facilitators: Patty LaPorta and
Tish Guinter

Special Interest

- Spousal Loss Group**
2nd Wednesday
May 13, 2026; 7 p.m.
Clinician: Cheryl Joseph-Lukz
Facilitator: Eileen Hurn
- Parent Support Group**
3rd Thursday
May 21, 2026; 6:30 p.m.
Clinician: Deborah Major
Facilitators: Mary and Mark
Edwards
- Spanish-Speaking Group**
2nd Tuesday
May 12, 2026; 6:30 p.m.
Clinician: Victor Alvarez
Facilitator: Yolanda DeLeon

- STAR Group for first responder families**
1st Tuesday
May 5, 2026; 6 p.m.
Clinician: Alicja Bochenek-Schultz
Facilitator: Tish Guinter

June 2026 Meetings

In-Person

- 1st Thursday Group**
June 4, 2026; 7 p.m.
St. John the Evangelist,
St. John, Indiana
Facilitators: Steve Costa,
Jim and Kris Kazmierczak
- 2nd Monday Group**
June 8, 2026; 6 p.m.
Downtown Chicago
Clinician: Deborah Major
Facilitators: Jeff and Reeny
Linstrom
- 4th Tuesday Group**
June 23, 2026; 7 p.m.
Marist High School, Chicago
Clinician: Michele Nowak
Facilitators: Katy Wertz and
Ann Marie Leofanti
- 3rd Wednesday Group**
June 17, 2026; 6 p.m.
St. Francis de Sales,
Lake Zurich
Clinician: Sharon Bibro
Facilitators: Sandy Bourseau
and Tish Guinter
- 3rd Thursday Group**
June 18, 2026; 6:30 p.m.
St. Joan of Arc, Lisle
Clinician: Mary Novak
Facilitators: Kathleen Sergent
and Lance Beigh
- 4th Sunday Group**
June 28, 2026; 6 p.m.
St. Joseph's Church, Wilmette
Clinician: Laraine Bodnar
Facilitators: Katie Graff and
Merle Cowin

Online

- 2nd Tuesday Group**
June 9, 2026; 7 p.m.
Clinician: Sharon Bibro
Facilitators: Jim and Tina
Kranz
- 3rd Tuesday Group**
June 16, 2026; 6 p.m.
Clinician: Laraine Bodnar
Facilitators: Cherie Emling
and Patty LaPorta
- Special Interest**
Spousal Group
2nd Wednesday
June 10, 2026; 7 p.m.
Clinician: Cheryl Joseph-Lukz
Facilitator: Eileen Hurn
- Spanish-Speaking Group**
2nd Tuesday
June 9, 2026; 6:30 p.m.
Clinician: Victor Alvarez
Facilitator: Yolanda De Leon
- Parent Support Group**
3rd Thursday
June 18, 2026; 6:30 p.m.
Clinician: Michele Nowak
Facilitator: Lori Grennon
- STAR Group for first responder families**
1st Tuesday
June 2, 2026; 6 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 email loss@catholiccharities.net to verify that meetings will be held as scheduled.



Upcoming July 2026 Meetings

In-Person

1st Thursday Group

July 9,** 2026; 7 p.m.

Holiday Schedule

St. John the Evangelist,
St. John, Indiana

2nd Monday Group

July 13, 2026; 6 p.m.
Downtown Chicago

3rd Wednesday Group

July 15, 2026; 6 p.m.
St. Francis de Sales,
Lake Zurich

3rd Thursday Group

July 16, 2026; 6:30 p.m.
St. Joan of Arc Church, Lisle

4th Tuesday Group

July 28, 2026; 7 p.m.
Marist High School, Chicago

4th Sunday Group

July 26, 2026; 6 p.m.
St. Joseph's Church, Wilmette

Online

2nd Tuesday Group

July 14, 2026; 7 p.m.

3rd Tuesday Group

July 21, 2026; 6 p.m.

Special Interest

Spousal Loss Group

2nd Wednesday
July 8, 2026; 7 p.m.

Parent Support Group

3rd Thursday
July 16, 2026; 6:30 p.m.

Spanish-Speaking Group

2nd Tuesday
July 14, 2026; 6:30 p.m.

STAR Group for first

responder families
1st Tuesday
July 7, 2026; 6 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 in Memory of*

**George F. Hendry
Daniel J. DeAno**



Mention My Name

Daniel J. DeAno

10/29/1974—4/8/2012

*Fourteen years of missing you
and loving you.*

Until we meet again, watch over us.

Love, Mom, Jill and David

Sheri Ann De Luca

5/10/1967—8/6/1998

*Our precious daughter Sheri,
The years keep passing, but the
pain of your loss remains. You
are missed so much even by new
members of our family. They hear
stories of you, and you will never
be forgotten. We wish you a glorious
birthday in Heaven!*

With our love, Mom & Dad

George F. Hendry

12/15/1972—5/17/1997

*We love you and miss you,
George dear.*

Love, Mom, Jack and Bess

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.

