



National Office
P.O. Box 3696
Oak Brook, IL 60522-3696

For Immediate Release

December 7, 2004

FROM: Wayne Loder
Public Awareness Coordinator
The Compassionate Friends
(Toll free) 866-964-4000
E-mail: wayneloder@aol.com

Worldwide Candle Lighting December 12 Remembers All Children Who have Died

Oak Brook IL—This Sunday at 7 p.m. local time tens of thousands of families around the globe are joining together for The Compassionate Friends eighth annual Worldwide Candle Lighting to remember all children who have died, no matter the age, religion, cause of death, or ethnic origin.

“This is truly a worldwide event that allows bereaved families everywhere the opportunity to unite following their combined loss and to show the world that while a child may have died, that child was important and will never be forgotten,” says Patricia Loder, executive director of The Compassionate Friends, the world’s largest self-help bereavement organization.

The candle lighting starts at 7 p.m. just west of the International Date Line and proceeds west one hour later in the next time zone, eventually encompassing the world in a 24-hour wave of light.

“Like a ring, this circle of light surrounding the globe represents that there is no beginning and no end for the love we carry for our children,” explains Mrs. Loder. “It exists for all eternity.”

In the United States, approximately 275 formal services are planned by chapters of The Compassionate Friends, allied organizations, funeral homes, and other caring groups and individuals. Thousands of informal services in the home with friends and family are also being held in areas where candle lighting services are not scheduled or persons are unable to attend. Known services, including those in other countries, are listed with information on The Compassionate Friends national website at www.compassionatefriends.org.

In recognition of The Compassionate Friends Worldwide Candle Lighting, the United States Senate unanimously passed Resolution 436 in November recognizing December 12 as National Children’s Memorial Day.

“Whether someone has suffered the personal loss of a child, brother or sister, or grandchild, or simply wants to show compassion to those who have, we encourage all to join with us in remembering those children who are no longer here,” says Mrs. Loder. “We would invite all to post a memorial message in our online remembrance book at our national website the day of the candle lighting.”

The Compassionate Friends has chapters in all 50 United States plus Puerto Rico and Washington DC and nearly 600 total chapters in the country, offering friendship, understanding, and hope to bereaved families. The organization has a presence in an estimated 29 countries around the world. For information on a local chapter or for other means of support, call The Compassionate Friends toll-free at 877-969-0010 or visit The Compassionate Friends national website.

###