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**For Immediate Release**

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## Worldwide Candle Lighting December 11 Unites Families Mourning Children

Oak Brook, IL—United in their love for a child who has died, hundreds of thousands of families around the globe will join together Sunday, December 11 to light candles in remembrance of all children gone too soon, regardless of age, cause of death, religion, or ethnic origin.

The Compassionate Friends Worldwide Candle Lighting, held annually the second Sunday in December at 7 p.m. local time, unites family and friends around the world who light candles for one hour to honor and remember children missing from their lives, but not from their hearts. Observances are held throughout the day. This is the event's ninth year.

"The Worldwide Candle Lighting is one way that we try to bring light out of darkness during the holidays, a time of the year that is difficult for most bereaved families," says Patricia Loder executive director of The Compassionate Friends, the nation and world's largest self-help bereavement organization. "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. It exists for all eternity."

The number of formal Worldwide Candle Lighting events submitted to The Compassionate Friends national website has increased nearly 100 percent over the past two candle lightings, exceeding 300 last year in the United States alone. Services are planned not only by chapters of The Compassionate Friends, but also by allied organizations, funeral homes, churches, and caring individuals. In addition, thousands of informal candle lightings are being held in homes with friends and family in areas where no formal candle lighting is planned, or persons are unable to attend. Known services, including those in other countries, are listed on The Compassionate Friends national website at [www.compassionatefriends.org](http://www.compassionatefriends.org).

For all who wish to leave a message in memory of a child who has died, a "Remembrance Book" will be available December 11 at The Compassionate Friends national website.

The Compassionate Friends has nearly 600 TCF chapters in the United States with locations in all 50 states, as well as Washington D.C. and Puerto Rico. The organization has a presence in an estimated 29 countries around the world. For more information, visit the The Compassionate Friends national website or call, toll-free 877-969-0010.

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