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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](http://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."

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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

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Archdiocese of Chicago

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 #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](http://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."

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## 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.

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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.

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---

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)  
Reprinted with permission from the author  
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(www.wildhousepublishing.com)

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

## 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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto:loss@catholiccharities.net) or Cristin Clifford at [cclifford@catholiccharities.net](mailto: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](mailto:loss@catholiccharities.net)

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## 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**





## 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.

