



The Miscarriage Association

OF IRELAND

Carmichael Centre, North Brunswick Street, Dublin 7.

Telephone: 8735702/8725550

Registered Charity Number CHY9738



AUTUMN 2000

NEWSLETTER

WELCOME

Welcome to your Autumn/Winter Newsletter. These coming months may be a difficult time for you. You may be facing very sad times i.e. your baby's anniversary or the date when your baby was due to be born and with Christmas being a special time for children, you may feel you need some extra support to help you through these days. Please remember we are only a phone call away. For anyone wishing to contact us, our numbers are 01 8735702 or 01 8725550.

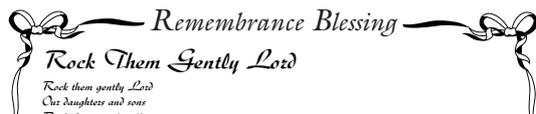
Mary Lawson & Maggie O'Neill

Remembering All "Our Little Souls" in the Month of the Holy Souls

Service of Remembrance

The Miscarriage Association of Ireland are holding their Annual Service of Remembrance in St Theresa's Church, Donore Avenue, off S.C.R., Dublin, 8 on Sunday, 5th November, 2000 at 2.30 p.m. Please note change in time since last newsletter.

To lose a baby through miscarriage can be a lonely and frightening experience. Parents



Remembrance Blessing

Rock Them Gently Lord

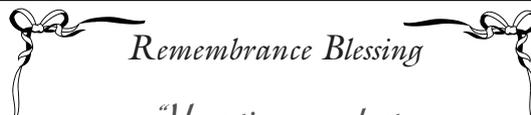
*Rock them gently Lord
Our daughters and sons
Rock them gently till our time comes
Stroke them softly, with all our love
Bring them our prayers on the wings of a dove
Sing to them quietly and ease all our fears
Rock them gently Lord, our precious little dears*



In Memory Of

Baby's Name

Date to Remember



Remembrance Blessing

*"Your time was short
Yet very precious"*



In Memory Of

Baby's Name

Date to Remember



often feel it is an unseen grief and feel they have to justify their loss. They rarely get an opportunity to openly acknowledge their baby's short lifespan whether lost through early or late miscarriage.

Our Service of Remembrance will give parents and family this special time to remember their lost babies. There can be great comfort in being with others who have suffered a similar loss.

A Remembrance Blessing, pictured left and above, will be given to parents for their baby at this year's Service.

Anyone wishing to enter their baby's name into our Book of Remembrance are welcome to do so on this day.

All are welcome.

Your Stories

My Precious Angel

On 16 December 1998, I found out I was pregnant. I was overjoyed, scared and amazed. My husband and I had been trying for a baby for a year. I had been convinced there was a problem and that I would not be able to conceive naturally and had an appointment booked for exploratory tests to see if there was a problem. My pregnancy had confirmed that the appointment was unnecessary.

I told my husband over the telephone that I had done a home test and that it had come back positive. He was away at the time and his mobile phone kept cutting out. It was a crazy conversation and I don't really think he could believe it. We tried not to get too excited until it had been confirmed by the doctor but it was just so amazing.

Over Christmas, I was so careful about what I ate and drank. I was determined to do everything I could to help this be an easy pregnancy. I walked every day and rested. I remember it being a very happy time. I would lie on the sofa and rub my tummy, talking about all the things we would do when he arrived. My mum was going mad with knitting needles and was dying to tell everyone. I said I wanted to wait until the first trimester was over and then it would be safe. My mum was never very patient and kept on about telling people until finally at 12 weeks I gave in and told her it was alright.

At around eleven weeks, all signs of being pregnant disappeared. I put this down to my hormones settling down and my body becoming accustomed to pregnancy. I had been for my first check-up and the consultant told me the baby was there. I was very relieved because I had begun to think I wasn't pregnant at all. I had my scan booked for six weeks after my first visit. I remember going away feeling reassured although somewhere in the back of my mind, I was still worried about the pregnancy.

Two weeks after my check-up, I started to have cramps. I realised that I could lose the baby and panicked. I telephoned the hospital and they told me to go home and rest. I rushed back and went straight to bed. I remember driving home and making all kinds of deals with God if only I didn't lose the baby. Four hours after the cramps started, I miscarried. My world fell apart around me and I didn't know what to do. Never in my life do I remember feeling as helpless as I felt then. I was losing my child and I couldn't do anything to prevent it. I had a D&C the next day.

I left hospital in a daze. I could not get over the fact that a few days before I was looking forward to the most amazing event that would ever happen in my life and now it was all gone. The devastation and emptiness were a physical pain which even now is with me. I don't think it has lessened, I have just learned to live with it. Everything in life I had ever wanted to achieve, I had. This was the first time I had not completed something I really wanted. I felt like a failure.

My due date is approaching and I have not managed to become pregnant yet. I worry that I never will carry a baby full-term. I feel a wrench inside anytime someone tells me they are pregnant and often pray that it be my turn next. My faith has been questioned and to some degree answered. I still believe in God although I feel my prayers weren't answered. Maybe,

there is some great plan in which this had its part to play. If I do have children, perhaps I'll appreciate them more than if I had never lost a child. The experience has made me realise that I shouldn't take things for granted, although sometimes, I still do.

It is very easy to be dismissive of parents who suffer from miscarriage. I had done it myself. I never really appreciated that a miscarriage meant a lost child. My baby is as real to me as if I had lost him after birth. That reality hits every time I think of losing him. It is a sickening in my stomach when I wake up and realise he isn't there. It is the emptiness I feel when I want to hold him but I can't. This can be eased by knowing there was a problem and that I would suffer every day rather than have my child born into a life of pain, but there is no explanation as to why the problem occurred. If I had the answer to why, then I would find accepting what happened easier, but I don't. That is really the sad truth.

Joanne Kinney

Lucy's Story

After reading Ruth's Story in the last newsletter, I felt I needed to write to tell you mine.

We have a beautiful daughter Aoife, our first child and when she was seven months old, I found out I was pregnant again. I was totally shocked, as we had not planned to have another baby so soon. I did not want to be pregnant because I thought how are we going to cope with two babies, blaming myself and my husband for being so careless. After a couple of days and after talking together we got used to the idea and started planning for the future. We had even picked out names. Conor for a boy and Roisin for a girl.

I suppose now looking back I did not feel pregnant. With Aoife, I was sick the day after conceiving and knew I was pregnant before I had even missed my period! I was weepy and hormonal. This pregnancy was different. I did not feel sick. I felt no different and after a couple of weeks, I noticed there was not difference in the shape of my body. My husband even commented that I was still managing to get into my jeans.

I work in a hospital, on 21st December, 1999 I went to the toilet across from my office and when I wiped myself I saw the tiniest speck of blood on the tissue paper. I had no pain or anything. I thought no more of it and went back to my desk. A few hours later I went to the toilet and the same thing happened again. I rang my Gynaecologist and he said to come down to him after lunch and he would organise a scan for me. He said not to panic, I could have an infection or something. I did not panic because it never crossed my mind that I could have a miscarriage, I suppose you think it will never happen to you and after having a healthy baby I thought I would have no worries with this pregnancy.

I had my lunch, drank plenty of water and went for my scan. I remember sitting in the waiting room with all those heavily pregnant women thinking I will be like that now in a few months time, I must sort out my maternity clothes!

I went in for the scan and the radiographer asked me how many weeks pregnant I was. I said I was 10 week's pregnant and my last period was 10th October, 1999. She kept asking me was I sure of my dates and I asked her "Why are you asking me this?" She said "It looks like a pregnancy of 7 weeks". Then I thought, maybe I am wrong, but I always keep a record of my dates. She said she was sorry, but that she could see nothing in the sac. I'd come in the next day and have the D&C done.

It was all over within a few hours and there I was lying in the bed and I just wanted to go home. I felt totally alone. Nurses running around the ward, life going on. I did go home, I was in total shock and the next day I went down town Christmas shopping. I remember my mother standing at my door holding Aoife, crying and

upset because she was worried about me. I said "Mum, I have bought no presents, it's Christmas!"

I took 4 weeks off work. I went back to work, I "got up and got on with it" (as I was told by someone). "You'll have more children". Then it happened. I started having panic attacks. I could not talk to anyone. I went home from work, I was a total mess. I could not drive the car, I was vomiting, everything I managed to eat, was vomited. I could not look after Aoife. I could not sleep, or function. I wanted to run, but I did not know where I wanted to go. I was totally out of control. I went to see my GP who said I was grieving for the baby and that my body was telling me something. My body could not cope as I was totally exhausted. I had not grieved. This was grief. I had been in overdrive over Christmas, put on a happy front for everyone and then crashed in a heap. My GP prescribed anti-depressants. I took them for 2 days and then threw them in the bin. I did not want to be taking them. I thought "Hold on, isn't grief a natural thing, why would I want drugs to block out what I was feeling?"

I really did think I would not come out of the darkness. I was very low. I questioned life, what was all this about, blamed God and why he would do this to us. I was not able for these feelings that I was having, Nausea in my stomach, anxiety etc. I blamed myself for the miscarriage, after all I did not want to be pregnant, and I had a tremendous amount of guilt to deal with. Now I know that we would have coped with two babies, this baby would have been wanted and loved.

The nurses and my Gynaecologist in the hospital were very good, but I do feel that there is not enough information on the subject of miscarriage. I do not think that they have proper training in dealing with miscarriages. They only deal with the medical side of things. What about grief, bereavement, the psychological part to it. It is a loss, part of you has died. I was not prepared. I did not know what to expect, do I bleed, how long will I bleed, etc. I felt very much alone, even though I have such a loving, wonderful husband and a wonderful family. I was able to talk to my husband and I know that he was grieving too. I have wonderful friends, but they do not understand because it has never happened to them. Some people think that a miscarriage is "no big deal" but for me and everyone else that has had a miscarriage it is about losing a baby, part of me and part of my husband.

I cannot say enough about the Miscarriage Association, especially Mary Lawson. Mary was always there for me. All I had to do was pick up the phone. I have never met this woman, but she definitely saved me from losing my mind.

It has taken me a long time to get where I am today and I am eternally grateful. I am not a religious person, but I believe that there is a Higher Power be it God or whatever, watching over us and guiding us. I did not get to where I am today alone. I got strength from somewhere. I do believe that death is no big deal, it is just the body that dies. The spirit lives on. Our baby will always be with us. He was not born into this life, but lives on in Heaven. It gives me such hope to know that when my time comes to go back to God, he will be waiting for me and I will see him.

We have named our baby Conor. I always thought it was a boy, maybe because it was a different pregnancy to Aoife's or maybe because I had a girl. I don't know. He was due to be born on 15th July 2000 and he will always be remembered and never forgotten. A day does not go by without me thinking of what might have been. It is getting easier, and every day is a little bit brighter. Conor is with God and the Angels in Heaven, looking down on us, he will always be close by.

To anyone who has experienced a miscarriage, you are never alone. There is help, talk, talk, talk about your feelings, cry if you feel like crying, get it out of your body. It does get easier. Pain is growth. It has been for me.

Lucy Carthy

Meetings – Dates and Venues

- DUBLIN:** First Thursday of each month except July and August at 8 p.m. in Whitefriar Street Community Centre, Aungier Street, Dublin, 2.
PLEASE NOTE that our Book of Remembrance will be available for completing at our December 2000, March 2001 and June 2001 meetings in Whitefriar Street, Dublin.
- CORK:** Monthly meeting in Bon Secours Hospital, College Road, Cork, Second Monday of each month – Bank Holidays included 8.00-9.30
- CO. MAYO:** Claremorris Social Service Centre. First Thursday of each month. Contact Martina at 094-80334.
- WATERFORD:** Last Thursday of each month. Contact Lorraine Hales at 051-878829
- LIMERICK:** First Wednesday of each month at Social Service Centre, Henry Street at 8 p.m.
- SLIGO:** Meetings held monthly in St. Michael's Family Life Centre, Church Street Sligo on the 3rd Wednesday of the month. Further details from Pauline at 071-63745.

News Round Up

Service in Clifden

A Special Mass and Healing Ceremony in Remembrance of Babies who died in the womb or shortly after birth will be held in

St. Joseph's Church in Clifden, Co. Galway on Sunday 15th October, 2000 at 3.00 p.m.

Anybody looking for further information, please contact Mrs. Bernie McWilliam Tel: 095 23974.

The Miscarriage Association of Ireland wish them all the best on the day.

Baby Wraps - Update

We wish to take this opportunity to thank everyone who kindly contributed to our "Baby Wrap Fund". This fund enabled us to have 1,000 baby wraps made. We have contacted every maternity unit in the Republic and forwarded them samples of the wrap. The feedback was tremendous. Quite a lot of the sample wraps have been used already by hospital staff who felt they could not justify leaving them on a shelf when some bereaved parent badly needed one. We have received urgent requests from hospitals for an immediate supply. Therefore, we have

now decided to donate our wraps to every hospital in the Republic who wishes to avail of them. Each hospital will be responsible for ordering their own supply and the fund is now closed.

So thank you all again for your help in making sure that each little baby lost through miscarriage will be treated with the dignity they deserve and also making the nurse's difficult job of dealing with bereaved parents a little easier.

Renewal of Membership

If your membership is due for renewal, please fill in the enclosed membership form and return it to us. If you would consider becoming a member, we would be very grateful, as we are a totally voluntary organisation. Our annual subscription is IR£10.

Christmas Cards

We are delighted to inform you that our Christmas Cards are now ready. Should you wish to purchase these, they will be available at our Service of Remembrance in November and at our November and December Meetings in Whitefriar Street. Should you wish to order by post, the cost is as follows:

1 pack	£3.50 + 70p p&p
2 packs	£7.00 + £1.15 p&p
3 packs	£10.00 + £1.90 p&p
4 packs	£13.00 + £1.90 p&p
5 packs	£16.00 + £2.70 p&p

Prices for larger quantities on request.

Street Collection Day

We'd like to remind all our members that our Annual Street Collection will be held on Saturday 11th November in Grafton Street, Dublin from 10 til 2. Don't forget to support us by telling all your friends. Thanks.

Committee

Maggie O'Neill
Chairperson

June O'Toole
Joint Secretary

Karen Gilligan
Joint Secretary

Mary Lawson
Treasurer

Monica Dunne
Cathy Lynch

We would like to take the opportunity to say farewell to Julie O'Donovan and Joanne Kinney, two members of our Committee who have worked hard during their time on the Committee. We are very sorry to see them go but wish them well for the future.

Thanks, girls.

Sad Farewells

Baby Eden Dillon lost on
14th January, 2000 and
Baby Tori Dillon lost on
2nd September, 2000.
Sadly missed by Mam and
Dad, Nuala and John
Dillon and brother Cúán.

Welcome Babies

A son, John Dalton Kinney,
precious baby of John
and Joanne Kinney.

Remembrance Blessings

We have had Blessings
of Remembrance
printed. They will be
blessed at our
November Service and
will be available on
that day and from
then on by post or at
our monthly support
group meetings in
Dublin. We decided to
have these Blessings
made because of the
demand from people
who, having lost their
babies, said that they
had nothing tangible
by which to remember
them. Relations or
friends often wish to
give the bereaved
parents a gift
following the loss of
their baby. These little
Blessings will be
treasured always. We
will be requesting a
donation of £1 per
Blessing to cover
printing cost etc.

Poetry Corner

Selected Lines Only

by Nuala Dillon

There's a sale on today.

I wish I could buy a heart
to replace the one you
took with you
on the day that I turned thirty.

There's a sale on today.

I wish I could buy a
birthday for you so that you
wouldn't have to die
on the day that I turned thirty.

There's a sale on today.
Selected lines only.

Slow Journey

by Nuala Dillon

My days no longer
have their full sound.

I can't seem to lift my hands
to everyday things,
or settle to ordinary tasks.

Though facing forward,
I'm looking back,
and I can't find the anchor
that will keep me fixed.

Only by tightening
the drifting ropes,
will I be able to make
the slow journey
back to myself.

To Dear Darling Angel James

We think of you so often, Dearest James
But especially today.
Today, 1st September, 2000, you should
have been born into our little family.
Another baby son, and a brother for Jack.
Jack is only 26 months old

So he doesn't understand yet,
But he's so full of life and full of chat,
We'll tell him all about his baby brother
When he's older.
It doesn't seem fair at all that you were
only
with us for 5 months, inside your Mama's
tummy.
You never made it out to run around with
Jack
but you'll always be in our hearts.
It will be very hard to see others born this
September
but we will always remember the day you
were born
and died, 19th April, 2000.
Knowing that you are with the Angels in
Heaven
and with Mama's Daddy helps us greatly.
Forever and Always
All our love,
Mama, Papa and Jack O'Sullivan

XOXOXO

25th August 2000 – A Dedication to Our Two Baby Boys *by Irene Roche*

Nine years have gone by
And we still wonder why?
You were taken from us Christopher
A little Angel high up in the sky.

We think of you Michael Patrick,
as your first anniversary comes round
today
The year has flown by
as we pray at your graves where you both
lie.

Life has gone on and we will always miss
you both dearly,
We will never forget you and think of you
yearly,
Lots of love always and forever
from Mammy, Daddy, brothers Stephen
and Colm and sisters Lisa and Niamh.

XXXXXX

REMEMBER THIS IS YOUR NEWSLETTER AND WE WOULD GREATLY APPRECIATE ANY POEMS, ARTICLES, EVENTS etc.
YOU WISH TO CONTRIBUTE FOR INCLUSION. THE MISCARRIAGE ASSOCIATION OF IRELAND CAN BE CONTACTED AT:
The Carmichael Centre, North Brunswick Street, Dublin 7. Telephone: 8735702/8725550/8722914. Fax: 8735737