

# Remembering Your Child

Contributed by Corinne O'Flynn

Regardless of the situation at the time of your child's death, it is always possible to find ways to remember and memorialize your precious baby. In cases where there is a prenatal diagnosis or when you are given an opportunity to prepare, the memorial ideas can be more closely associated with your child's time here with you. In cases of early pregnancy loss, or when your child dies suddenly and without warning, there are still many ways in which to build memories that can be cherished for a lifetime.

Gathering the mementos of your child's life may sound like a difficult undertaking when you are in the midst of your loss, but having these things down the road will be such a gift. Taking your child's foot and handprints, ID bracelets, pictures, ultrasound images are some things that can bring your baby closer to your heart after they are no longer here. Saving their blankets, a lock of their hair, the items that were in contact with your baby if they did survive for a short while will bring you comfort and help you to feel close to your baby at times when they seem so far away.

Ceremonies are a special way to honor your child, and allow those close to you to take part in your remembrance with you. Church services, special prayers, memorial services, funeral, baptism, or even a gathering of your family and friends can become a cherished memory for years to come. You can hold your service or gathering right away or many years after your child is lost.

Annual cards sent on your baby's birthday or angel day, requesting that your family and friends take a moment to remember your child with you might be something to let others know it is still okay to discuss your child with you at any time.

The holidays offer a unique opportunity to remember your child with others as well. Personalizing a greeting card with a blessing about your child, including your baby in the annual family newsletter that you might send out at the end of each year can be a wonderful way to honor your little one.

Planting a tree in your child's name, or a memorial garden at your home can be very healing. If you have your baby's cremated remains you could sprinkle them in the garden or plant them with your tree.

You can donate to favorite charity in your child's name, and request that your friends and family do the same. You can organize a fundraiser in your child's name, annual walks, or candlelight vigils, are some other ways to publicly remember and honor your child.

On a more personal level, you can prepare an area of your home to be your child's place of honor. Here you can arrange photos, keepsakes, cards and figurines to remember your child. Many parents have found a special piece of jewelry, or even had one made for them to honor their child. If you had your baby cremated, many mortuaries offer tiny urns that you wear as a necklace, into which they will place a small portion of your child's ashes for you.

If you are gifted in a craft or wish to take up a new pastime, consider scrapbooking, quilting, painting, or other creative hobbies that would allow you to make something just for remembering your baby.

The possibilities for making memories are only limited by your imagination. What is important to know is that regardless of the volume or the lack of physical items you do have, you will never forget your baby.