



ARCHDIOCESE OF NEW YORK
RESPECT LIFE

Mass of Remembrance

For Children Lost Through Miscarriage

As a meaningful expression of reverence and love, a parish may offer a “Mass of Remembrance” for children lost through miscarriage. Below you will find suggestions for liturgy planning.

Suggested Votive Masses

If there is no obligatory memorial, it may be fitting to pray a Votive Mass of the Blessed Virgin Mary, such as Mother of Divine Hope or Gate of Heaven.

Additional Elements

The following are tangible ways to acknowledge the children lost to miscarriage, and to entrust them to the Lord. Depending on pastoral considerations, we recommend you select one or a combination of these elements:

- **Book of Remembrance:** You may have a “Book of Remembrance” available for couples to write the name(s) of their child(ren). *If couples have not named their children, they may write “Baby (last name)” or “Daughter/ Son of _____”*
 - o If it seems pastorally appropriate, each name may be read aloud as part of the Prayers of the Faithful. “We pray for... may they rest in peace.”
 - o The Book of Remembrance may be placed before the altar at the Offertory, or before an image or statue of the Blessed Mother for the duration of the Mass.
- **Basket of Names:** A basket with paper and pencils may be placed at the entrance of the Church for people to write the name(s) of the child(ren) they are remembering. *If couples have not named their children, they may write “Baby (last name)” or “Daughter/ Son of _____”*
 - o The basket may be placed before the altar at the Offertory, or before an image or statue of the Blessed Mother for the duration of the Mass.
- **Flowers:** To represent the child(ren) lost to miscarriage.
 - o Parents may place these flowers in a vase in front of the altar, or before an image or statue, as a way of entrusting their child(ren) to the Lord.
 - o You may invite them to take the flowers home.
- **Votive Candles:** To represent the child(ren) lost to miscarriage.
 - o As attendees arrive at the Church, greeters may invite them to light a votive candle and place it on a table in front of the altar or before an image or statue of the Blessed Mother, as a prayer petition for those they are remembering.
 - o After Mass, you may invite the couples to take their votive(s) home.

Homily Recommendations

Priests and pastors, know that your presence and fatherhood is such a gift of security and strength amidst the grief of losing a child. Thank you for offering a Mass of Remembrance, which provides a meaningful way to uphold families in prayer as they entrust their children to the Lord. Below you will find some themes that we would recommend including in your homily for a Mass of Remembrance.

- Acknowledging the reality of grief, with all the human emotions that it may entail, and understanding *this grief as an expression of love* for the child that was lost.
- The understanding and the closeness of the Hearts of Jesus and Mary to us in our suffering.
- The gift that every life is, even if brief.
- Affirming the reality that these parents are mothers and fathers forever. The Lord entrusted these children to them and to their love, into eternity.
- The hope of Heaven, as we journey as pilgrims to a place beyond tears and suffering, a place of eternal joy and communion.

Intercessions

Below you will find some suggested intercessions, which may be modified according to the particular needs of your community of faith.

That those who have suffered the loss of a child, especially through miscarriage, may know the tender mercy and closeness of Jesus. *We pray to the Lord.*

For fathers and mothers of child loss, may they be given the grace and courage to lean on each other and the Lord amidst their grief. May the Lord surround them with love, care, and support.
We pray to the Lord.

For the Church and the ministries that seek to uphold her grieving members. May those who honor and reverence the gift of every life be instruments of kindness, compassion and healing.
We pray to the Lord.

For the souls of all the faithful departed, especially the children we carry in our hearts today. May all those who mourn receive consolation and hope in Christ, the Resurrection and the Life.
We pray to the Lord.

Materials to Take Home

- We recommend preparing a care package of meaningful items for each family to take home. This may include elements such as:
 - o A prayer card, small crucifix, medal, votive candle, or flowers.
 - o Resources and materials on miscarriage (such as those available through [Red Bird Ministries](#)).
- Additional ministry resources and brochures can be made available in the vestibule.

Additional Prayer: [USCCB's Blessing of Parents after a Miscarriage or Stillbirth](#)