

TRIBUTE TO THE LOST

(In memory of those addicts whose premature deaths have saddened all of us)

To our children who fell victim to the allure of escape from reality through the use of substances, we are truly sorry. We're sorry that you inherited a world from which you believed an escape was needed. We're sorry that we couldn't get you more help at the height of your desperation. We regret that society cast you out when you so clearly needed to be embraced. We deplore the stereotype that has permeated public opinion....that you were not worth saving. We are all God's children and you had value in His eyes and in the hearts of your families and friends.

We will honor your memory in this service and for as long as we live. Perhaps the tragedy that so devastated your lives, and the lives of your families, will serve as a beacon to a country that needs enlightenment and a call to action. Your passing will not have been in vain if others are saved by virtue of the attention you have brought to this devastating national epidemic.

Tonight, we light a candle for you.

6/8/2006—Candlelight Vigil