

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE CONTACT: Joanne Cacciatore at (623) 979-1000**

**December 10, 2000 is National Children's Memorial Day**

Members of the community who have lost a child at any age and from any cause are invited to join in a candlelight vigil under the starry heavens of Phoenix. It will be held at Patriot's Square Park, Sunday, December 10, 2000, sponsored by the MISS Foundation and The Compassionate Friends. The event is free to anyone who has experienced the death of a child. The ceremony will begin at 6:30 p.m. and features the Phoenix Children's Choir.

On the second Sunday of each December, families across the world light a candle at 7:00 p.m. in remembrance of their child. This ritual has been tradition for the past six years, however, the bill formally recognizing this day as a national holiday in the United States was just approved in 1999. Other organizations attending the service include: Parents of Murdered Children, Phoenix Children's Hospital, and AGAST. This will be the second of many annual services to honor children who have died.

Nationwide, about 30,000 babies are born still, and more than 20,000 babies die within the first year of life in the United States. Tens of thousands of children die from disease, homicide, motor vehicle accidents, drowning, undeterminable causes, and suicide. These statistics leave families in horror. The groups participating are committed to providing free counseling and ongoing support for the survivors.

For additional information, call Executive Director Joanne Cacciatore at (623) 979-1000. Web site is located at [www.misschildren.org](http://www.misschildren.org) with links to the Compassionate Friends National Chapter locator.

