

- **Prayers with Candles:**

I use the following prayer with candle lighting. We use 4 candles:

The first candle is lit to represent the memory of all of the children who we have loved who have died. Though this candle will only burn for a time, the light and love that they brought into our lives will remain strong forever.

The second candle is lit to represent our hope as we face the future. Although our lives have been marked by pain and loss, and although pain will remain, we hope for a future that also has joy and happiness.

The third candle is lit to represent the peace that we seek in our lives. Peace does not mean that everything is better, only that we find comfort and solace in the midst of the difficulties of our lives.

May the light of these candles remind us of the tenacity of the human spirit that always seeks life and love even in the hardest of life's moments.

Let us pray.

Holy comforter, source of all of life and solace in death, we turn to you today seeking the peace and hope. Our hearts ache with the pain of loss and our souls echo with the emptiness that we feel. Be with us, granting us life and love and joy to fill the emptiness and to soothe the pain. Help us to find in your promises to us and in the companionship we have with one another enough of life's goodness to balance the sadness of the loss of our children. We pray today for our children who have died. Hold them in your love and keep them in your kindness. We thank you for the gift of memory, in which they live on within us and within all who loved them. Help us to keep memories alive and to share with others the joy and the pain that our children's lives and deaths have brought. Finally, we pray for all everywhere who mourn with us, that we all may find new joy and contentment in lives that have felt such terrible loss. Let it be so, we ask. Amen.