



DIOCESE OF ROCKVILLE CENTRE

Office of Human Life, Family and Bioethics

Emily's Gift

We remember each life lost with love and affection knowing how precious all life is to God!



*Donna Crean, OHLFB and Janet Stevens,
Program Coordinator of Emily's Gift*

Emily's Gift is a program that was developed at Good Samaritan Hospital to give dignity to the physical bodies of miscarried children under 20 weeks gestational age. We offer a Christian burial service bi-annually at Queen of All Saints Cemetery in Central Islip.

As important, is the opportunity to offer healing to the families of these children whose grief is often dismissed by the secular culture who see these lost babies as something less than a life that comes to term and is born. **We remember each life lost with love and affection knowing how precious all life is to God and we acknowledge that reverence through our programs practice.**

Any products of conception that remain after a loss are taken to pathology and examined at the cellular level for human remains. All human remains are held in pathology until the next service. Children who were lost at home where there are no remains are remembered spiritually at our service where the names of each precious child is read solemnly out loud with the families present. Unlike secular hospitals we **do not incinerate human beings as medical waste.**

We treat all life with the same dignity and respect as we would want for ourselves or our own families. **The Emily's Gift program goes to the very core of the mission of Catholic healthcare, who we are and who we claim to be as Catholics who respect all life from conception to the moment of natural death.** To see the families who attend approach the gravesite, laying down a single white rose and saying a prayer to remember their lost loved one is a beautifully moving experience and is a testament to the sacred nature of all life.

The Emily's Gift team sees this ministry as a sacred one and it is an honor and a privilege to be able to accompany these families as they lay their precious children to final rest.

By Deacon Rich Becker, MS, MA, BCC
Director of Pastoral Care and Ethics
Clinical Ethicist

Catholic Health, Good Samaritan Hospital



Reflection from a couple who shared in Emily's Gift

May 1, 2021

We prayed together and had a space to see we are not alone in our loss!

I was 15 weeks pregnant when I found out that the baby did not have a heartbeat anymore. We were so sad to experience this loss and grieved for this special little one who we had already thought of as a part of our family. I was incredibly grateful for the Emily's Gift program at Good Samaritan Hospital. The doctors, nurses and staff on labor & delivery were outstanding. **I was so touched by the respect and care the medical team gave in upholding the dignity of our baby, no matter how small.**

On May 1st I attended the Emily's Gift ceremony at Queen of All Saints cemetery. **It was one of my most moving ceremonies I have been a part of in my adult life.** The team honored the lives of the babies who were lost to miscarriage. Every person was given a white rose to place on the grave. **We prayed together and had a space to see we are not alone in our loss.** It gave us some peace for what happened and also hope for the future.

Sean and Jamey Hutchinson

