

PONDERINGS ALONG THE PATH

By Nadine Boyd



Dear Compassionate Friends:

This month many of our children are starting new chapters in their lives, by graduating from high school or college, getting married or even becoming parents themselves. As much as we rejoice in their achievements and their optimism for the future, we mourn the loss of the old chapter. It's so hard to think about them moving on in life and realizing we will no longer be as big a part in their daily lives. We love the confident, kind, funny adults they have become, but mourn the loss of the trusting little child we rocked and nurtured and shared every little happy time or disappointment with. It is especially hard for bereaved families who have suffered the loss of a child through death to "let go" of their surviving children. We don't do change very well!

Our children have taught us unconditional love, courage, the strength to stand up for our values and the faith to keep going during adversity. They have also taught us patience, hope, confidence, the ability to dream and the unbelievable strength of family. Our children have taught us that life goes on. They have lived through the tremendous pain of losing a sibling and experienced one of the most painful losses possible, but still find the courage to hope and love and dream for the future. They are anxious to spread their wings and experience life. We can only hug them tight, say a prayer and release them to find their way in the world. We are trusting them to make the right choices through the values we have taught them. We have so many dreams for them, but realize they have to have their own dreams, and work to make those dreams come true. We hope that our faith, love and trust in them will carry them through any tough times, and the knowledge that we will always "be there" for them.

Our church has a wonderful ceremony for graduating seniors in which our ladies' quilting group hand-makes a beautiful quilt for each graduate and they are then presented with the quilts and blessed. It is a very moving ceremony and it moves me to tears every year. The words go something like this: "when you were born we wrapped you in a blanket and held you close. We now wrap you in this quilt and send all the love and caring of your family and church family with you out into the world".

I wish you comfort and healing, and the faith and courage to get through these new chapters in your life.

In friendship,

Nadine