

Dear Saying Goodbye

I want to extend my heartfelt thanks for the beautiful and sincere service I attended in Oxford this year. I simply can't tell you how much it meant to me to be able to give my children the service that I always wanted for them.

With early miscarriages, such as I had, it is too easy for them to pass by without anyone knowing, without anyone saying anything, without the typical dignity, respect and public ceremony that is paid when people die.

If you miscarry early, they may be taken away in a yellow medical bin, you may miscarry at home, and your children become like a quiet secret's that disappear in a moment. But that is not how I related to them.

They were my children, and each one was loved and cherished and, even now, an essential part of who I am. My family. To be honest, it is that abstractness that has made miscarriage so very hard to deal with for me. Not to know if I was 'allowed' to be bereaved as others might be, to wonder if I could talk about them as my children without upsetting or offending people.

When I first came across Saying Goodbye, we were talking and Zoe asked me what I had called my children. I will never forget that. No one had had the courage to ask that, or talk about my losses as individual members of my family - with names. It was an astonishing relief to know someone thought of my children the same way I did. But it was a rare occurrence - at the hospital I was never offered a picture of my babies. I had gone there as an expectant mother, but I left alone, bereft and empty four times over.

Bereavement is such a terribly isolating path to tread, even when it is shared between two parents of baby. Yet death is a normal part of life, but still so unbearably difficult to deal with, share or comprehend. You challenge that loneliness. That is a very brave and kind thing to do.

So, I am tremendously grateful that I was able to stand with others at the service and acknowledge our beautiful precious children. Finally, I was able to give them the public service that they deserved, I was able, with your help to do my best by them, and mark their lives in a spectacular cathedral, with wonderful music, prayers, and most of all love.

Thank you.

Emma