

MEDIA RELEASE

For immediate release

From: Catherine Butterfield, Media and Communications Consultant, Mercy Health

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Remembrance service held to recognise babies lost

More than 300 people gathered on 15 October at the Melbourne Museum to remember babies lost to miscarriage, stillbirth or neonatal death at the inaugural Victorian Pregnancy and Infant Loss Remembrance Service.

In what was described as a simple but beautiful service to recognise babies' short but significant lives, the evening was an opportunity for bereaved families to connect with each other and with community support networks, including Red Nose Grief and Loss, and SANDS.

Mercy Hospitals Pastoral Care Manager Mary Klasen, one of the event organisers, read a moving story, *'You have my heart'*, to those gathered. The audience included families who have experienced the loss of a baby, Victorian Health Minister Jenny Mikakos, members of parliament and representatives from Safer Care Victoria and the Spiritual Health Association and other Victorian hospitals.

Holding a statewide event sent a powerful message to families that their babies' short lives mattered, Mary explains.

"This coming together as a community to openly acknowledge pregnancy and infant loss can certainly help to reduce the isolation so many families experience after the loss of their babies," Mary says.

"The service was beautiful. It was an evening that featured harp music, a wonderful choir, candle lighting and a time to reflect. The wave of light that moved through the museum was a poignant symbol of hope, peace and memory.

"We are hopeful that the event will continue to be held each year on International Pregnancy and Infant Loss Remembrance Day, 15 October."

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For interviews and photo opportunities, please contact:

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