

Loving Life

Shortly after Mary Manachi's second child, Marylou, was born, she was diagnosed with Cooley's anemia, which requires a blood transfusion every two weeks and is usually fatal before the age of 20.

Assured by physicians that the genetic disorder was very rare, Mary and her husband had another baby. At six months, Rosemarie was also diagnosed with the disorder, and later, her son, George, was also born with Cooley's. Sadness gripped Mary and her husband.

One day, Mary walked into Rosemarie's room and found her making a beautiful pin to sell at a craft show. "I'm going to earn all I can toward college," she said. Then a teacher phoned to report what Rosemarie had written as something she was most thankful for: "good health!"

Mary took another look at her children and found them all to be embracing life. George was talking about becoming a geologist. Marylou was earning a place on the honor roll and practicing her piano diligently.

Mary finally concluded: "If they love life so much ... am I to love life less?"

It is not unusual for the associates of Life Care, American Lifestyles and Life Care at Home to have similar experiences as we survey the people we serve. Sometimes our burdens seem great. It helps at those times to remember those with great burdens who carry them as "being too small" even to become worries.

--Beecher Hunter