

To those around you  
Who are trying to cope.

Always remember  
That peace  
Is at hand  
By living your life  
As best as you can.

## Let it Begin with Me

by Marcella Adamsson



I can only imagine  
What life would be like  
If we focused on love  
Instead of the strife.

Life could be great  
As we go about our days  
Lifting each other up  
Out of the fog and the haze.

This is the dream  
I would like to see  
So, help me God  
And let it begin with me.



Life is a mystery  
That we don't understand  
We rail at what is not  
Instead of enjoying  
What we can.

It is time to change  
This train of thought  
Let's enjoy what is  
Putting to rest  
What is not.

Live, laugh, love  
All the time  
Giving hope

I do it right from my home by phone. Even though I no longer see their faces, I can hear the changes in their voices. I have adapted to the change and I am so grateful for this opportunity. Once again, I have a purpose in life and that is helping those in need.

I would like to encourage others to give some thought to volunteering a little time to the communities in which you live. There are so many opportunities out there and people who could use your help – in little and big ways. It does not have to be big to be useful. You don't even have to be able, but available. The rest will be provided. I reach out to those who are retired or approaching retirement to Consider sharing a little of your time, skills, interests or talents with others. It's strange that when I think back on helping those in need the biggest thing I remember is the joy. What more can one ask for?

In the late 80s my husband and I moved from Ontario to Alberta, far away from my sick and elderly parents. They lived on the East Coast. They understood that I had family and employment commitments, but it was difficult for me. I decided I would make up for it by helping others who needed assistance. I knew that my parents would approve. It helped me come to terms with the situation.

The idea of comforting the sick and elderly stayed with me over the years. I believe I was destined to follow that path. One day, as I was reading our Parish Bulletin, shortly after retirement, my destiny was confirmed. An article about pastoral care visitation training caught my attention. I immediately checked it out, signed up, completed the course and began a new phase of my life.

That training introduced me to a very rich, rewarding experience in the years that followed. I thrived as I visited the elderly and the sick in their homes, in nursing homes, in extended care units, and hospitals. To my surprise, filling that need fulfilled a need in my life as well. That thought never entered my mind when I began volunteer work.

Seeing the joy that my visits brought to the lives of others also brought much joy to me. I remember the first day I visited a nursing home. I was a little apprehensive entering the facility. I floated out. I did not feel my feet touch the ground. I had never had such a high in my life. How could this be? I could finally affirm what “in giving we receive” really meant.

Nursing home visitations were special for me. I made friends with many residents. When I entered the foyers of the homes to see specific residents, many of the others’ faces would light up. They thought I was coming to visit them. I felt compelled to stop by, say hello and spend a brief moment with them before I started my regular visits. In order not to short change the time I had to spend with others I found myself showing up early to socialize with those in the front lobby.

The people I visited would sometimes confide in me. They would talk about concerns they did not want to discuss with family. They did not want to worry them. They would talk about their youth, their pranks, their

families, their sorrows and joys in life. Sometimes we would go for a little walk. Often we laughed as we reminisced about days gone by, and sometimes we laughed uncontrollably. What beautiful memories.

This volunteer work gave me a sense of well-being. I loved every minute of it. Well, almost! It filled me with love and compassion for those I served. It also filled a need I had, to be useful. I did not realize how much I needed it until I could no longer participate due to my own physical limitations. I thought my volunteer days were over.

I remember hearing that “whenever a door closes, a window opens” and one opened for me. A couple of months ago, when I was browsing the Catholic Diocese newsletter, another opportunity presented itself. I noticed an announcement about training for the palliative care bereavement team and a request for volunteers.

I called the number provided and discovered that I could do this from home as the contacts were by phone. Of course, I enrolled. Once again I felt I had a new lease on life.