

A CELEBRATION OF LIFE

We are here today to celebrate a life—the life that was well lived by of a woman who loved life itself.

When we think of Marie, so many things come to mind. She was a very strong and independent woman and she proved this by living her adult years on her own until she was for 97 ½. Most of her life was lived in the very house where she grew up. Marie liked to show a picture of herself when she was a baby and liked to share that she was only 13 pounds when she was a year old.

Marie was someone who kept her mind busy. She was always thinking of new projects to start. She often had several projects going on at the same time. We would visit Marie at her house and she would have a quilt in progress laid out on the table, boxes of stamps she was sorting, a puzzle started on the card table by the picture window, a knitted scarf begun in her yarn basket by her chair, handmade cards she was finishing to fill a request and on and on.

She kept her mind active and her hands busy almost until the very end.

Marie lived simply, yet fully. She was content with the things she had.

She saved everything with the purpose of putting it to good use. She cut off the corners of used envelopes to use them as bookmarks. She kept used envelopes, scraps of paper from mailings and other things that she would share with our children for their drawing and coloring projects.

She was great at recycling. We could all learn from her way of getting the most use out of everything she had. She did not waste a thing.

She was a teacher until the very end. She often taught others her crafting skills. Her skills were worthy of several ribbons at the county fair for her baby blankets, booties and caps. She made educational games for our children using old greeting cards she cut into pieces to make puzzles.

Marie was faithful to the church, faithful in her faith, and faithful in her care for her fellow man. Marie attended every Mass possible. And if she wasn't able to attend, she would listen at home.

Marie was a woman of faith who lived out her life in a Christ-like manner.

Marie was a very giving person. She volunteered her time in a number of ways. She volunteered hundreds of hours at the hospital and through the RSVP program. She gave blood and decorated bulletin boards every month at the Mary Jane Brown Home. There are probably many other things she helped with that we are not even aware of. She knitted and crocheted hundreds of stocking caps and scarves, sewed pillows and quilts for those less fortunate. Her back porch was always bursting at the seams with bags of things she had made and collected for outreach groups.

Marie loved puzzles and often had one out working on it when visitors came. Mike has fond memories of stopping by to see her and they would visit together while fitting a few more pieces into the puzzle.

Marie loved the "Wheel of Fortune". It is one of the only television shows she watched. Marie loved to watch the birds and squirrels from her window. She enjoyed her garden and flowers.

Marie always had a glimmer in her eye. She was a very gracious woman with a positive attitude. Even in the midst of her greatest pain, she was not demanding or rude.

Marie was like a grandmother to our children. When I asked the children what their favorite thing was about Marie, Anja our almost 4 year old said, "everything". As much as I tried to get a more specific answer from her, she insisted it was everything.

Griffen, who is five, said "I was like her kid. She always hugged me when I would leave." Mela (7) said, "She was nice" and Elise (6) said, "I loved her."

She told us once she had always wanted a pair of bib overalls. That year we got her a pair for her birthday. She told us she had tried them on, but we never saw her in them or even knew if she ever wore them again. I have often tried to picture her in her bib overalls.

While outliving the majority of her relatives and often saying that she didn't have a family of her own, many of us can say that she was like family to us and was a part of our families.

Psalms 91: 14-16 states, "The Lord says, "I will rescue those who love me. I will protect those who trust in my name. When they call on me, I will answer; I will be with them in trouble. I will rescue them and honor them. I will satisfy them with a long life and show them my salvation."

Marie's request was that she not die alone and she did not. That request was met by many friends who took the time to sit with her and hold her hand which they did to the very end.

Marie left this world a better place because of the life she lived. Marie will be greatly missed, but not forgotten.

The following reflection was written and read by Wanda Jarchow for the funeral of Marie Wiegel on October 27, 2008. Marie's was one of 19 funerals celebrated in our two parishes in the past year. Each one was a gift to us from God. May God bless each one with eternal life in heaven.

