

Blankets of Love

“Support In Crisis”



As told by Julia Means, Columbia St. Mary's Parish Nurse

Marissa and Thomas (not their real names) seemed to be a simple Blanket of Love (BOL) success story. They were both regular participants in the BOL prenatal education program. The program often struggled to get men involved; but Robert seemed to look forward to coming. He was always friendly and energetic and the participants appreciated his sense of humor. Marissa and Thomas took advantage of the education and advice given by the women who are BOL staff and mentors. A healthy baby boy was born and they were overjoyed.

They weren't done with BOL, however. They continued to be regular participants in the parenting education program. It wasn't easy to go through the challenges of growing along with the new baby, but they dealt with the challenges together. It seemed to be a "Readers Digest" kind of success story. Until one night, Thomas was the victim of the violence that has plagued Milwaukee. He was shot and killed. The Blanket of Love became something entirely different for Marissa. She had always enjoyed the friendship of the group through the many months of prenatal care and training. But at the time of Thomas' death, she came to depend on the BOL community for ongoing support. Grieving is a difficult task at any time, but when a baby is involved and a family is ripped apart, it is even harder. Her BOL friends and staff now take the time to be sure that she is adjusting and grieving as well as being a good parent. All are committed to help her be the best parent she can be in keeping with the plans that she and Thomas once held together.

The Blanket of Love Program meets weekly from 5:30 p.m.-7:00 p.m. each Tuesday night.
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