

Well, I wish I could tell you that that was the end of a happy story. It was not a very happy story. Because as a result of all this ministering in the village, taking care of all her own children, taking care of the chores, being the provider in the house because my grandfather had been laid off. Doing all these things, Mary herself, my grandmother, became ill and died.

My mother never had a mother for very long. And I often asked her later because of this supreme act of volunteerism, giving her life so another could live, 'Mom, did you ever resent this?' 'Oh son,' she said, 'how could I ever resent a legacy like that. Maybe people would think it was foolish that she would sacrifice her life and her family to save that of another. But son, if you don't have that attitude, how are you going to make a difference in the world? If you can't think beyond yourself, how can you possibly be a volunteer?'

... I see women dedicating their lives ..., sacrificing themselves so that others might enjoy more. And in every one of you in this room there is that volunteer. And in every single one of you there is the remembrance of my grandmother Mary and the continuation of her spirit. ... You are the caressing hand, you are the crooners, you are the smellers of the flowers ... You are the ... ambassadors of their hope.

... Throughout the entire world there's beginning to emerge a consciousness of the need for women to win the day and to become the daughters of destiny and the

guiders of tomorrow. There's a belief, even among men, that we cannot live without the guiding touch of the volunteer woman who has a sense of compassion, collaboration, cooperation, courtesy, civility, that men have not been known to have. ... The truth of the matter is ... with a woman, her heart is fused to her soul and she's not self-conscious about that.

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In high school I lived with my grandparents and I used to come home occasionally from some heartthrob experience as a teenager. And I'd walk through the front doorway and my grandfather would greet me and smile at me and be oblivious to my pain. But my grandma would look and she would see. She had that inner eye. Grandma knew I was in pain. And so she would get up with that terrible arthritis of hers and walk over to the stove and put the kettle on. And pour me a tea. And occasionally when I wanted to talk too quickly about it she'd put her fingers on my lips and say, 'Not yet,' first the tea... And then she would hold my hand. And I would tell her. I knew she'd come.

There were times when I had toothaches and we didn't have a dentist in town. ... Grandmother would come and whisper into my mouth and soothe it away. And when I had earaches because we didn't have a doctor in the community she would come and whisper into my ear. And soothe it away. I knew she'd come. Many times throughout the course of my life when I have seen difficulty and privation and pain and anguish, I knew she would come. Who ever she was. And she generally looked like you, like each one of you in this audience. ... [We] knew that you would come because there is a sense of optimism when the soul is fused to the heart.

... My Grandmother Mary did not die for not, she died to inflame my mother with the sense of the need to help, to serve, that has inflamed my wife, has inflamed my sister, has inflamed my daughter, and will inflame my granddaughter because we never, never let them forget the story. The stories must be told because you are the ambassadors of the past and the great harbingers of hope for the future.

You love each other, you love your predecessors, you love those that are coming to replace you and you love humankind ... just plain people, every size, every shape, every form, wherever they are. And that is your legacy.

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A Scene from A Canadian Mosaic

Dancers wearing provincial tartans take to the air.