

WHAT OTHERS ARE SAYING ABOUT STEVE STIRLING AND *THE CRUTCH OF SUCCESS*...

Do you believe God can use you to change the world? Or do you think you're not gifted enough, exceptional enough, or good enough? Meet Steve Stirling. Crippled by polio when he was just a baby and abandoned at a Korean orphanage when he was six, Steve was an unlikely candidate to change the world. But when you read the story of how God has used this humble man to impact the lives of hundreds of thousands of children all across the globe, you'll believe that God can use you too. Prepare to be amazed at what God can do with just one person's obedience.

—Richard Stearns
President Emeritus, World Vision US
Author, *The Hole in Our Gospel*

The Crutch of Success is a wonderful story of Steve and the life the Lord gave him. We have seen him, his lovely wife, and their two talented children at various times over the years. It is thrilling to know that he is the CEO of MAP, which has helped us back when we needed them. I am sure anyone who reads this book will be sincerely touched by the way the Lord has led Steve over the years.

—Molly Holt
Chairperson, Holt Children's Services (Holt Korea)

Steve's story is one of incredible resilience and the work of MAP International inspires many to join the global movement to bring critical medicines to those in need.

—Jimmy Carter
39th President of the United States

We hear that the purpose of life is a life of purpose. It seems remote as a saying until you meet a person with a purpose-driven life. Steve Stirling is such a person. To see him shrug off disabilities, as if they didn't exist, and then focus on preventing others from suffering from disabilities of all kinds, is a lesson for all seeking purpose in their own lives. As the head of MAP, Steve is daily involved in providing medicines and medical supplies to health workers around the world. These are daily redemptive acts of a person who lives a life of gratitude. This inspirational book describes how he has achieved a positive attitude, despite abandonment and disabilities that could have left a lesser person bitter and unproductive.

—*William H. Foege*, MD, MPH

Emeritus Presidential Distinguished Professor of International Health
Rollins School of Public Health, Emory University
Gates Fellow, The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation

Steve Stirling is a remarkable success story, a story that would be hard to believe if it weren't true. *The Crutch of Success* tells his story well. It is an inspiring journey of a polio-stricken child in a small Korean orphanage to success in business and success in life.

—*Andrew J. Young Jr.*

Former U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations
Civil Rights Leader

Steve Stirling is a winner! Being with him in the Agalta Valley region of Honduras when MAP International delivered their five billionth donation in medicines was an amazing moment. The health and overall well-being of not only this Honduran community, but also other communities worldwide, would not be possible without Steve's dedication to his work. His inspiring life story is about the journey it takes to make triumphs out of obstacles and turn losses into wins.

—*Vince Dooley*

College Football Hall of Fame Inductee
Former Coach, University of Georgia

Steve is an Asian hero and role model of challenge. I have known him for twenty years. By faith in God, he has overcome his orphan life with a disabled body by challenging all of his obstacles in his difficult life journey. His life is a living testimony today. Also, his leadership at MAP is outstanding and making a difference all over the world.

—*Rev. Byeongho Choi*

Moderator-Elect, National Caucus of Korean Presbyterian Church
Senior Pastor, Bethany Presbyterian Church

Rotary International has been on a journey since the early 1980s to eradicate polio. There is not a more dedicated Rotarian who represents that journey as well as Steve Stirling. It is time for his story to be immortalized in writing, and all who read it will be motivated to reach beyond the barriers they encounter in their lives. It is a terrific story that will inspire us all.

—*John Hewko*

Secretary-General, Rotary International

Having known Steve personally and professionally for over nineteen years, I can attest to his courage, determination, sincerity, and faith. His story is one which inspires and shows his God-given purpose to serve. We witness his servant leadership at MAP International daily.

—*Jim Barfoot*
Chair, MAP International

**THE
CRUTCH
OF
SUCCESS**

THE CRUTCH OF SUCCESS

*From Polio to Purpose, Bringing
Health & Hope to the World*

STEVE STIRLING


WHITAKER
HOUSE

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THE CRUTCH OF SUCCESS

From Polio to Purpose, Bringing Health & Hope to the World

MAP International
4700 Glynco Parkway
Brunswick, GA 31525
map@map.org

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DEDICATION

To my parents: the ones who gave birth to me, and the ones who gave me life through adoption.

To my wife, Sook Hee, for taking a chance on me, believing in me, and loving me.

To my children, Richard and Racheal, whom I love.

To my childhood friend, Song Kyung Soo, who opened my eyes to see how to live for Christ.

And to my friends, who have touched my life journey, enabling me to become who I am today.

*For we are His workmanship,
created in Christ Jesus for good works,
which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.*
—Ephesians 2:10

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FOREWORD

Before I read a book, I ask two basic questions: Does the author possess a level of credibility? And does he or she have something meaningful to say? Author and MAP International CEO, Steve Stirling, delivers on both counts. His book, *The Crutch of Success: From Polio to Purpose, Bringing Health & Hope to the World*, will challenge you to play your part in changing the world.

Steve is a living reminder that where you start in life doesn't have to dictate where you end. Through perseverance and faith, he overcame polio and an orphaned childhood to lead one of the largest international relief charities in the world. Convoy of Hope, the organization I founded, has partnered with MAP International to respond to natural and human-made disasters around the world. Countless lives have been rescued by delivering medicine and emergency supplies to children and families in need. It is a privilege to partner with an organization that pursues excellence with passion and urgency. When Steve speaks on global health and world crises, we have good reason to listen.

The Crutch of Success will increase your faith and help you discover your mission in life. If you've ever been told you aren't good enough, smart enough, or strong enough, this book will inspire you to believe, that with God's help, anything is possible. He will minimize your

weaknesses and maximize your strengths. He longs to help the hurting and heal the sick. He just needs people like you to believe you can make the world a better place.

—*Hal Donaldson*
Founder and CEO, Convoy of Hope

PROLOGUE

Wait right here, Son,” said my father, sounding choked up. “If you cry, they will come and get you.”

He had been carrying me in his arms, and now he leaned over to place me on the ground in a sitting position with my useless legs splayed out. He was wearing yesterday’s white shirt. Looking up, I could see that his dress trousers, normally creased and cuffed, were wrinkled and dusty.

I was confused, but I trusted my *abba* (dad). Korea was not an easy place to live only three years after the end of the Korean War, but I knew nothing about that. Although polio had left me unable to walk at age one, my family had cared for me well. I was now a cheerful and energetic six-year-old.

Today was unusual in every way. Usually dignified, serious, and well-dressed, my abba had gotten thoroughly drunk the night before and found it difficult to get up that morning. I was confused when someone had to poke his nose with an acupuncture needle to awaken him. This had never happened before. When he finally arose, Abba collected me in his arms, then took me to the car. It was just the two of us, as if we were running a distant errand together.

“Myung Soo, just wait right here.” His voice sounded thick.

I was not alarmed. I had spent most of my six years inside the family home due to the crippling nature of the polio. It had affected the muscles of my legs and my lower back severely; I had never known what it was like to walk and run like my siblings. My mother and father had subjected me to various traditional Eastern medical treatments, but no matter what we tried, my legs remained immobile.

I was still small enough to be carried wherever I couldn't crawl, making use of my arms while dragging my legs. Despite the fact that there were other family problems and much turmoil, my parents had been good to me. So if my abba took me somewhere and told me to wait, he would be back.

The car ride from our home in Seoul had been long. He had brought me out into the countryside, beyond the reach of the city buses, and now we were in front of an unfamiliar low building surrounded by brown dirt. I could hear children's voices somewhere out of sight.

I looked up one more time, but Abba's face was silhouetted against the bright sky, obscuring his expression. He pointed to the steps leading up to the building. “There,” Abba ordered. “Crawl over there and cry.” He then turned around, and he was gone.

I hoisted my upper body on my arms, not bothering to brush off the dust that clung to them. At least this dirt was not gravelly; dragging myself would be easier. My father had told me what to do. The sun was getting hotter.

After a short time, seeing no one and feeling both hungry and thirsty, I remembered to cry. That's what my abba had said. Then “they” would come. . .

I did not realize until many days later that I had been abandoned. That low building was an orphanage, and it would be my home for the next four years. But I was not an orphan!

1

ABANDONED

Fear not: for I am with thee: I will bring thy seed from the east, and gather thee from the west; I will say to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back: bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth; even every one that is called by my name: for I have created him for my glory, I have formed him; yea, I have made him.

—Isaiah 43:5–7 (KJV)

Every day for several weeks, after eating my breakfast of cornmeal mush, I would crawl through the dirt back to the spot where Abba had left me. What else could I do? I would sit there expectantly and patiently, my scrawny legs coated with powdery dust. The people inside the building were nice to me, and there were many children there, but nobody explained anything to me. *Abba would come back, wouldn't he? Had something bad happened to him?*

Each day, one of the caretakers would eventually come out and take me back inside. After another meal, usually *jook* (rice porridge), they would settle me on my mat and blanket on the floor beside the other

little boys, most of whom seemed to have something wrong with their bodies.

I told them my name, Cho Myung Soo, but I did not know anything more to tell them. I did not realize at the time that many Korean parents had been forced to abandon their children to orphanages because of the aftereffects of the Korean War and three years of famine. They simply could not take care of them for one reason or another. The people in charge of the orphanage did their best to meet the needs of all the children.

I had ended up in the Holt orphanage in Ilsan, northwest of the vast city of Seoul, and I would never see my father again.

MY LITTLE SISTER APPEARS

One afternoon, after about a week, someone appeared in the doorway of the general-purpose room, holding the hand of a little girl—my younger sister, Myung Hee! Much later, I found out that my father had sent her along after me so I would not be alone in my abandonment. A relative by marriage of his sister (who apparently had been the one to persuade him to abandon me) had brought Myung Hee and had signed her into the Holt Children's Services center.

"Myung Hee!" I exclaimed.

"So is this your sister?" they asked.

"Yes! Yes! Cho Myung Hee!" (Cho was our family surname.) I felt a slight panic.

Four-year-old Myung Hee was smart enough to try to elude an unwanted fate. She did *not* want to go to the orphanage; she wanted to go home. "No, no! I am *not* his sister!" she insisted. It didn't work. I convinced them that I was indeed her brother, and from then on, Myung

Hee was there. She stayed on the girls' side of the three-room building, but we would see each other every day at meals and playtime.

Once Myung Hee came, I think I finally realized, "Well, this is it—just you and me." But we were too young and uninformed to understand why. We didn't know what was going on. *Where was our family? What must we have done wrong to be punished like this?* Even if someone had explained that our father abandoned us in hopes that our lives might be better, we wouldn't have believed it.

I had never been in trouble before. If anything, I was the much-desired son after my parents' first two children turned out to be daughters. The fact that I had gotten polio had compromised that status, but not seriously. I had been the only boy in the family for about four years, until my baby brother was born shortly after Myung Hee. Three girls and two boys, a mother, and a father. We lived as a family for only a short time. Then we were separated and would never live together again.

Now Myung Hee took it upon herself to look after my welfare, even as I did the same for her. Since I did not have crutches or braces, she would often take hold of my legs and walk me like a wheelbarrow, for fun and faster mobility. She was strong for such a little girl. Of course, with my withered, useless legs, I was lighter than the average boy. Sometimes, she would even carry me piggyback.

Since she was so young when she arrived, my sister doesn't remember as much about the orphanage as I do. She does have one distinct memory of a time when the children were making paper chains for Christmas, and one of the kids crunched hers up. I gave her my best brotherly advice: "Go crunch up his paper chain in return!" Which she did. Even if any of the other kids had siblings in the orphanage (and I don't remember any who did), none of them could have given as much attention to each other as we did.

The able-bodied boys and girls had a different place to sleep, separate from us handicapped kids. We had three main rooms. One side was for the boys, and the other side for the girls, with a common room in the middle. They let my sister stay on the girls' side of my building, even though she was not disabled. I could crawl everywhere. It wasn't a huge place.

At night, after we had been settled on our sleeping mats, I would wait for the other fifteen or twenty boys to fall asleep, then quietly cry to myself. No matter how much time had passed, I couldn't help but think I had done something wrong to cause my father to abandon me.

LIFE IN THE ORPHANAGE

The orphanage was full, but there was always room to accept more children. I don't recall hearing about anyone being turned away due to a lack of space. Sleeping on the floor was not an unusual thing for us, since that's where most people slept in their homes, too. The floors in Korean houses were kept warm in cold weather. Back in the 1950s, almost everyone heated their houses with *yeontan*, big blocks of compressed charcoal with holes bored through them. The hot fire of the burning *yeontan* was used for cooking as well, with ducts under the floor carrying the heat throughout the house. One *yeontan* would burn and provide steady heat for about twelve hours, when another one would be placed on top to take over.

Once, the *yeontan* caused a horrific accident involving one of the severely handicapped girls, whose torso was very rigid and hard to move. She was lying on the floor near where two workers were trying to remove the old *yeontan* by means of metal rods inserted into the holes. The chunks of fuel would get crumbly after they had burned for a while. In this case, the searing-hot charcoal broke apart and fell on the helpless

body of the disabled girl. She was screaming with pain, badly burned, and unable to move and get it off of her.

Apart from accidents like that, though, we were comfortable and safe. We slept side-by-side on the floor, as close as sardines in a tin. Outside, it may have been cold, but inside, we were warm. We had no privacy nor any place for personal possessions. Not that we owned anything anyway, except the clothes on our backs. We would bathe outdoors, and we would eat in the common area. The water outside was cold. The orphanage workers would heat it in the wintertime, but never during the summer. We would run the water from the pump into a bucket, then take soap and wash ourselves.

Most of the time, the orphanage kept the handicapped kids separate from the other children. All of us were of school age; I do not remember any babies there.

We were fed regularly, but we were always hungry. During this time, many children living in Korea didn't have much to eat. In hindsight, I was very blessed to be in the orphanage, where I was fed regularly. I later learned that my aunt had a friend who worked in the orphanage, and she made sure we were well taken care of.

Most days, the food was the same and pretty boring: the same cornmeal mush and rice porridge. Boys will be boys and hungry boys go to drastic lengths to make their stomachs stop growling. One day, we stole some old cookies we found in the kitchen. They were crawling with maggots, but that did not stop us. We just picked out the maggots and ate the cookies. Another time, we swiped a stick of butter and shared it.

In search of entertainment as well as food, we would catch snakes, start a little fire, and cook them to eat. Sometimes we got potatoes from a nearby field and ate those, too. For extra protein, we'd roast dragonflies and grasshoppers. Don't ask me how we made the cooking fires or

how we got away with that. Sometimes, we would catch and kill rats, bashing their heads with rocks. We didn't eat those though. Children who have been abandoned and are famished have the instinct to eat just about anything, in an attempt to fill the emptiness in their hearts as well as their stomachs.

The orphanage was surrounded by wetlands. There was a small pond that would freeze in the winter and we would play on the ice. With a pole, I could push myself around on whatever kind of sled I could find—it was fun to move around so freely.

We would go swimming in that same pond on hot summer days. I remember one time, some kids were playing in the water, but I couldn't join in because I didn't know how to swim. A bigger kid said, "Just hold onto my neck and I'll walk around the pond, okay?" I was holding onto him when he suddenly slipped. Amidst the chaos, I managed to grab onto what felt like a ladder. Thankfully, I didn't drown that day. After that, I made sure I learned how to swim at the first opportunity.

Frogs were all over the place in that wet environment. Once, we had a bunch of them in a jar. I remember I had gotten into trouble for something, and the house mother banned me from attending movie night, which took place at a church on the orphanage property. Needless to say, I didn't like that, so I threw a fit and argued with her.

When that didn't work, I tried to bribe her. "If I give you some gum, can I go?"

Her answer was firm. "No. You are being punished." So as soon as she left the room, I let all the frogs out of the jar.

Looking back, I don't think we always had an adult watching us. We must have been on our own a lot of the time if we were able to get into so much mischief!

At first, none of the handicapped children were permitted to attend school, but after I received some donated crutches, I was allowed to begin my education since I could now walk to class. This was a welcome development, but only up to a point. The kids at school picked on me mercilessly. All I could do was throw my crutches at them, which only made them laugh harder. Then I would return to the orphanage and take out my frustration and anger on my disabled roommates. The non-disabled orphans who attended school with me would go off to their separate living quarters at the end of the day. Nobody stood up for me. I simply had to look after myself.

(There were many disabled orphans who could never live independently, so the Ilsan orphanage eventually expanded and became a rehabilitation and residential center for disabled adults. It still exists today, operating under the auspices of the Holt Children's Services of Korea.)

We had very little in the way of medical care. I do remember one major surgery, an operation on my hip and to fuse my right ankle, at the U.S. military hospital in Korea. This was an entirely new experience for me. The only attempts at medical care I had received before coming to the orphanage had been quite traumatic, consisting of burning my skin with little sticks, like herbal cigarettes—traditional Chinese and Korean moxibustion—in failed attempts to stimulate the damaged nerves in my legs and back. I bear the scars to this day.

My sister and I were not the only ones in the orphanage who were not true orphans. Besides the handicapped children of Korean parents who simply could not provide for them, there were kids whose fathers were American G.I.s. When the U.S. troops departed, they had left behind many single mothers raising half-Korean children. These biracial Amerasian "G.I. babies" looked different, and they were very much discriminated against. Whether their fathers had been fair-skinned

Caucasians or African-Americans, these kids were called “other sheep.” Nobody wanted them. Their mothers were stigmatized, too, because Korean society does not show much tolerance for single mothers. That’s why so many of these kids ended up in our orphanage.

The adult workers at the orphanage would come and go. We children didn’t pay much attention to whether they lived on the premises or elsewhere. In Korean, they were called *bo-mos*, or “caring mothers,” with *bo* meaning “caring” and *mo* meaning “mother.” Some of them were older women while others were very young, like nannies. We could tell that they were a little more educated than the cooks. The *bo-mos* knew how to take care of little children, and the cooks did not. The cooks stayed in the kitchen area.

UNADOPTABLE...IN MORE WAYS THAN ONE

I knew I was in an orphanage, I understood the name “Holt,” and I was aware that some of the workers came from the United States, but no one ever told me about the possibility of being adopted into a family—in either Korea or America. In all likelihood, that is because my sister and I had too many counts against us where adoption was concerned.

First of all, Korean families were not usually looking for children to adopt, especially not from orphanages, where it was assumed children were getting socialized poorly. Kids who came from orphanages were distrusted, thought to be dishonest and shrewd like street kids. In any case, Koreans would rarely adopt in order to expand their nuclear families, preferring to incorporate an orphan into their households in the role of a conscripted servant.

Beyond that reality for me and my sister was the further complication of being older children. Myung Hee and I were no longer cute little babies. And we were siblings—who would ever want both of us? Then there was the biggest drawback of all—my polio. If my own father and

mother could not figure out how to take care of me, how could strangers do it? And international adoption? Why would anyone from America even take a second look at us? We were not very “adoptable” at all.

Still, we had landed in a good place, all things considered. We weren’t on the streets, and we were still alive and growing well. I now know that God Himself had His hand firmly on our lives.

THE HOLT ORPHANAGES

The orphanage was Christian. I can’t say the same for our home, but the Christian features of orphanage life did not seem foreign to me. I remember seeing crosses on the walls there. I didn’t really know who Jesus was, but I was motivated to memorize all sixty-six books of the Bible so I could earn a Bible of my own. This was in the context of some kind of Sunday-school-like time they had in the orphanage. We would sing Christian songs, hymns, and Christmas carols.

The story of the orphanage is interesting and inspiring, although I didn’t know the details until later.¹ Harry Holt, the founder of the Ilsan orphanage, was the father of six children with his wife, Bertha, who was a nurse. After the Depression, they had moved from an Iowa farm to Oregon, where Harry worked hard and became a successful sawmill owner. After a heart attack in 1950 gave him a brush with death, he went back to farming, this time in Oregon. He provided well for his family, and they were quite content together.

In 1954, Bob Pierce, the founder of the child-sponsoring organization, World Vision, came to the local church to show a couple of films. His goal was to recruit more sponsors—people who would pledge ten dollars a month to sponsor a needy child in a country such as Korea. At first, Harry didn’t want to go to the event, but his kids—including his

1. See: Bertha Holt, David Wisner, *The Seed from the East* (Oxford, England: The Oxford Press, 1956). The book includes conversations with members of the Holt family.

daughter Molly, who ended up dedicating her life to helping Korean orphans—persuaded him to attend.

When Harry saw the film called *The Other Sheep*, he couldn't believe what was going on in Korea after the Korean War. After seeing the pictures of the war orphans, he was so moved that he sponsored as many children as he could through World Vision.

But sponsoring children was not enough. The very next year, Harry and Bertha Holt decided to adopt eight Korean orphans—all at once—modifying their large home to accommodate them. International adoption was virtually unheard of at the time. After initiating the process of obtaining the required refugee-immigrant visas by special permission from Washington, D.C., Harry went in person to Korea in 1955 to locate adoptable children and bring them back. On his way, sick and discouraged and seeking confirmation that this was indeed the will of God, he opened the King James Bible to Isaiah 43:5–7, which reads:

Fear not: for I am with thee: I will bring thy seed from the east, and gather thee from the west; I will say to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back: bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth; even every one that is called by my name: for I have created him for my glory, I have formed him; yea, I have made him.

After many delays and much effort, he came home with eight boys and girls, who were welcomed with open arms into the Holt family. The older children were delighted with their new brothers and sisters, and they all pitched in to help their parents take care of them.

Harry's extraordinary accomplishment made the news in a big way, and queries started to come in from couples everywhere, wanting to know how they, too, could adopt Korean orphans. Thus, Harry decided

to return to Korea to see what he could do to provide for the neglected children there. His health was not the best, and he did not like to be separated from his wife and family so much, but urged on by the flood of queries from prospective adoptive parents, in 1956 (the year I was born), he returned to the needy country that had captured his heart. Only a few months after bringing home his eight new children, he started to organize an adoption program. Now, to make it a reality, he needed to figure out how to house the potential adoptees in Korea.

Meanwhile, back home in Oregon, Bertha and her older daughters started handling the American end of the adoption process, hiring several people to help. The Orphan Foundation Fund was incorporated in late 1956; the name was later changed to the Holt Adoption Program. Within a few years, most of the older Holt children got married or moved to pursue adult careers, but after being apart from Harry more than she was with him, Bertha eventually brought the rest of their large brood to Korea to join him. Their temporary quarters were grossly insufficient, so Harry—the farmer that he was—purchased a tractor and began to work on what would become the orphanage in Ilsan—the one to which I was taken in 1962. This site was chosen because it was undeveloped, unlike property closer to the city of Seoul. The whole time I was living there, the property was being developed further, and improvements have continued to be made right up to the present time.

Harry Holt's health finally broke under the strain. He literally worked himself to death, pressing on with both the building and the adoptions all the more because he seemed to realize that his time was short. He died in 1964 in Ilsan, having sent Bertha and their "second family" back to Oregon. Thanks to his extraordinary efforts (and to at least one unexpectedly mild winter), the entire Ilsan orphanage—which consisted at that time of forty buildings and was expected to take ten years to finish—had been completed in only twenty-eight months.

After Harry died, Bertha, nicknamed “Grandma (*Halmoni*) Holt,” shouldered the burden of steering the leadership of the orphanage and the adoption program, which had grown so much that it involved many others. Several of her adult children helped, too, including Molly, who stayed more than fifty years and is still serving there today. Today, Holt International Children’s Services operates adoption programs in seven countries in addition to Korea and works with adoptive families in all fifty of the United States. I remain eternally grateful for everything the Holts did for me and so many other children.

Although Harry was the first hero of the story, Bertha became the much-loved matriarch of the every-growing Holt outreach. When she died in 2000 at the age of ninety-six, her funeral in Korea was attended by a thousand people. It was like a state occasion, with the president’s wife in attendance and a special motorcade from the Seoul airport to escort her casket when it arrived from America. She is buried beside Harry on top of a hill overlooking the Ilsan complex.

By the time of Bertha’s funeral, I had been living in the United States for thirty-four years. My attendance at that funeral marked a crucial decision-point in my life.

ABANDON HOPE, ALL YE WHO ENTER HERE

The whole time I was in the orphanage, from the age of six until the age of ten, I never saw any of the other disabled kids get adopted. I wasn’t aware of very many adoptions of healthy children either. My sister and I simply adjusted to our new life with no particular expectations.

It was as if the motto posted over the gateway to Dante’s hell, from his epic poem *The Divine Comedy*, had been posted over the door to the orphanage: “Abandon hope, all ye who enter here.” Well, it wasn’t quite as bad as that because they did do their best to take care of us. But the word “hope” was not really a part of my working vocabulary. I merely

lived from one day to the next like any child, although without any assurance of the future. The workers were nice, but nobody explained anything to us because they didn't know what to say. *Whose children were we? Where were our families? Where would we go when we grew up?* We had no answers to these questions.

If only I'd been given a sixty-cent dose of polio vaccine, none of this would have happened.