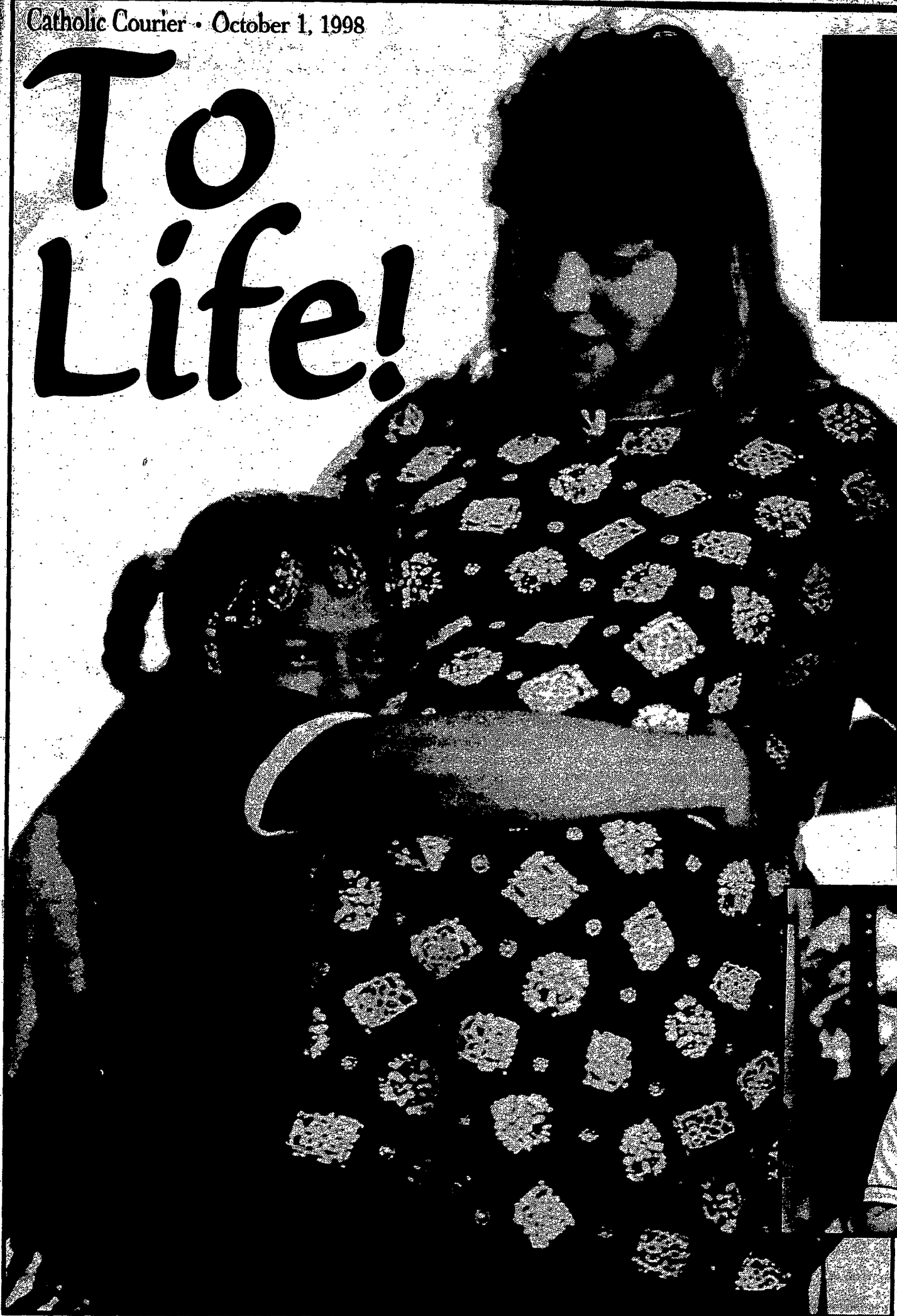


# To Life!



Greg Francis/Staff photographer

Clara Jackson, a beneficiary of Loving Arms of Steuben County pregnancy help center, with daughter Delana, 6. Jackson said of the center, "They give you the opportunity to put God in your life."

## Bath outreach offers help, hope

By Mike Latona  
Staff writer

**BATH** — This past year has been, to say the least, a tumultuous one for Clara Jackson.

Her 3-month-old daughter died from a heart defect in February, and she was one month pregnant at the time. She married the father of both babies, Frank, on May 24. Money has been consistently tight because Frank cannot work at his normal trades, welding and construction, due to a heart ailment.

"I'm having a really hard time," said Clara, 36.

Meanwhile, Frank called their baby's death "the worst thing I've ever been through."

As the Jacksons await the arrival of their new baby, due in October, Clara has mixed emotions.

"I'm excited, I'm glad, I'm scared," Clara

said.

However, the Jacksons said they have gained great comfort through a new crisis pregnancy service, Loving Arms of Steuben County, Inc. The agency has provided them with both material and emotional support.

"It's a godsend. I don't know what else we would do," Frank said. His 22-year-old daughter, Bridget, also received supplies from Loving Arms after she gave birth in March.

Loving Arms, located at 25 Pine St., opened in January. According to Mary Carol Wall, the Steuben County area had badly needed a crisis pregnancy center after Birthright in Corning closed in 1996.

"The closest pro-life crisis pregnancy center was in Elmira, but that's not real handy to the folks in Steuben County," said Wall, a parishioner at St. Mary's Church, who was part of Loving Arms' founding committee. "Bath, being the county center,

really would provide availability."

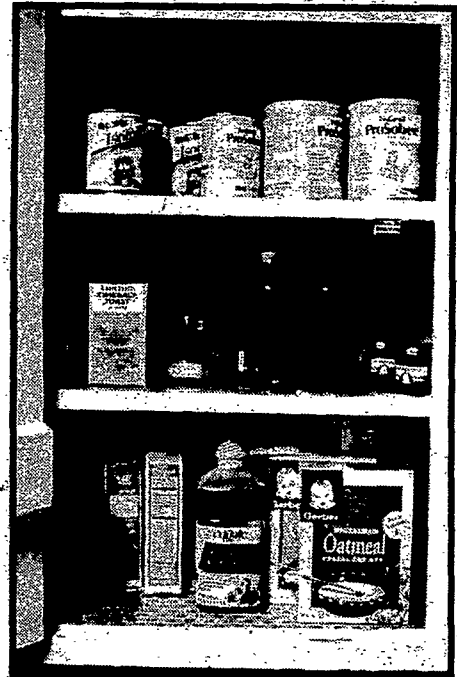
Loving Arms offers a variety of free services: pregnancy tests; counseling; clothing and other supplies; adoption options; connections to other resources; and brochures and guest speakers dealing with pregnancy issues. The center's hours are currently Mondays, 1:30-5:30 p.m.; and Wednesdays and Fridays, 1-5 p.m.

Among the area organizations supporting the nonprofit agency are the Corning-Painted Post Roman Catholic Community; St. Gabriel's Church in Hammondsport; Catholic Charities of the Southern Tier; and Mercy Rural Ministries. Loving Arms has also been selected as a 1998 recipient of a diocesan Consistent Life Ethic Grant. Wall added that several parishioners at St. Mary's Church in Bath donate supplies and take part in fundraising activities.

The volunteer staff includes Donna Tuite. **Continued on page 4A**



The Jacksons pray at the Pine Street pregnancy center with Director Donna Tuite, left, Sept. 22.



Food is donated to the center from many sources. It is given free to mothers and families in crisis.



Delana looks over one of the quilts given to patrons of the center.



Jackson, left, looks over donated maternity clothing from the center's clothing closet with Donna Tuite Sept. 22.