



Gabe & Lauren Jakubisin



**GOD IN THE FURNACE**

LOVE MY FAMILY . US



# GOD IN THE FURNACE

By Gabriel Jakubisin

*In the Book of Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego are thrown into a fiery furnace. Questions about where God is in the furnaces of our lives are met with the same answer: Our God does not immediately remove us from trials; He joins us in the fire and strengthens us in it. He is Emmanuel, God With Us.*

**Two and a half years ago, Lauren went into labor with Gabriel Jr. five weeks early. Although the labor and birth itself was fairly uncomplicated, two trials came to light that day. First, we realized the antepartum depression that Lauren had been struggling with, which, when present during**

**pregnancy, often indicates that the postpartum depression will be pretty tough. Second, when Lauren had held our little son for only a few short moments, his vital signs were failing and he was whisked away.**

Although we spent hours and hours with him in the coming days, we could mostly only look at him in his little plexiglass box as his little lungs struggled to develop enough so he could breathe on his own.

**You would think this would be a painful memory, but it is not.** By the end of those ten days in the NICU, Lauren and I had already articulated our experience there to each other as like unto a second honeymoon. We were scared, overwhelmed, concerned with what the future would hold. *But, even in that trial, that little furnace for us, we knew that Jesus, our Lord, Emmanuel, God With Us, had joined us.* He was in the NICU room with us. As we held each other, He held us. We were closer to each other than we had ever been and more appreciative than ever of God's tender care for us.

**I've thought of that moment more than a few times in the past weeks and months.** Our God enters into our trials, not removing them from us, but strengthening us to bear them. As Emmanuel entered into a world fraught with tension, mistrust, anxiety, and hatred that threatened to overwhelm hope on that first Christmas some 2000 years ago, he entered also into our NICU room where fear and anxiety also threatened hope.

**So also today, in December 2020, he longs again to enter** into the gloom of our hearts where fear of illness, loneliness and isolation, anxiety, and frustration again challenge hope. But because He is a conquering God, that hope will not fail and He will show us again, as He has shown His people over and again

through the ages, that...

## He is Emmanuel. Our God is with us!



**Gabriel and Lauren Jakubisin** are blessed with four children from 7.5 years to 14 weeks old and have a little intercessor in heaven (miscarriage). They are a Novice Oblate Family of the Benedictines of St. Vincent Archabbey and hope to take their final vows soon. Gabe is principal of St. Joan of Arc Elementary School, and Lauren is co-director of Campus Ministry at Notre Dame Academy.

**Dear Brothers & Sisters in Christ,**

**Our world is pining for good news. God's supply is *you*.** Your short, moving story of "God with us" will make a big difference in someone's life.

Right now you can think of at least one moving moment in your life. An example of "God with us." Please take a moment now to simply email me the possible subject of your story. If you're motivated, sure, write it out (no more than 500 words). We'll help you land it. Many will be blessed. We want to feature a new story every week.

Thank you in advance!

So blessed to be united in building the Kingdom,



**Greg and Stephanie Schlueter**  
Image Trinity | Mass Impact

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Call: (814) 449-8808  
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**"The future of humanity passes by way of the family."**  
~ Pope St. John Paul II

Marriage and family have always been Satan's most fierce point of attack. Why? Because man and woman image God and exist to make Him, who is love, known. (Gen. 1:27)

**It's no longer subtle.** Things hidden in darkness are coming to light. (Mark 4:22) It's not just playing out among those who've been deceived into rejecting their Maker, but also under the roofs of many who profess Him. Now more than ever good Catholic families are looking for a solid anchor. Lived encounter. Community enlivened by the Holy Spirit. Remnant.

**God is with us.** His holy presence remains powerful. Transformative. We give witness to His holy presence reviving, renewing, strengthening vibrant marriages overflowing into their families and into the world. We desire this for everyone.

**Marriage and family are God's supreme gift of Himself.** His promise of renewing the face of the earth. Being poured out right now. We are passionate about engaging as many as possible in this great ADVENTURE of striving to live it.

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(please see the other side)

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"The future of humanity passes by way of the family."  
~ Pope St. John Paul II

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