



OUR MARY STORY

by LIZ ERICKSON

Growing up in Fort Wayne, Indiana, the four of us and our parents went to church every Sunday, prayed before meals, and said memorized prayers at bedtime. Since I did not have a personal relationship with Jesus, my faith was not a priority when I went away to college.

There, my freshman year, I'm so thankful to have met my future husband, Walt. While he didn't grow up with faith, I was determined to get married in the Catholic Church and to raise our children Catholic. Unfortunately, we didn't marry until five years later.

Though I was a registered nurse, once married I was ready to become a mama. That really is all I ever wanted to be. I remember being very young and just wanting to raise babies. I was devastated when month after month and year after year I was not pregnant. God's timing is crazy because four years later, following a vacation where we were praying about adoption, we found out I was pregnant with our oldest, Ally. I was so excited. (I think I took 5 pregnancy tests because I couldn't believe it!)

Next came Baptism classes. We were attending church occasionally, still not really "alive" in our faith. Walt was still not Catholic. He was starting to listen to Catholic radio and ask questions. The deacon at the Baptism class stated that getting our child baptized was making an oath with God, that we are going to raise our child Catholic and all that entails. It was like a lightning bolt hit me: I have to know my faith and practice it so I can teach it. At that point, we never missed Mass again. I started a Monday night Bible study. I was seeking Christ.

Baby number two, Izzy, came along 18 months later. Then pregnant again a few months later, our little two-bedroom home began to feel small. In between homes we went to Fort Wayne to live with my parents. Walt continued to work in Toledo and visited us weekends.

One busy night after giving baths, I realized it had been hours since I last felt the baby move. It was crazy, but instantly I knew she was gone. I felt empty. It was terrifying and numbing. I asked my mom to take me to the ER. I immediately started praying the Hail Mary over and over. Once we got to the ER, the ultrasound confirmed what I already knew: No heartbeat. It was awful. I was numb, shaking, and afraid.

At this point it was about midnight. My mom had to call Walt because I couldn't talk. He didn't answer his phone. Thankfully, his friend Matt, who he was living with, answered his phone and told him the devastating news. His baby had died.

After Walt arrived, we were laying in the hospital bed crying and talking. I remember saying, "This is going to make us stronger." They delivered our beautiful little girl, Mary Elizabeth. She was 3 pounds 2 oz and perfect. We all got to hold her and give her kisses. She died August 10, 2011.

God was with me the whole time. I could have been at the lake

by myself, with two little girls. The doctor on-call was in-house and was my old OBGYN when I lived in Fort Wayne. He stayed with me and waited for Walt to get there to deliver. I had to have a c-section.

Like her namesake, our little saint in heaven Mary led us to Jesus. I really believe her little 28 weeks of life saved our family. Walt become Catholic the following month. He has been on fire for our faith ever since. I have become a better mama. Less selfish. I see how precious each of my babies are. While there have been many trials and tribulations since then, I know our goal of life is heaven... and God is always with us to help us through.

"Guide me in your truth and teach me, for you are God my Savior, and my hope is in you all day long." Psalm 25:5



WALT & LIZ ERICKSON

have been married for 17 years. They have been blessed with eight children counting Mary and their unborn "little" joining them September 20th. They live in Ottawa Lake, Michigan and are parishioners at Holy Trinity parish. Walt owns Interstate Commercial Glass & Door. Liz is a fulltime wife and homeschooling mother.

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

WEB: ILoveMyFamily.us

PARTNER 2021



EMMANUEL IN
2021

The great calamity of this day
dates back to the beginning of time, and punctuates our
one, underlying, unifying, eternity-defining mission:

"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
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ALL SEASONS

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

We are families seeking to make our homes places of

ever-deepening encounter with Jesus Christ.

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