



FAITH: A FRESH TAKE



October 24, 2013

Mothers as Super Heroes

I've always heard about and truly do believe in a mother's intuition. My mother could always tell when something was wrong based on my tone of voice or my facial expressions, no matter how hard I tried to mask the pain or anguish I was feeling. She just knew something wasn't right.

She wasn't a magician or a superhero — she was a mother.

Now that I have two children of my own, I have the same gut feeling in my stomach when my daughter's voice is low or my son turns his head so I won't see his expressions. As a mother, you feel what your kids feel. You hurt when your kids hurt.

Ironically, though, I think that we underestimate how much intuition our kids have. Children have a keen sense when it comes to someone they care about. Just as I can detect when my son or daughter has had a bad day at school, my children can sense the same from me.

As much as I might try to mask my tiring day or a tearful moment, they see right through me. Just the other night, my daughter came up behind me as I was staring at my computer screen and said, "You're not focused, mom." She knew I was struggling with a piece I was writing just based on my body language. She knows me too well.

Today, after I hung up from a stressful phone conversation, my son leaned over and put his hand on my arm. He didn't have to say anything, but the tears I saw brimming in his eyes, showed me just how much he was feeling what I was feeling. He wanted to take away my hurt — just as I do when he is hurting.

With such keen senses, children have the ability to understand and comprehend much more than we give them credit. They deserve the credit and the explanations, rather than dismissals that they are "too young to understand."

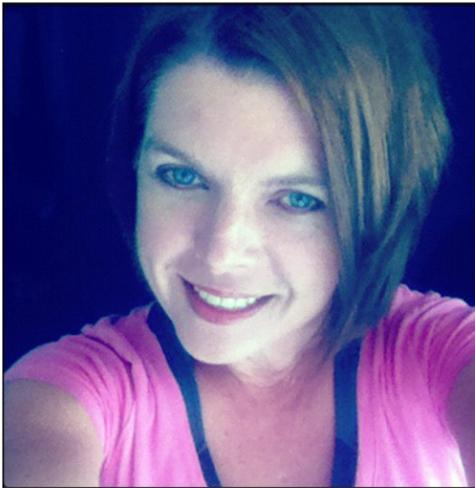
My kids' senses give me motivation to feed each moment with more happiness than sadness. It starts with me and filters through them. Just like a mother's intuition, my happiness will fuel their happiness; just as my happiness fueled my mother's happiness when I was younger. She detected it — even without superhero powers.

My children don't have superhero powers either — just a grand love for their mommy. I hope they can sense how much I treasure it every day.

On having confidence: Confidence is a double-edged sword. If you have too much, you're labeled as a conceited jerk. If you lack enough, it can kill your drive to succeed and motivation to accomplish great things.

A lack of confidence promotes giant walls impossible to scale and negativity that convinces us that the world is against us — why try, right?

Confidence, though, empowers us. It brings us to new heights. It promotes



positivity and a feeling that we can conquer whatever obstacles come our way.

As a parent, I constantly worry about my children's confidence. Do they have enough? Do they truly believe in themselves? Do they have the drive to conquer negativity and push past those who attempt to cut them down?

I'm not sure how to answer those questions yet, although the potential answers put me into a tailspin of worry. I know that they are creative, unique and special in their own way. I know that my daughter is a talented dancer, a thoughtful soul and a nurturer. I know that my son is artistic, passionate and conscientious about his actions. But do they know?

How do we, as parents, preach to our children about the importance of confidence when at times, we doubt our own abilities? I often wonder: Am I getting this parenting thing right? Am I too overprotective? Am I too relaxed with discipline?

Do I encourage them enough? Do I show them how to be confident? I don't know these answers either because I, too, lack confidence at times.

This double-edged sword continues to dig deeper as my children grow and face social, emotional and academic challenges. It tears away at my daughter when she is rejected by a friend or a team. It tears away at my son when another kid tells him he's not good enough "at anything" as he puts it.

I can't fix the problems they face, but I can encourage them and work to build their confidence and mine at the same time.

And, just as I think the negativity is succeeding, they surprise me with their strength.

This was evident when my son hopped in my car after school the other day, sweaty from his PE class. "I'm hot, mom," he said. "And I don't mean the weather."

Hmmm. Maybe I don't have anything to be worried about.

For more, go to shannonphilpott.com.

— Shannon Philpott

Remembering Your Roots and Taking Your Faith to College

My name is Bailey Kampwerth. I grew up in Breese, Ill., and am a member of St. Dominic Parish in Breese.

I started my education at All Saints Academy, a Catholic grade school and junior high in Breese. I continued my Catholic education at Mater Dei Catholic High School, also located in Breese.

I now attend McKendree University in Lebanon, Ill. I plan to major in Accounting while also being a part of the McKendree University varsity volleyball team.

My faith has always been a huge part of my everyday life. Growing up, my family always attended Sunday Mass. Attending Catholic schools throughout my life has taught me many values about always being willing to help others.

I have realized the life God wants me to live and how to be of service in my community.

Being a part of the Breese Youth Ministry group has also been an important aspect of my life. By being involved in my parish, I have gained so much more than I ever could have thought possible. Working with others for the common good has helped me always to try to contribute in any way I can to help others.

I also enjoy taking a part in the Communion Service at the Breese Nursing Home.

Bringing smiles to the elderly shows me how much I can make a difference by going out and doing something for others.

By taking a part in helping my community, I have realized that doing things for myself will never be as important as doing things for others.

I have also had the wonderful opportunity to be able to attend the Diocesan Youth Conference (DYC) and the National Catholic Youth Conference

(NCYC). I was also a part of the Diocesan Youth Ministry Advisory Council (DYMAC) for two years. I attended DYC all four years during high school. I always looked forward to attending DYC.

DYC gave me the opportunity to meet so many amazing people throughout my diocese.

The speakers at DYC were always unforgettable and left me with a new meaning of faith that helped me to become a better Catholic.

The experience I had the one time I attended NCYC will forever be with me. NCYC brought together over 25,000 Catholic youth from all over the United States.

DYMAC was a great council to be a part of. While being on DYMAC, my fellow members and I were in charge of running DYC. It felt great being in charge of something so empowering. I encourage anyone who has the opportunity to attend DYC, NCYC, or be a part of DYMAC, to definitely do so. It could ultimately change your life and strengthen your faith.

Whichever steps I take in life, my faith will always remain very important to me. I continue to ask God for help in all situations I come across. I know that if I keep my faith strong, God will always be with me and help me to become the person he wants me to be.

— Bailey Kampwerth



Young Adults Gather Monthly in Carbondale for Faith Sharing, Fun, Fellowship

Young adults, cradle Catholics and converts benefit from a young adult group at the Newman Center in Carbondale, Ill. They meet once a month to talk about a topic of mutual interest. The topics have been coming from a young mom who was part of an earlier RCIA program. After joining the church, she wanted to talk more about topics like the rosary and saints, Vatican II and what that was all about.

Here a few members of the group pause while they think about making S'mores at an outdoor campfire at the Newman Center. Father Steven Beatty joins the group to offer insight and act as a sounding board if they have questions.

If you'd like more information about the group, please call the Newman Catholic Student Center at Southern Illinois University, Carbondale at 529-3311.

Comment on these stories of young adult Catholics in the diocese

This an online-only page is dedicated to young adult Catholics, their interests, their needs, their challenges and their faith.

We're tapping into young adults who have something to say about faith, about life, about being young parents.

Send us your story ideas, your concerns, your hopes and your stories of faith.

Email us at cathnews@bellevillemessenger.org with questions, suggestions or for more information.

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