

A Healthy Baby :)

by KC Schnitker, Monday, April 28, 2014

My Dear Auntie,

You know what a weirdo I am! Here again is another case where I am afraid you might find me weird, weird, *weird!!* You asked if I plan to have the prenatal bunch of tests and I replied, "no". I am sure that sounded strange.

Being pregnant at 46 is a little out of fashion, that is unless I focused on a career first and waited to have children until later- which many women do these days.

I do not plan to have the recommended invasive, expensive and dangerous barrage of tests because there is not much they can do if they discover a problem. An ultrasound and blood test would give us any heads up we or the baby would need at delivery if a medical issue was discovered. I also know that if they do discover something wrong, they will likely counsel us to have an abortion, which, of course, we would not do (reminds me of Nazi Germany- this whole contemporary, neurotic emphasis on perfection).

If they did counsel us for an abortion, things might get very ugly and I am certain some regretful strong and pointed words would come out of my mouth.

From the time I was 35, the medical community (and society) has tried to instill terror into me (not only in me but in others as well) about having more children. Consider this though, since time immemorial women were having babies into their 40's.

They had babies until their biological clock stopped ticking, until their fertility came to it's end and God shut the door. The door opens and it shuts—very big fact of life. There was never a time when we had to artificially determine, "Ok, I am X age, so therefore we should not have any more children".

Anyway, in regards to a healthy baby- you will think me even weirder now—I actually told God that if He wanted to bless us with a baby with Down's (for example), we would be very pleased and blessed. Children with Down's are such a blessing to everyone. They are innocent and sweet and walking saints among us. They teach us to love and to give more freely, joyfully and sacrificially.

If we did have a baby with extraordinary health challenges, of course like anyone, I would be frightened. I would be frightened that I could not get over my own selfishness enough to really give our child all the love and attention needed. For this, I would have to pray and ask God who, I know (but have to learn over and over) would give me the necessary Graces.

The Church teaches that every life is worth living. God is especially close to the poor and the suffering and what would it matter *ultimately* if a person suffered due to ill health, lack of beauty, poverty if in the end they won the happiness of eternal life? I do not think they would remember it in eternity with God. I see people with perfect health, beauty and wealth suffer in ways harder to treat than illness or disfigurement; they suffer from greed, selfishness, lust, depression, boredom, dissatisfaction, etc., etc. Shoot, I suffer from some of those too at times.

I have a childhood friend who is married and very successful in her career—both she and her husband each earn 6 figures. She

told me she does not want to have children because of the way she sees teens behave these days, the turbulent political climate and because of the general lowering of morality so apparent in the media. I was very sad to hear this and did not have a good way to answer her concerns. In my work teaching about God's thrilling plan for love and marriage (aka moral family planning and NFP), I am always seeking ways to more effectively communicate this plan to couples who have mostly been

catechized by the world and hold its values. It's tough because it is a very counter-cultural message- but one that brings true happiness and satisfaction. I often go to the encyclicals and Church teaching pertaining to marriage and family for help and inspiration: *Humanae Vitae* (ever read this? It's really good!), *Evangelium Vitae*, *Familiaris Consortio* and *Theology of the Body*. I stumbled upon a quote that gave me the answer I needed to encourage my friend in *Familiaris Consortio*:

"Scientific and technical progress...not only offers the hope of creating a new and better humanity, but also causes ever greater anxiety regarding the future. Some ask themselves if it is a good thing to be alive or if it would be better never to have been born; they doubt therefore if it is right to bring others into life when perhaps they will curse their existence in a cruel world with unforeseeable terrors.

But the Church firmly believes that human life, even if weak and suffering is always a splendid gift of God's goodness. Against the pessimism and selfishness which cast a shadow over the world, the Church stands for life: in each human life she sees the splendor of that "Yes," that "Amen," who is Christ Himself." (84) (emphasis mine)

A very beautiful attitude!! And also VERY counter-cultural.

Our culture tells us the only lives worth living are those that have health, wealth and beauty and that these hold the keys to happiness. Of course, it's not true. Some of the most miserable people I have known have 'it all'. I understand that we are all constantly bombarded by this 'culture of death', as Saint JP II put it, and it's eugenic mania and also by the population control freaks who would like us to believe that the solution to the world's ills is found in the elimination of human beings. These erroneous philosophies and ideas continually bombard us. It's no wonder we fall prey. Without the Church we are rather helpless.

I am not making assumptions about your views (which were not out of the ordinary), but rather addressing modern trends I notice, especially because I am the mother of 7. The comments I receive are interesting- you might imagine- and I find it fun to think up loving one liner comebacks to hopefully induce a change in perspective. My husband, Ed, also has some good ones- In response to a co worker's sarcastic, "Don't you know what causes that?" He in good humor has replied, "Yeah, but can I help it if we are good at it!?"

Anyway, I hope this letter sheds some light on my decisions and choices. And hopefully takes away at least a little of my 'weirdness' :)



Photo of 'Katrina' Courtesy of Reece's Rainbow, www.reecesrainbow.org



Thanks for your love and support and interest. Muah!!!!

Happiest of Easters!!!

Love,

Your Little Niece

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