

As a parent, every day is Christmas morning

“Every day with a child is like opening a Christmas gift.”

One of our social workers told us that when we were beginning the adoption process.

I loved the idea, but I didn’t realize just how right she was.

Every child is full of gifts, full of talents, full of possibilities we can only guess at as we watch them grow.

When I see our little boy hit a baseball and take off for first base, I am in awe of the gifts God has given him that allow him to do that.

When I see his brother making a promise to himself that he will learn to ride a bicycle—even if he has to fall many times along the way—I am in awe of the determination God has given him.

Practically every day brings a moment of discovery. When did our 7-year-old learn to tie his shoes? Where did he get that hilarious sense of humor? Where did his big brother find the patience to help with first-grade homework? When did he learn how to unload the dishwasher? How do they find the words to ask such simple, yet challenging, questions about God?



Some days I forget to look at our children and see them as gifts to be opened. Some days I’m trying to get lunches packed and breakfast served and backpacks closed and jackets zipped and everyone on their way in time to begin the day.

But on a good day, on the best days, I pause and realize that I am in awe of the gifts my husband and I have been given. How, I wonder over and over and over, are we so blessed to be parents to these children?

Especially for us, as adoptive parents, the journey brings surprises. We have no expectations that our children will be good at music or football or writing or chess or cooking. Each of them gets to find his own path without any preconceptions that they will be able to lift three men on a bicycle like Great-Uncle Antone or have a great sense of direction like Grandpa. But, of course, even when you know your family history well, each child's strengths and interests are still a mystery.

Every single day is a surprise as we discover something new things about each of our children. Their strengths, their weaknesses, their likes, their dislikes, the way they laugh and hug and run and tell jokes at dinner, all of it gives us an idea of the people they are becoming.

As we watch them grow and learn and change, I realize so much of who they are seems to have nothing to do with us. I can't hit a baseball or run like the wind or do math facts that fast or sing a song in a goofy opera voice that makes my whole family laugh. It reminds me that this journey isn't completely in our hands. These children are ours, but they are also His. And we are just honored to be part of their stories.

Today, like every day, is Christmas Eve. And tomorrow, yet again, will be Christmas.

I can't wait.