

From split-level soup to eggs, looking for a bird in the hand, and more (7 Quick Takes Friday)

- 1 -

When you have children, you realize you use certain turns of phrases when you hear your words coming out of your child's mouth. Then you hear them say other things and sit there scratching your head.

That's how I feel about Daniel's new phrase: "Thank you, my masterpiece!"

He says it instead of simply saying, "Thank you," and at times it even comes with a bit of a dramatic Shakespearean bow. If you think it's entertaining around the house, you should have been with him in line at the drug store the other day, when he used it each time he placed an item on the counter.

I try to write these phrases down because he'll be saying something else soon enough.

- 2 -

Do you prefer cream of crab soup or Maryland crab soup?

What would you say if I told you that John and I have found a restaurant that will serve you both kinds of soup in the same bowl? Would it help if I mention that the "split level" version features huge lumps of crab, lots of vegetables, a blend of sweetness and spiciness, and a pairing of silky and smooth textures that makes you wonder whether you've ever tasted crab soup before?

And get this. When the waitress brings it to your table, she says, "You have to eat it like ice cream." What does that even mean?



The picture does not do it justice. But I feel I should get credit for taking it before eating the soup.

What I don't know is whether this is an option that is widely available and I have been in the dark, or whether we have discovered the crab soup kingdom.

Meanwhile, I also just learned that we are sharing our hometown with the man who claims to have invented tiramisu. And he still makes it, and sells it, in his shop in Little Italy.

Too bad there's no special occasion coming up, well...except, maybe that second Sunday in May.

- 3 -

John had a doctor's appointment the other day, and I went along. A nurse stopped by to fill out some paperwork, and before I knew how it had happened, we were talking about our sons and adoption.

Fairly quickly I got the sense that the nurse was interested in adoption as more than a concept, but as a possible path. And suddenly it became even more important to answer her questions in the most honest and straightforward way.

Then we pulled out pictures of our sons, and suddenly there was a crowd of medical staff gathered around, looking at each one. That was the moment that made the conversation not about adoption, or about traveling to China, or about considering so many questions, but about how we are a family.



When we were considering adopting, and waiting to adopt, there would be days when it would feel as if our child might not actually be at the end of the journey. And then we would meet a family with a child they had adopted, and it became real. It gave us hope and a sense of purpose.

It's impossible to know whether someone who is curious will end up adopting. I understand that adoption is not for everyone, though I believe adoption is a great option for many people who don't consider it. I just hope we helped her see that it might be worth exploring. We all know life is full of possibilities, but sometimes we need a bit of a nudge or an invitation to see the path clearly enough to take that first step. Who knows what will happen?

- 4 -

Pope John Paul II and Pope John XXIII will be canonized on Sunday! I would like to celebrate this as a family, though we'll see how the weekend comes together. There are some great ideas here, with my personal favorite being to serve Divine Mercy Sundaes.

I saw Pope John Paul II only once in person during a trip to Rome after graduating from college. I was standing in a crowd of hundreds of thousands of people, the sun was beating down, and I think only one of the readings was in English. I had chills the whole time.

I also remember the people next to me in the crowd didn't speak English, but they offered my friends and me cardboard boxes to sit on. There's something about the kindness of complete

strangers that stays with you.

- 5 -

Alleluia! Christ is risen! How was your Easter? We had such a beautiful day, with Mass and time with family and low expectations.

Each of our boys found a small toy chick in his basket.



The chicks cheep when you hold them (until the batteries run out), but they are not satisfying Daniel's dream of holding a bird in his hands. So now I am on a quest to find a place in the Baltimore area where I can take him to meet a bird. Any suggestions?

- 6 -

The dandelions are popping up! There is something special about watching a child pick dandelions. Our children rarely pick flowers in the yard, but they know they can pick as many dandelions as they'd like.



Every time I see dandelions, I think of the time the boys thought they saw a porcupine on our front steps.

- 7 -



Did you notice that I made a mistake in my blog about our trip to the Shrine of St. Anthony? One of my readers, Holly, let me know that I misidentified the statue of St. Anthony as St. Francis. She also brought to my attention the story of St. Anthony and the donkey, which I had never heard. Leo especially loved hearing it.

I also received some great suggestions for places to visit with our children! So you may want to go read the comments, and not just to see my error.

Reading the story about the donkey made me realize I know very little about St. Anthony. Maybe we will make it a goal to learn more about a new saint each month as a family so we will know more of their stories.

We will have two more new saints to get to know on Sunday!

Find more quick takes at Jen's Conversion Diary.