

Full of Grace: Feeling blessed in my vocation as a working mother

I was always sure that I would be a stay-at-home mother, especially when my children were young.

It was only after becoming a mother that I realized that those were just hypothetical plans, not based in reality.

The truth is that not every family can afford to live on a single income.

So when we became parents, John and I realized we had no choice. I had to work. People talk about how some mothers choose to stay home and others choose to pursue careers. For many mothers there is no option. There are groceries to buy and a mortgage to pay.



So I kept working. And I worried. Should I be spending more time with my son? Was I missing all the best moments of his childhood? Would he come to love other people more than he loved me? Was he getting all he needed?

Gradually, bit by bit, I started to see my answer. And I began to feel God's hand reassuring me that everything was fine-and maybe better than fine. Because whenever I look at my son-and now when I look at his younger brother-I can see that our children are thriving.

Would I love to spend more time with our boys? Absolutely.

Would I enjoy being a stay-at-home mother? Of course.

Do I worry that I could be a better mother than I am? All the time.

But do my sons need me and only me at this moment? No. They have a network of people-teachers, extended family, and others-who are supporting them, educating them, celebrating them, and partnering with John and me in helping them become the men we hope they will be one day.

I came to realize that for me, the desire to be a stay-at-home mother had much more to do with my personal hopes than with our children's needs. And when I saw it that way, I started to

come to peace with it. Because if it's a matter of giving up what I wanted, and it's not that our boys are suffering as a result, then that's something I can handle.

We all have crosses to bear. We all find ourselves on paths we didn't expect to walk. God gives us the strength for those journeys. When I see it in those terms, my yoke feels easy, and my burden light.

The truth is that I am serving my family, just not in the way that I expected. I do wish I could work less (doesn't everyone?), but I have a fantastic job that is meaningful and rewarding. And, as our older son started kindergarten last fall, I found myself realizing that as they get older, they are more independent, and I am even more at peace with the path God has chosen for me.

It's not always easy. In fact, it can be incredibly hard. I feel scattered and disorganized and tugged in different directions. Some days I can't believe how much I am doing for so many people, including the three most important people in my world. And I know I fall short in so many ways.

But I am so, so honored to have been given this role as a wife and a mother. And I am also extremely blessed to have a job working in a family-friendly workplace where I am valued and can make a difference through my work.

As I look back on my first five years as a mother, I can see God's fingerprints everywhere. And I know I am where God wants me to be, both in my career and in my role as a mother of these two magnificent children.

I am filling a role He carved out for me. And, as I place my trust in Him, I feel an overwhelming sense of encouragement, strength, hope, and peace.



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Wednesday on July 6, 2016.***

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