

The Gift of Patience

As I enter the final week of my pregnancy, I'm amazed by the amount of patience I have this time around. Last time I was at this stage I was downright miserable - tired of comments and unsolicited advice from strangers and people I know, anxious about the delivery, and at my threshold for physical discomfort. I prayed for Frank to be born as soon as divinely possible. But this time, it's different. This time I prayed for patience.

Like last time, I'm still working, even though I look and feel like a slow-moving, enormous floating orb when I move through the halls and around my classroom. The difference is that now I am kinder to my students, put in the same amount of effort as I would without a baby in my belly, and don't watch the clock. I follow Mother Teresa's advice and "do small things with great love," and I'm all the happier because of it.



A statue of Blessed Teresa of Calcutta is seen in Calcutta, India, Aug. 25. (CNS photo/Rupak De Chowdhuri, Reuters)

If I had decided to take off, and wait around at home for the baby to arrive, I'd drive myself crazy with a circuit of chores. I'd pace the floors, fussing over the little details that really don't matter to our newest family member. Instead, I'm using my home as a place for rest and enjoying playtime with Collin and Frank. Allowing myself some leisure is another way I've kept my spirits up.

I've wondered where this new patience is coming from and decided that this past year and all of its challenges have taught me that we can't always control when things will happen. All we can control is our reactions to our circumstances.

Being diagnosed with a serious disease was unexpected and nerve-racking. It took three months to regain my strength. I kept asking my doctors when I'd be myself again. They told me it would take time. When I stopped trying to control the situation, I got better. I trusted God and He did not fail me. Once again, I place the birth of my baby into His hands and know in my heart that despite the odds He will give us another beautiful, strong, happy, healthy child.

Fixing our house after the tree fell on it took four and a half months. People kept asking us when we were going home, and we said, "when it's done." We wanted our house to look and feel just right. That couldn't be rushed. It's not unlike how I look at the arrival of my new baby. He or she will join us when he or she is done living inside of me and is ready to be a bigger part of our world.

So, in teaching me how to wait, God has blessed me with the gift of patience. And

I'm much happier as a result.