

Why did we decide to adopt?



Even before John and I were married, we talked about adoption. I wouldn't say we felt called—just that we felt that adoption was a beautiful option.

We were looking ahead to a future that we assumed would include children. And if biology didn't cooperate, we would pursue adoption.

That was as far as the conversation went until we had been married a few years and it became clear that we weren't likely to welcome children by birth. That's when we started talking more seriously about adoption.

November is National Adoption Month, and I remember when we first started delving into the questions of how to adopt. John and I started our research by attending a Catholic Charities information session where we learned about attachment issues, special needs, how long we might have to wait to add a child to our family, and all the paperwork and laws and fees and extensive travel that could be involved.

It was overwhelming. But it was also clear that this was the path God had set before us. Suddenly we encountered adoptive families everywhere—at church, at the grocery store, at our favorite restaurant. Friends who had adopted or were planning to adopt were offering advice. And, even though we didn't know anyone who had adopted from there, all the signs were pointing to one country—China.



Ask John, "Why China?" and you'll get a well-considered, logical response. For me it was a gut feeling, a belief that China was where we would find our child. And the fact that we were both drawn to China made it even clearer that that was the path we should take.

It wasn't easy, but it wasn't that difficult. It was like any journey—obstacles would pop up, and others would fade away. There were moments when doors slammed shut and others where windows opened. There was bureaucracy and fingerprinting and the challenge of waiting and waiting and waiting. But once we had a photo of our son, we realized this was no longer about us. It was about him.

We read and prepared ourselves as much as possible. We childproofed the house and then—when the U.S. and Chinese governments said we could—we boarded a plane and flew to China. It was our first flight together. Even today, after nine years of marriage, the only times John and I have flown together have been on our adoption trips.



So, why did we decide to adopt?

Some days I don't even think it was a decision. It just happened.

One day we turned a page and there was a new chapter—one we hadn't realized could be so wonderful—and our lives took this most amazing twist. We started down a path that had been set out for us and kept going. And here we are, the parents of two sons who were born on the other side of the world and who fit perfectly in our lives and our family.

It may not have been our first plan, but it's our best. And we are so grateful.

Adoptive parents: Why did you choose adoption? I'd love to hear from parents who have grown their families through adoption.