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Always There

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Abstract

In lieu of an abstract, below is the essay's first paragraph.

"We live in a changing, complex world. We are a society that is on the go, a society that thinks more is always better, one in which technology continues to evolve. We dine out more; up to 50 percent of the money that we spend on food is spent dining out. Most families don't have the classic home cooked meal where all family members eat at the same time. It seems like there is so much to do and so little time to do it."



From Our Guest Essayists

Always There

Todd and Stacie Plouffe

We live in a changing, complex world. We are a society that is on the go, a society that thinks more is always better, one in which technology continues to evolve. We dine out more; up to 50 percent of the money that we spend on food is spent dining out. Most families don't have the classic home cooked meal where all family members eat at the same time. It seems like there is so much to do and so little time to do it.

One area that remains constant in our lives is church. I remember when I first met my wife, over 14 years ago; we would always set Sunday mornings aside to go to Church, and then spend time with family after church. That time together was precious family time and remains so today.

During my wife Stacie's first pregnancy, with our daughter Jacquelyn, I remember how nervous she was. I remember her going to church and going to church often. She would go at various times, 6am, 8pm, 11pm and pray. She was praying for a healthy baby. She always mentioned that no matter how busy she was or when it was convenient for her that church was "Always there" for her.

After our daughter, Jacquelyn was born we continued to attend church, now as a family. We wanted to bring Jesus into Jacquelyn's life at a young age. Although Jacquelyn was a healthy baby, she did have a problem with ear infections. It seemed like just after one ear infection was cleared up, another one would set in. In fact, Jacquelyn had over 30 ear infections within her first 30 months; it doesn't take a mathematician to figure out that this is one per month. After seeing many sleepless nights and going for doctor's visits, we decided it was best to insert tubes into Jacquelyn's ears. This is a very common procedure that has a high success rate of reducing the amount ear infections that a child has to endure. I remember the days leading up to the surgery, going to church and praying with my wife hoping that everything would be ok. One night, while praying, Jesus spoke back to us and told us that this wasn't the right thing to do and that he would cure the problem. The next morning we called the doctor and cancelled the surgery. Jacquelyn hasn't had an ear infection since that day.

On April 4, 2006 Stacie and I welcomed our second child Nicholas into the world. Nicholas is the most loving child that any parent could ask for. He is full of energy, loves to play all kinds of sports and will even watch a football or hockey game with his dad. He also loves cars and Spiderman.

After Nicholas was born, we decided that it would be best for my wife to stop working and stay home with the kids. It was always heart wrenching dropping Jacquelyn off at 7am to the local day care and not picking her up till 5:30pm. Just as Jesus has always been there for us, we wanted to "always be there" for our children. We wanted to raise our children, wanted to be there for their first steps, wanted to be there when they needed a hug or to take care of them when they didn't feel well.

As we did with Jacquelyn, we decided to bring Jesus into Nicholas' life at an early age by attending church every Sunday. Nicholas is very curious and aware of all that is happening in church, in fact he is starting to recite several prayers.

My family is typical of most families, always on the go. Our kids are involved in many activities. My wife and Jacquelyn are involved with the K4J group at Holy Spirit Church. This group teaches values to children and teaches the fundamentals of the Catholic faith. My wife taught Vacation Bible School this past summer and Jacquelyn was a student at the school. The sparkle in Jacquelyn's eye is enough to reassure me that she knows that Jesus will "always be there" for her as he has been for us.

My wife and I bring Jesus into our lives on a daily basis and look to him for strength and guidance. Just as we want to “always be there” for our children, we know that he is “always there” for us. Whether it is a daily prayer or a special prayer in time of need, Jesus is always listening and his door is always open. My wife and I ask for his wisdom and guidance as we raise our children.

I thank Jesus daily for all the blessings he has given my family. He has provided me with a wonderful life and an incredible family. We are all blessed and appreciate every day of our life.

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