

November 17, 2022

A Cup of Living Water

ADOPTION REFLECTS A HEART LIKE GOD'S

Each week my village newspaper runs engaging columns about a dog or cat who needs a "forever home." Week by week the local humane society director reminds readers that many difficult circumstances can leave innocent pets without a home, and that the need for loving pet adoption is great and continual. How much more so for innocent children caught in difficult circumstances, who need forever homes as well.

For the past few years my own columns in the same newspaper have highlighted National Adoption Month, which has been observed every November since 1984. Sometimes I hear from a reader who has been adopted or whose family has been affected by adoption. Invariably, they tell me how grateful they are for the blessing of adoption, and for the annual November focus on this life-changing gift.

You probably know someone who has been adopted, even if they have never come forward with that information. According to Adoption Network, 6 out of 10 Americans have personal experience with adoption, meaning that they themselves, a close family member, or a close friend was adopted, adopted a child, or placed a child up for adoption.

If you have had personal experience with adoption, people need to hear your story. It may have begun with the heartache of infertility, the trauma of violence or family instability, or the crisis of an unplanned pregnancy; yet how much love and sacrifice ensues, as innocent children receive the gift of life and love, changing their whole future from that point forward.

Adoption is an essential component of a real-life, pro-life position, and all of us who profess that position should be doing all we can to support it. We will be further inspired to do so when we understand that adoption is also the way we come into the family of God.

This is set forth in the Bible, where we see what may be startling to some: no one is born a child of God. It is true that we are all made in his image and likeness (Genesis 1:26), and that He so loved the world that He gave his only Son to redeem us all (John 3:16). But notice what else that famous verse reveals: "...that whoever believes in him should not

perish but have eternal life." Belief in Jesus is essential to salvation, for it is by faith in Him that we are adopted as children of God.

This process is verified early in John's gospel: "But to all who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God" (John 1:12). Adoption into the family of God is reiterated in Paul's letter to the Galatian church, in which he wrote, "for in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith", and, "if a son, then an heir through God" (Galatians 3:26; 4:7).

A chosen heir of God (John 15:16) -- there is no higher privilege! As the apostle John wrote, "See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God!" (1 John 3:1). This adoption altogether changes our lives, including our identity, our worldview, and our eternal destiny.

As grateful adopted children of God, we can echo and give thanks for this incomparable blessing by supporting all aspects of adoption in human families, including coming alongside foster children, adoptive families, couples facing unplanned pregnancy, and the organizations that serve them, with our love, compassion, encouragement, prayers, and practical support.

Jesus said, "I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you" (John 14:18). Let's not leave children orphans, either; let's come to them in his name. Here are some nationwide places to start: adoptuskids.com; childwelfare.gov; care-net.org. An online search will direct you to resources in your own area.

With love in the Lord,

The Rev. Christine Maddux

New readers are always welcome, and may subscribe to these weekly messages by sending their name and email address to me at: aclmaddux@mac.com.