

# Reflections of the heart during a time of family transition



A blessed Easter to all of you! How good it is to be filled with the joy and the hope of the Resurrection after our long Lent. What thrilling promise of new life Jesus brings for those who believe.

This Easter, the promise of new life, for our family, is quite literally staring us in the face. Within the first few weeks of the season, God willing, we will be welcoming a new baby into our home. Though we did this two years ago, to the due date(!), I feel much less prepared this time around. With only a few weeks to go, the “to-do” list is still so long: clothes to wash and put away, diapers to buy, toys to clean and sort through, bottles to prep – it goes on and on. And the time that was dedicated to those tasks last time around is now filled, quite joyfully, with the ever-consuming needs of a curious almost 2-year-old.

And in addition to meeting our son’s physical needs, there are the concerns of meeting his emotional needs. Are we talking enough about the baby and what it means to be a big brother? Are we doing enough to prepare the one who has held center stage for 23 months for a bigger family and less direct attention?

And then I find myself trying to soak up the final moments of my first baby’s babyhood. Holding him a little longer, reading just one more book, running my fingers through his curly head of hair before he rushes off to grab a toy or, most likely, something that’s not a toy. Cherishing the few times he still

falls asleep in my arms. In a few short weeks, our beautiful life will be so different. Even more beautiful, thanks to God's great goodness and generosity, but still different.

In such times of transition, I find myself extra grateful for being surrounded by a community of solid Catholics who by their very witness and words have helped me prepare for the joys, challenges and surprises of family life.

"You're great at this pregnancy thing," my wonderful pro-life, pro-Church doctor quipped a couple of months ago. "You should do this four or five more times." When I laughed, he said, seriously, "No one ever regrets having more children."

When I visited EWTN studios in the fall of 2017, when Joseph was just 6 months old, I remember Jim and Joy Pinto, hosts of "At Home with Jim and Joy" and parents of seven, saying: "You never think you will love your second child as much as you love your first, but you do. The love multiplies."

I also have witnessed for years the sacrifices made by my dear friends and parents of seven who live in a small townhouse that is as filled with love for each other and love for God as it is with children. What a gift.

Formation comes from many places: books, videos, the classroom. But it also comes from those around us. This Easter, I am grateful for the beautiful, honest and even unknowing witness and support of the members of my cherished Catholic community.

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