



Aid for Women

Empowering Women to Choose Life Since 1978

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Fulfilling Desires of the Heart



*Debbie Wells
and
Mary Rycroft*

Sitting across from Mary Rycroft and Debbie Wells you would have every right to believe that these women were the very best of friends — and they are. They are also mother and daughter, whose lives were forever intertwined with the brave decision of a birth mother to release her daughter for adoption.

Mary and Don Rycroft had tried for four and a half years to conceive a child. Mary was going through what was then

state-of-the-art fertility treatment, but there was no pregnancy in sight. They had not discussed adoption yet.

On October 16, 1972, during a visit to friends in San Francisco — friends who had adopted two children — Don got a call from their doctor. “I have a little girl who needs parents,” he said. Mary says that that trip back to Chicago was the longest in her life; she was so excited to know that they would at last have a daughter.

On October 18, the doctor said to the baby, “I want to introduce you to your parents.” Don responded instantly, “That’s Debbie.” And Debbie was home with Mary and Don in just six days.

Debbie soon had another loving relationship begin with her GaGa Rycroft. From the day she came home from the hospital and GaGa held her in her arms, there was an instant bonding.

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Aid for Women

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A Gift of Love, for Life



Katrina and Trianna Martin

Katrina Martin came to Aid for Women at the beginning of this year, already eight months pregnant but needing someone to encourage her and help her work through some difficult issues.

Sharnina Starling, Aid for Women director of client and volunteer services, gave Katrina the compassionate care and information she needed.

Trianna Janee was born on February 14, 2001, a wonderful gift of love that will last Katrina’s lifetime. We are thrilled that

Katrina brought Trianna to meet us and we look forward to seeing them both again.

Thanks to the generosity of many people, Aid for Women volunteer counselors and staff are here to help women of all ages, races and circumstances in their pregnancy decisions and situations.

“Fulfilling Desires...”

In another three months, Mary’s parents, living in Florida, welcomed Debbie into the family. Although Debbie’s parents separated when she was three years old, Don has played a vital role in her life, and they continue to have a close father-daughter relationship.



Mary, Don and Debbie never met Debbie’s birth mother. As an adult, Debbie did check for any information that might be important in her medical history.

With fond memories, Mary tells the story of Debbie in second grade standing before her classmates for “show and tell” to talk of her bi-racial heritage. The questions her fellow students had were all about being adopted!

Debbie believes that her birth mother was a courageous woman. She and her parents learned that the birth mother’s family never knew that she was pregnant. “This has made my pro-life conviction very personal,” says Debbie. “To go through an entire pregnancy without the support of your family, to have no one to comfort you through or after the delivery, and then to release your child for adoption takes a very special and strong person.”

Our eyes become tear filled as she says, “It is an incredible blessing to have been adopted by Mary and Don. I have the best mom possible.”

Mary would say this to the birth mother, “Thank you. Debbie is more of a daughter than I could have wished for.” They both laugh as Mary says, “How many daughters would invite their mothers on their honeymoon?”

(To set the record straight, it wasn’t the whole honeymoon. Debbie’s ancestry is one half Spanish/Moroccan. Debbie and her husband, Scott, invited Mary to join them for the second week for their time in Spain.)

Scott has his own perspective on adoption and would say this to any birth mother, “I thank God everyday for the blessing of adoption. Without it, I would not have found the love of my life.”

Mary continues, “I underestimated the power of the Lord in fulfilling desires of the heart.” Mary came from a large family and had wanted to have five children. With one child,

the Lord fulfilled Mary’s longing. “My friends are in awe of our relationship,” says Mary. “I’m looking forward to the day when her birth mother will get to meet Debbie in heaven.”

Mary was able to be a stay-at-home mom until Debbie was 12 years old. Debbie says, “My mom has been my spiritual mentor.”

Mary’s excellent mothering is responsible for Debbie’s counseling at Aid for Women. Mary and Kathleen Bindley, an Aid for Women board member, are longtime Bible-study and prayer partners. It was through Kathleen that Debbie learned about the ministry of Aid for Women, and Mary encouraged her to explore what counseling our clients would entail.

Debbie has been counseling at Aid for Women for almost a year. Her testimony is uniquely powerful, and our clients pay attention to what she has to say. She knows from her own life that a woman does not have to choose abortion.

The story gets better. Ever since they were married, Scott and Debbie knew that they were going to adopt at least some of their children. They have a vision for a multiracial, multicultural family. Debbie discovered that she was pregnant when they were seriously thinking about adopting their first child. They are expecting their first baby — and Mary her first grandchild — in August, although adoption is still in their plans as a family. At their eight-week ultrasound exam, Debbie and Scott heard their baby’s heartbeat for the first time.



“I was awed into silence,” says Debbie. “If our clients only knew that their baby’s heart is already beating when most of them come for a pregnancy test, I know they wouldn’t be thinking about ending that life.”

“When our clients say that abortion is okay, I tell them that what they are saying is that it would have been okay for my birth mother to have chosen not to give me birth — not to give me a chance at life.” Many abortion-minded clients take Debbie’s message to heart.

Aid for Women dispels the myths and stereotypes surrounding adoption. If you’d like an Aid for Women representative to talk about adoption to your professional or civic association, student or church group, please contact the executive director.

Adoption In-Service Training

Aid for Women volunteer counselors received up-to-date adoption information from Pam Dahlman, child welfare specialist with Bethany Christian Services, and Becky MacDougall, senior social worker for Sunny Ridge Family Center, at an April in-service training. Tamara, a birth mother of three children released for adoption through Sunny Ridge, also told us her moving story. She offered us genuine reassurance that adoption can be a win-win situation for a mother and her child.



Becky MacDougall and Tamara

We learned the best ways to promote adoption to our clients and overcome the myths and stereotypes surrounding adoption. Here are two tips for you:

1. Always encourage and reassure the birth mom that she is making a very unselfish choice.
2. Always use adoption sensitive language, such as, “making an adoption plan” or “releasing your child for adoption.”

Ways You Can Help

Prayer

Aid for Women cannot be effective without prayer support. Please consider checking the “I will pray” box on the reply envelope and pray right now for more clients, more volunteers and more resources.

Volunteer

Aid for Women has no outreach without the volunteers who counsel our clients. Please visit us to explore volunteer opportunities and see how you can make a difference.

Fundraising

There are numerous ways to financially support Aid for Women. Please see the reply envelope for a few ideas on direct and indirect giving.

Education

Experienced Aid for Women speakers are available to address congregations and study groups at churches or synagogues, professional and civic group meetings, and groups of high school, college and post-graduate students. Please let us know if you would like to schedule a speaker.

Thank you for your support!

The Chicago Sun Times published a tribute to the renowned poet, Gwendolyn Brooks, when she died last year in which they reprinted the following poem.

the mother

Abortions will not let you forget.
You remember the children you got that you did not get,
The damp small pulps with a little or with no hair,
The singers and workers that never handled the air.
You will never neglect or beat
Them, or silence or buy with a sweet.
You will never wind up the sucking-thumb
Or scuttle off ghosts that come.
You will never leave them, controlling your luscious sigh,
Return for a snack of them, with gobbling mother-eye.

I have heard in the voices of the wind the voices of my
dim killed children.
I have contracted. I have eased
My dim dears at the breasts they could never suck.
I have said, Sweets, if I sinned, if I seized
Your luck
And your lives from your unfinished reach,
If I stole your births and your names,
Your straight baby tears and your games,
Your stilted or lovely loves, your tumults, your marriages,
aches, and your deaths,
If I poisoned the beginnings of your breaths,
Believe that even in my deliberateness I was not deliberate.
Though why should I whine,
Whine that the crime was other than mine? –
Since anyhow you are dead
Or rather, or instead,
You were never made.
But that too, I am afraid,
Is faulty: oh, what shall I say, how is the truth to be said?
You were born, you had body, you died.
It is just that you never giggled or planned or cried.
Believe me, I loved you all.
Believe me, I knew you, though faintly, and I loved,
I loved you
All.

Gwendolyn Brooks (1945)

Good Stewardship

Each time we send out this newsletter, some copies come back marked “undeliverable” — mostly because people have moved. We pay an extra 68 cents for each one returned.

Please help us have more money to serve more clients!

If you're moving, please call Anna McLain at (312) 621-1100, so she may update your record.

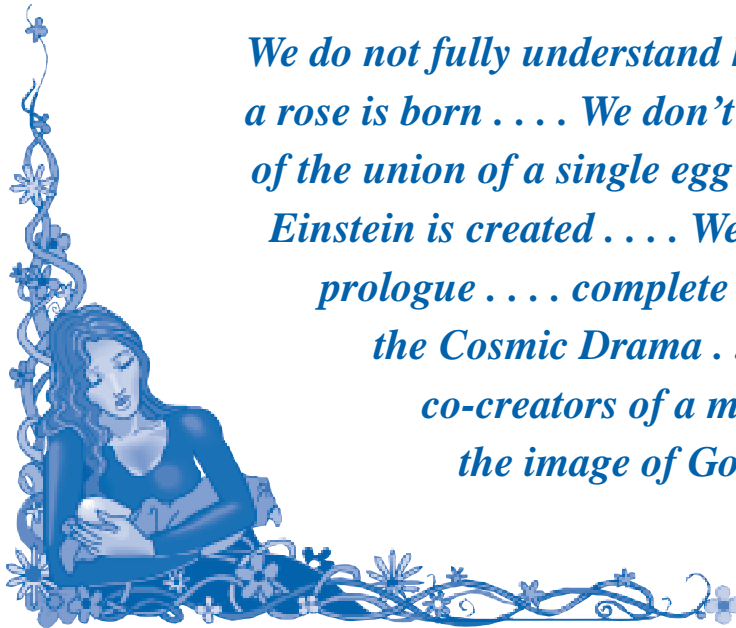
If you no longer wish to receive this newsletter, please check the “I'm sorry” box on the reply envelope and return it with your name and address. We will certainly honor your request. *Thank you!*



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We do not fully understand how a seed flowers and a rose is born We don't know how because of the union of a single egg and a single sperm an Einstein is created We cannot fully write the prologue complete the story line or epilogue of the Cosmic Drama . . . We only know that we are co-creators of a miracle an infant made in the image of God

Happy Mother's Day

Ruth Weisman Goldboss,
Associate of the School Sisters of Notre Dame

We Couldn't Do It Without Them . . .



Erika Gleeson

Our volunteer counselors are the most amazing women. Their generous, selfless service meets the needs of our clients, 33 hours a week, Monday through Saturday.

We served 533 women in the first three months of 2001.

Thank you, from the mothers and the babies!



Kate Berley and Katie Ambrose