

Living Pro-life

The other day, as I was sitting down with my children for lunch, I noticed a woman watching us from a few tables over. My youngest, barely three months old, started to fuss and I leaned over to quiet him as my daughter tried to whisper something in my ear. When I looked back over at her I noticed that she had started to sob but she just kept looking at my family. I knew that something was truly bothering her and so I decided I would go over and see if I could help. I handed the baby to my husband and went over to her. As I sat down she quickly tried to dry her eyes, but I assured her that I did not mind; everyone has those days. “Has my family offended you in some way or is there anything that I can do to help you?” I questioned. “I am sorry I just saw your beautiful children and it touched something deep within me,” she replied. Her life story then started to spill from her lips.

Her name was Elizabeth Stevens. She was only twenty-one years old and she had recently broken up with her boyfriend of three years. They had lived together for two years and he had finally decided that it was time for a change. She was currently sleeping on the floor of her best friend’s dorm while she tried to juggle a new job and stay in college. Her situation was worsened when she found out that she was also pregnant. She told her friends and they immediately suggested that if she wanted to stay in school she would have to end the pregnancy. When my family sat down in the restaurant, she had just finished scheduling an appointment for her abortion. She saw my children and realized what exactly that would come to mean.

I understood quickly how perfectly Providence works in our lives. After finding out about her situation, my heart broke for her. She felt all alone with a mountain of troubles on her shoulder and I was called to help her work through this difficult time. I started by telling her that

she did not have to have an abortion. While it may have seemed like that was her only option at the time I assured her it was not. Children could be difficult but that did not mean that they would steal away all of your heart and love. They were worth every struggle. I opened our home to her so that she would not have to continue to sleep on her roommate's floor. I also informed her of a place called Lifehouse. Here young expecting mothers could come and live while they went to school or worked. It would not be necessary for her to give up her child for adoption but if she chose that path they would help her to find a wonderful family.

Elizabeth was faced with the toughest decision of her life. I knew that she would need time to think about it and so I left her my number and urged her to take a few days to think about her situation. Two days later I received a call from her. She sounded much happier than the other day. She informed me that she had thought long and hard about her decision and she felt she had made the right choice. She had decided to keep her dear child! She shared with me how every time she considered abortion, although it appeared to be the easy solution, my children's faces flashed in her mind. She could not bring herself to end a life once she understood that that was what her baby, her mistake as she had said, truly was.

She came to live with us for one month and after that she stayed at Lifehouse. She made the decision to keep her child and she has never, not for a single moment regretted it. She has her struggles but the joy that her daughter brings her allows her to keep going. She is now living independently and will finish nursing school in the spring.

All it took for Elizabeth to want to keep her child was being a witness to life and a few kind words. Marching and protesting will help us to change the unjust laws of our country but kindness and living pro-life are what truly influences individuals. I had no formal training on

counseling before I met Elizabeth, but I simply told her that I would not force her into any decision. I told her what I believed to be the right choice and why that was so based on my personal experience as a mother. I showed her respect and care in a time in her life when she was experiencing none. Presence is the key to changing hearts and minds. Live pro-life.