



Adoption Services

Networking for Adoptive Families of Catholic Charities of Northwest Florida



Connect with others and share your story with other adoptive families in the area.

"A Match Made in Heaven"

It seems that everyone's journey into adoption is individualized. Our journey began as many others before us; we struggled with infertility for years. We were eventually blessed with our precious son, Carson. The doctors told us if we wanted more children our best bet would be to begin trying immediately. We did and we found out that we were pregnant when Carson was a mere 8 months old. Unfortunately, the pregnancy was not viable and our quest to grow our family was put on hold. We realized after several years that it was not in God's plan for us to have more children biologically. So, we started a journey to see what God had in store for us as a family and to investigate our options. Our research led us to the wonderful office of Catholic Charities. Of course, this office has been an answer to our prayers.

We began our adoption journey with Catholic Charities in the Spring of 2007, when we met to develop a plan for adoption. It began the process that would eventually change our lives and deliver to us the most precious "gift from Heaven." We worked throughout the summer to complete our portfolio, which was the most amazing process of self reflection. We were placed officially on the adoption list in August of 2007. We received a few phone calls to present our portfolio, but nothing seemed to develop. Then we received the phone call that we had prayed so diligently to receive. As I sat at the kitchen table one cold winter January night, Cheree called with news of the birth of a sweet baby girl who was going to be placed for adoption. I was shaking profusely as I listened to the details. We had received this phone call before but something was different about this one – God had his hand on this one. The birthmother had requested a meeting with us. We quickly agreed; of course. Our baby girl was born in January several weeks premature. She stayed in NICU for three weeks and on February 4th we brought her home from the hospital. She was tiny, but so perfect. She instantly was ours and she stole our hearts from the moment we held her. Actually, she stole our hearts from the moment that we had heard of her. It was quite amazing! She was our "match made in Heaven."

On September 12th, we completed our adoption journey with finalization. We are so grateful to the workers at Catholic Charities for the work that they do on a daily basis. Cheree, Tiffany, and Precious have truly become an extension of our family throughout this process. We have been blessed beyond words.



Upcoming Special Events:

Adopting an Infant, what

you need to know. An Orientation and Training offered the 1st Saturday of every month in Pensacola. Call to inquire (850) 436-6411.

For Your Information:

Welcome, Kellea Sims, our Florida State University Master's Program Intern. Kellea will be working with both Adoptive families and Birth families.

Our Adoption Counselor, **Cheree Moore**, and Adoption Specialist, **Tiffany Heiple**, have added one more to their families with the addition of their baby girls. All families are doing wonderfully. Thank you for your thoughts and prayers.



Our Program Coordinator, **Precious Arnold**, will be leaving the agency to pursue other opportunities within the community. Please join us in thanking her for her major contribution to our agency and with our clients.

Email heiplet@cc.ptdiocese.org if you have a question you would like the staff to answer in future issues.

Office Location:

1815 N. 6th Avenue
Pensacola, FL 32503
(850) 436-6411 office
(850) 436-6414 fax

E-Mail:

heiplet@cc.ptdiocese.org
moorec@cc.ptdiocese.org

Web Site:

www.catholiccharitiesnwf1.org



Future Issues:

Legal Questions
What to expect
Funding your adoption
How long does it take to
find a birth father

Women can make a positive choice

The tragedy of the abandoned infant found in Milton in December (**Baby Milton**) calls us as a community to reach out to women in crisis. It reminds us how fragile life is and that these unfortunate events do happen right in our own neighborhoods. With a little education and a lot of love and support, we can save lives and give a child a future.

According to A Safe Haven for Newborns, a statewide infant rescue group based in South Florida, 125 newborns have been saved across Florida since the 2000 enactment of the Safe Haven law.

This law allows women to leave their newborn at any medically staffed facility (hospital, fire/EMS department) with no questions asked. In 2008, the law was amended to extend a women's option from leaving a newborn up to 3 days old to leaving a newborn up to 7 days old. In leaving her newborn, a woman would be choosing an adoption plan while remaining anonymous.

With such a viable option, many wonder why a woman would abandon a child in an unsafe environment. However, we must first ask these questions:

How do we treat women facing unplanned pregnancy? Do we offer options? When we hear a woman say that she is not ready to parent her child, and is considering adoption, do we cast a judgmental glance her way or laden her with guilt? Do we encourage these women to evaluate all their options and make the best decision for themselves and the child?

Women considering adoption have been asked, "How can you give your child away?" Some have been told that they are careless and heartless. Thus, shame sets in. Those facing unplanned pregnancy listen to the messages we send and feel hopeless and trapped. They believe that parenting is the only option that society will accept. So, in fear and desperation they run or hide or neglect or abandon or abuse — or even kill.

A woman facing a crisis pregnancy needs education to make the best plan for herself and her unborn child. As a community, we can support these women by referring them to one of the four pregnancy resource centers in our two counties. We can make others aware of the Safe Haven law and acknowledge that if a mother chooses to anonymously leave her child in a safe place, she is making a positive choice.

And finally, we can realize the negativity that is so often attached to the courageous act of adoption and work to change this stigma, remembering that adoption means life.

As a community, let us consider that our tiny acts of support offered to women in crisis just might save one tiny little life.



2008 Activity:

12 Parenting/Other Plans
7 Adoption
Plans/Placements
8 TPR Hearings
8 Finalizations

2009 to date Activity:

5 Parenting/Other Plans
2 Adoption
Plans/Placements
4 TPR Hearings



Please keep those families with placements in your prayers as they travel through the legal process.



Catholic Charities of Northwest Florida
1815 N. 6th Avenue
Pensacola, FL 32503

