**Spiritual Adoption - A True Story!**

**Gianna Grace**

**January 1, 2010**

We have a daughter! Apparently, the Holy Spirit has been busy at work this past year planning for her arrival. With many prayers being answered….especially this one from my Mom (Gianna’s maternal grandmother).

***“The Lord called me from birth, from my mother’s womb, He gave me my name.” Is 49 :1***

*On March 23, 2009, Joseph and I attended our weekly Sunday mass at St. Stephen’s Catholic Church. As we were leaving church a young woman with a basket full of little babies wrapped in pink and some in blue, handed me a baby wrapped in pink tulle and tied with a pink ribbon. Attached to the ribbon was a prayer card which requested you to spiritually adopt this baby and pray for nine months to spare her from abortion.*

*I came home and placed the card and baby on my kitchen counter where it soon was covered with mail, catalogs and coupons. That is until two weeks later when going through this mound of paper, discovered the baby and prayer card. I read the prayer and held the little baby in my hands and realized that this baby was growing in the womb of a possible birth mother for my daughter and son-in-law, Teresa and Max.*

*I wrote the date, April 8, 2009 on the card and the name Claire Marie, a name Teresa had planned for her first adoption in 2003 which was a little girl. The adoption did not go through as planned. I then taped the prayer card to my bathroom mirror. A place I stood countless times during the day. My prayer journey had begun. As each month went by I noted (to myself) how the baby was growing inside her mother’s womb.*

*As the weeks went by, I waited anxiously for the phone call from Teresa telling me a birth mom had chosen them. But no call came. By December 09, my journey of prayer to protect this baby was nearing its end. I knew the young mother I had been praying for would soon be giving birth. As December drew to an end, the birth mother weighed even more heavily on my heart and something else was taking place. One night before falling off to sleep and alone with my prayers, I had a very strong feeling that the name Claire was wrong. God was giving me a new name for this precious baby, Gianna.*

*I fell asleep that night saying the name Gianna over and over. I changed the name Claire to the name Gianna. Each day forward, I prayed for God to spare the life of baby Gianna. At no time did Teresa ever know I was praying this particular prayer; nor did we ever discuss names.*

*On December 31, 2009, a young woman in labor walked into a hospital and a baby girl was born to her at 6:23 am on January 1, 2010. Soon after she informed the nurse she wanted to place the baby up for adoption. The nurse was surprised but gave her a long list of adoption agencies. The young mother circled one of the agencies, the same agency that Teresa and Max were registered with. A representative of the agency came to visit the young mother. After being assured this is what she wanted to do, the representative asked her what kind of family she wanted for her child.*

*The young mother replied, “I want a Catholic family”. And second, she wanted her child placed in a home with older siblings. At this point the representative smiled and said; “I have the perfect family for you”.*

*On January 5, 2010, Teresa received a phone call and the representative said: “We have a little girl for you”. On January 6, which is exactly 39 weeks to the day I began my spiritual adoption prayer; a beautiful baby girl was placed in her mother’s arms; was lovingly kissed on the brow by her father and sweetly patted by her two adoring brothers. A baby was born to a family.*

Now Max and I had chosen the name Gianna many months before, but never shared it with anyone. We didn’t realize how significant this name would be. We had chosen the name to honor my great-aunt Gianna. She and her husband, like ourselves, were never able to conceive. She treated all of her nieces, nephews, great -nieces and nephews, and even great- great nieces and nephews as her own. So we thought what a great way for us to honor her memory. The idea that our daughter was born on New Year’s Day in 2010, almost 100 years after the birth of my Aunt Gianna (New Year’s Eve 1910) was incredible!

Gianna was also born at 39 weeks, the same number of weeks my mother had been praying. We were amazed to find out after the fact that my Mom had used the name, Gianna, in her prayers and then found out the birthmother’s middle name is Gianna…we truly believe intercessory prayers were at work.

We chose the name Grace to honor Max’s maternal grandmother and his sister Mary Grace who will be Gianna’s Godmother. But we also thought of how special that our Gianna Grace was born on a Holy Day -the Solemnity of Mary, Holy Mother of God (January 1).

We brought Gianna home to her Catholic family and her 2 big brothers Gerard and John-Paul on the Feast of the Epiphany, January 6 – What a gift!

With Love,

Max, Teresa, Gerard and John-Paul

***The Prayer***

*We, the undersigned family willingly and joyfully agree to spiritually adopt this unborn baby and pray the following prayer on baby’s behalf for nine months.*

***“Heavenly Father, we love you very much.***

***We beg you to spare the life of the unborn baby we have spiritually adopted who is in danger of abortion.”***