

CATHOLIC AND THE CITY

Welcome to life from the perspective of a twenty-something single Catholic trying to love God, make a dollar, and have a little fun along the way in modern culture as experienced in Brew City, USA. From stories about attempts to share Jesus with high school kiddos, to tales from my increasingly hilarious trail of dating, to commentary on religion and politics, it's all fair game. I'm an open book; I invite you to read on.

Meatloaf and Ovaltine

It was meatloaf and Ovaltine, Poison Control and bathroom bartering, shards of glass and new shoes.

I was on parental-assistance duty for Thanksgiving this year while my sisters frolicked about in the Tennessee sunshine. As my sweet mother is in pain and recovering from double knee replacement surgery, and my beloved father is, well, my father, it was an interesting, although not unusual, visit. This recap is provided mostly for my sisters' entertainment, but as it's pretty amusing in general, I'd like to share with y'all a typical day at home, as a temporarily-only-child, assisting parents upwards of 65. Enjoy...

- 8:00 - Awake to Dad's voice-alarm booming, "Annie, get outta bed. I wanna find the list of Cool Tools judges on the computer monitor internet machine so I can send them my Garden Seeder!"
- 8:15 - Arrive in kitchen, clean Dad's sticky "Magic Juicer" slop from walls, counter, and floor, before getting my sanity-saving coffee.
- 9:00 - Clean bathroom number one.
- 9:30 - Clean bathroom number two.
- 10:00 - Make deal with Dad that I'll help him with the "internet machine" if he'll promise to start flushing toilets.
- 10:05 - Help Dad find list of judges from a DIY Network show based solely on the first name of a judge from a 2007 episode.
- 10:45 - Explain to Dad why typing "My Email" into the Google search bar is not the best way to access his Yahoo account.
- 11:30 - Call hospital on-call number to track down doctor on duty, on vacation weekend, because Mom might have accidentally taken the wrong mix of post-surgery pills.
- 11:35 - Prepare to call Poison Control before getting call back from on-call doctor.
- 12:00 - Make lunch for 82 million cousins stopping through to say hello.
- 13:00 - Go grocery shopping for weekend fielding a question from Dad on my cell while in the dairy aisle about how to change font size in Microsoft Word.
- 14:30 - Do laundry of Mom's hospital bed's 24 pillow cases.
- 15:00 - Buy new shoes on Mom as "thanks" for coming home to help.
- 16:00 - Fill up tank of premium gas on Dad as "thanks" for coming home to help.
- 16:30 - Arrive home to living room floor of Dad's shattered glass of juice.

- 16:35 - Clean Dad's shattered glass of juice.
- 17:00 - Clean bathroom number one, again.
- 17:15 - Clean bathroom number two, again.
- 17:30 - Say hello to cousin installing a downstairs, walk-in shower in bathroom number three.
- 17:45 - Make dinner of World's Largest Meatloaf so parents and cousins can be fed the following week.
- 19:00 - Sitting in kitchen, see Dad put a quarter stick of butter into his mug. Ask Dad if I really just watched him put butter in his tea. Learn that, no, he did not put butter in his tea; he put butter in his warm milk, "with cinnamon, too!"
- 20:00 - Peacefully watch Forrest Gump in living room, with volume actually at a controlled level because Dad has his "audio ears" headphones on and working, while sipping Ovaltine and eating pie, being thankful I have two working legs, a place to call home, and two married parents who love me a whole lot.

It's not always pretty, and it's sometimes very messy, but that big, old, beautiful house on Summit Street with the creaky floors that is full of love and cherished memories will always be home sweet home.

Flying by Faith

I'm not scared of flying - I rather enjoy it, actually - but just to be safe, I always say an Act of Contrition before takeoff and tell the Lord I'm ready to meet Him if it's time.

This past weekend I made a quick trip to Tennessee to meet my new Goddaughter and celebrate her Baptism. As the plane took off, I was once again convinced I was going to plummet to my death at some point during the flight.

I know the rules of physics and can even tell you that $Lift = .5\rho 2ACL$ (I took honors physics and might have dated an aerospace engineer once or twice). But even with that knowledge, the concept of an 80,000-pound object being suspended in invisibly thin air for hours seems contrary to everything that makes sense up in my brain - especially if I'm on that 80,000-pound object. I don't understand it, but I don't have to. I just have to get on board.

From the good to the bad, there is so much in life I'll never understand. I will never be able to explain why they had to lose their young daughter to cancer, why she lost her baby, why he can't find a job, or why her heart has been broken so many times. I also can't really explain how transubstantiation works, how five loaves and two fish fed 5,000, or how spit made a blind man see. My knowledge alone cannot explain a lot of things, but I've realized I don't have to have an explanation for everything. I just have to trust in the Lord with all my heart, and lean not on my own understanding.

God is big enough to handle our questions. Jesus hung on the cross to open our eyes to

what we would otherwise never see, knowing all of the questions we would have from that great act of love, and to answer our questions; I believe there's no place he would rather have been. But when our own insight is not sufficient for the big "why?" questions we often face, sometimes it's best to toss our lack of understanding up on a wing and prayer, trust in the Lord, and fly by faith. Whenever I do that, I seem to land safely.

"Trust in the LORD with all your heart, on your own intelligence rely not. In all your ways be mindful of him, and he will make straight your paths." Proverbs 3:5-6