

Thought For The Day

I recently came across this neat story in an article about volunteerism:

There is a story about a man walking along a beach. He notices that the starfish have washed ashore and will soon die in the baking sun. Then the man sees a young child picking up the starfish, one at a time, and throwing them back into the ocean. Noticing the hundreds of starfish and the small size of the child, the man says, "Son, you will never be able to save them all. What you are doing will not make any difference." The little fella looks at the man, picks up yet another starfish, and tosses it back into its saltwater haven. "Matters to that one."



I think this is a cute story that very effectively describes the fears that many people have about volunteering – their heart may be in the right place when they want to help, but then they begin to have doubts, like “I’m just one person, what could I possibly do to help?” or “I don’t have a lot of time, so I probably just shouldn’t bother committing to anything.” The bottom line is, if you have any extra time at all, as little as one hour a week, and you’d like to help others, there is a place in your community that could use and be grateful for your volunteer work. So if it’s something you’ve been thinking about doing, let go of your insecurities,

find someone to answer your questions, and find a place that suits your interests where you can pitch in and lend a helping hand at the same time. Your calling might be at a food pantry, nursing home, animal shelter, community theater, hospital, senior center, community service agency, delivering for Meals on Wheels, etc – the list goes on and on. If you really want to take the time to help others and give back to your community, don't let excuses run your life – just do it!! If you really can't find anywhere to volunteer in your community, try contacting your local churches to see if they have any community programs for which you could volunteer, or perhaps a family in need of some helping hands; you never know what you may find!

Nocturnal Purple-Legged Baby

So how is life with 4 kids? One word – chaotic. I suppose some of that can be attributed to us not taking any time off from volunteering with the various community groups we are involved in... Most logical people would have done the smart thing and laid low for awhile. But us, we did just the opposite and jumped into a few new projects head first – oops. But, I do enjoy getting out and spending time with fellow adults, and besides, we've already committed ourselves, so it's too late now.

But anyway, the kids are adjusting just fine to having a new little brother. Our almost 2-year-old has reached the terrible twos officially, and she spends most of her time being upset or making messes. Figures, doesn't it, that she would reach this stage right as there's a new baby in the house. But it can't be helped, and we just have to grin and bear it for awhile until it passes. The upside is that her

terrible twos are no where near the magnitude of the turmoil that her older sister caused in the house when she was going through them, but it's still hard to see our once sweet little girl being so nasty. I don't know what it is about the terrible twos, but every kid goes through them (maybe the terrible twos aren't so bad with boys? I'm hopeful...), and they can totally change a child's personality for months, even years. Little Disney was the sweetest baby and toddler, and now that she is almost 2, she has begun tantruming (almost constantly), hitting, spitting, and biting. Much, if not all of the behavior comes from being so frustrated – she gets frustrated when people don't understand what she wants or when she thinks her sisters are taking things from her. Even if they're just trying to help her, if anyone is doing anything she doesn't like, she'll throw a tantrum. But what keeps me going is knowing that it's just the age, and she'll magically return to normal one day; that's how it works. It usually happens suddenly, almost as suddenly as it began – it's like a spell is broken, and hopefully it's sooner rather than later; but I'm prepared for the long haul because her sister's terrible twos (and boy, were they *terrible*) lasted from about the ages of 16 months until she was 4 years old.

And speaking of our 4-year-old, Sammie loves her new little brother and always wants to hold him. I'm trying to get better about how nervous it makes me; especially because Disney sees her older sisters holding him and then of course she wants to do it. But as time goes by, he gets stronger and less floppy, so eventually I can let them help more and be relaxed about it.

Taylor, our 8-year-old, loves her new little brother also, although with 2 younger sisters, she's kinda been there and done that, as far as new babies go. She is still a big help, especially with Disney, but she and Sammie fight constantly, and now Disney is starting to join in... If we could get a handle on some of the fighting, things would be much better

around here. I feel like my kids fight, argue, and bicker *constantly*. I probably feel this way because it's true. Part of it is Disney being so frustrated all the time, and then neither she nor Sammie like to share things with others; and then also Taylor can be really nasty to Sammie, probably just cuz it's summer and they're sick of each other. Thank goodness school starts in less than 2 weeks. I say that now, but I'll also be losing my day-help when Taylor goes back to school, so we'll have to see how things work out.

As for the little guy himself, Christopher is almost 4 weeks old, and he's doing well. He is a constant joy to have around, but aren't they all at this age? The only problem with him is that he seems to be nocturnal – wakes all night and sleeps during the day. Luckily for me, my husband is a light sleeper and wakes with him before I even hear anything. He is getting no sleep, but I told him weeks ago, once you let me start sleeping through the night, my body will get used to it and I won't wake up... I don't think he listened. But my sleeping-lightly days are over – during my pregnancy I awoke very easily at every little noise, but now I'm back to my I-could-sleep-through-Armageddon phase. I also warned Hubby that this baby was going to be nocturnal because in the womb, he wouldn't move much during the day, but he's start going crazy about 9pm until after I went to bed.

And almost all new babies bring with them the fear of something being wrong – the other day, Christopher's legs turned purple out of no where... I had just gotten him out of his stroller, but his straps weren't too tight or anything like that; I checked on them later. It was horribly scary to see his little purple legs, and I've never experienced that with my girls. But the doctor didn't seem to be too concerned; just something to take a look at next appointment – might be a blood vessel spasm, which I found out is not terribly uncommon in infants after looking it up on the internet. There is a condition called Raynaud's Syndrome that

is characterized by purple limbs, however they're accompanied by extreme pain, and little Christopher was sleeping calmly while this happened. We'll see what the doctor says on Monday.

That's about it for now; it's good to be sitting here blogging again – it's been so hectic for a few weeks that I was not in front of my computer enough to even blog. But then I started thinking of all my faithful readers I was disappointing, and I thought I'd better make the time to give them something to read ☐