

A VERY SPECIAL WOMAN

I visit a very special woman at least once a week. Why is she so special? She has the rare talent of making all who enter her home feel as if the fresh flowers on the table were cut just for them.

Although her body is weary with Parkinson's Disease and her joints ache with arthritis, she moves her gracious spirit across the room to embrace me, seemingly unencumbered by her earthly covering. Her eyes greet me with genuine warmth, and there's a certain excitement in her voice as if I'm a special guest on a rare outing.

My children squeal with delight as they parade before her their latest artistic creations and collections. She handles each item with utmost care and asks appropriate questions such as, "Was this alive when you found it, Alicia?" The children then proceed to ask Grandmother their favorite question, "Can we have some gum?" She keeps it in the refrigerator. My toddler wraps his fat little arms around her trembling legs and she goes in search of a cracker for him, having had much experience with two year olds in her previous parenting career, which began in 1948 and formally ended in 1986 when the youngest left for Colorado.

In between the children's requests, we sit and sip Starbuck's coffee, and I wonder how she made it through all those early morning hours "on instant". She shares with me the latest news items, which she and Dad have carefully clipped from the paper. They know I seldom make it past the front page.

Yes, she's a well-educated lady with a Master's Degree in nutrition. She has traveled the world, sometimes taking her bevy of seven with her. She has exchanged conversation with political leaders and entertained foreign dignitaries. She had a successful career working for the Dairy Council, and making appearances on television. In addition to these things, she never missed a day in the life of her children, unless she was at the hospital having a baby.

She finds her delight in her family and husband whom she has been married to for 42 years. They like to brag about the fact that they have never had a quarrel during this time. She continually extends herself outward towards others in acts of kindness, and there is never a harsh word or gossip to be found upon her lips.

Perhaps the most striking thing about her is the apparent contentment she has in the midst of constant physical pain. This is not a peace which the world can give. It is a peace which is born out of her faith in God, a faith with roots that go down deep, and limbs that flex instead of break in the midst of life's storms.

I thank God for my Mom.

Composed by and submitted by Ann (Mrs. Bob) Gascoigne, daughter of Jane
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