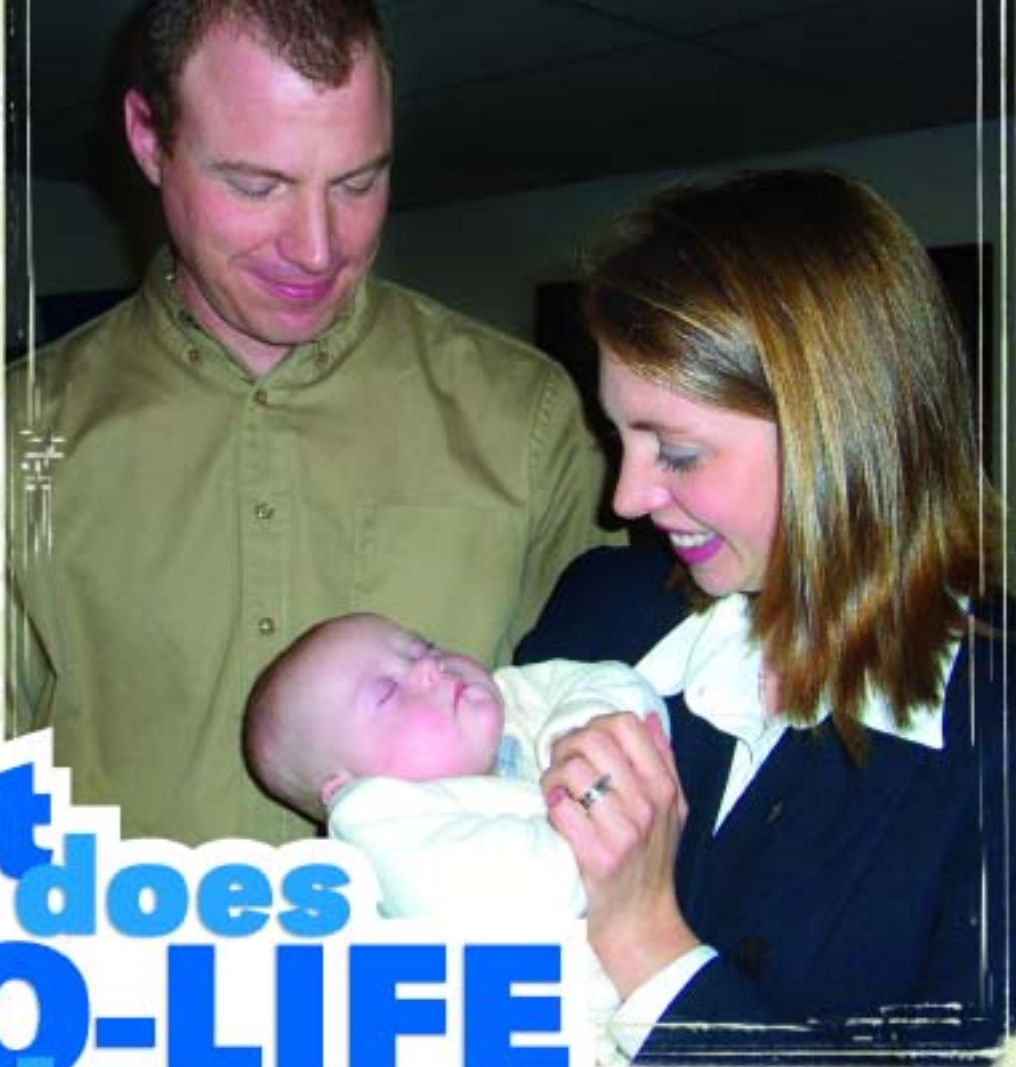


photo by Chris Dornin



Steve, Shauna and Sarah Amick

# What does PRO-LIFE look like?

By Shauna Amick

I hung up the phone and thanked God for using me as a pro-life witness. The first question I had answered during that phone conversation was, "Are you pro-life?" My response was an emphatic, "Yes!" and I was smiling because I wondered if this person had forgotten my connection to the local crisis pregnancy center as its director of abstinence education.

Meanwhile, I was watching my firstborn daughter and son play in the yard against the backdrop of brilliant New Hampshire fall foliage. After all, both of their lives were used by God to increase my faith and passion for upholding the sanctity of human life.

During my first pregnancy, my husband and I were told the baby was at risk for Down syndrome. Then due to a blood clotting disorder, we also were counseled concerning my health risks while I was pregnant with my son. So after I survived both pregnancies and my first daughter had been born without Down's, some people suggested that it was easy for me to defend my pro-life convictions.

The second question came quickly. "Do you have any exceptions?" I was being interviewed as a potential speaker for this woman's pro-life event, and the booking agent needed to be sure that I believed in defending all innocent persons, from the preborn to the aged, regardless of a person's health circumstances.

Again, I smiled. This time I looked down at my three-month-old daughter asleep in my arms.

Despite the doctors' suspicions, my husband and I had decided against amniocentesis while I was pregnant with her. We didn't want to risk losing Sarah and maintained that it didn't matter how she was formed. We trusted God as the Creator and saw our baby as His daughter too. As painful as it was to look at her partially-formed heart on the fetal ultrasounds and echocardiograms; as challenging as it was to see her born with Down syndrome; we understood that she was just as much God's gift as our other two children. Therefore I answered the question thoughtfully, "I have no exceptions."

## Are you pro-life?



The Amick family

## Reflections

That evening I was flooded with memories from the previous nine months. I remembered hearing the diagnosis only days after celebrating Sanctity of Human Life Sunday in January 2005. I was asked whether I'd continue the pregnancy. I recall how God filled my heart and mind with scripture in order to strengthen me at that difficult moment. Jesus continued sending His powerful love as I meditated on His words: "Father, if You are willing, take this cup from Me; yet not My will, but Yours" (Luke 22:42).

Even at the onset of that trial I believed that God was giving me priceless knowledge of the emotions that our clients must experience during their crisis preg-

nancies. I found that I could relate to those precious women with new compassion and greater understanding and I praised God for it.

My thoughts brought me back to the delivery room, when our sweet Sarah Hope was taken to the neonatal intensive care unit only minutes after her birth. In my own recovery room, a social worker asked me how I felt since I knew my baby wasn't "perfect." She seemed confused when I explained that I was choosing to see Sarah through God's eyes; thus she was perfectly

## Do you have any exceptions?

determine their priorities.

Let us not forget that each person is more than just a body; regardless of its size, shape or ability to function. Each body is animated by a soul. That truth should remind us that those who are embryonic persons are not mere products for laboratory experiments. It should also show us that people who are terminally ill, physically disabled or elderly, are someone's family rather than a faceless burden. When I sat across from Sarah Hope as she snuggled in the lap of her late 96-year-old great-grandfather, I sensed a unique bond I have yet to experience elsewhere. Those two people, at opposite ends of a typical lifespan, represented a real celebration of life.

For many years now God has prompted me to be vocal. In fact, a continuous prayer of mine is that He will make me useful in the ongoing fight for life. That's why it baffled me when people asked us what choice we'd make in regards to Sarah's condition. Hadn't

they been listening?

When those around us showed that they didn't

have ears to hear, God provided a visual aid. Yes, God has answered my prayers. In holding my beautiful baby girl, it is clear without even saying a word that He has made me a pro-life witness.

Shauna Amick is a freelance writer from New Hampshire.

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