My Four Daughters

I am sitting in a hotel room in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania on a cold winter night. I am here for work for the next couple of days; and I guess, if the truth be told, the quiet is allowing me to talk with God. I was reflecting on my life and where I have been and wondering how I got here. I can see the blessings now that possibly 30 plus years ago were not so clear.

I was 20 years old when I married for the first time. At that age I assumed that each family had a boy and a girl and then any children after those first two were just added bonuses. Somehow in my mind however it was to always be a boy and then a girl. So, when I had my first son, I was ecstatic. A short 15 months later I was pregnant for my second child. I was certain that this would be my “girl”. This would be Erica! Was I surprised when I delivered this baby on May 16, 1984 and it was a boy. Erica turned into Eric with one final push. Oh, I was so in love!! But not quite sure about two boys. I had always been a “girly” girl. I was all about the doll babies, make-up, jewelry, fashion and dress up. What do you do with a boy, I wondered. It didn’t take long for me to start realizing that there would be “ball” and lots of different types. There would be baseball, football, basketball, bowling, golf. Balls would be little and big. Some would bounce, some would roll, and some would get thrown. Balls would often break things like vases and windows. Then came baby number three. Keep in mind this was before sonograms and reveal parties. This was in the day where it was truly a surprise at the end of the pregnancy. But of course, I was sure that this would be the girl. Brianna would be her name, I shared with my friends. I was surprised when the doctor announced I had just delivered another football player. That took a minute to digest and then I say him! Brianna became Brandon in an instant and love abounded all over again. Life seemed like nirvana for about 3 years and then something changed.

Arguments and fighting became increasing prevalent in our house. Drinking was escalating and so was discord. After about 2 years of absolute chaos and drama the split between my husband and I happened in an instant. I was in the hospital and he was in jail. How could this be? Looking back it is easy to see that alcohol is not a good idea in an already charged situation. As we navigated those really choppy waters we ended up separating and filing for divorce. During that time another pregnancy ensued. Only this time it was between my husband and another woman. To this very day that thought stops me in my tracks. What do you do with that kind of information? There is so much pain, so much unrest, so much anger, so much hate…..everything that is so opposite of God….of love, serenity and peace. Within a short while there was a beautiful baby girl joining the three boys. God had a plan! That little girl brought the love and joy that our family so desperately needed. Day by day healing was taking place and time was healing the wounds. For the next 15-20 years they all grew. Just as Jesus did in the Bible. They grew into fine men and women and awesome members of society.

Christmas of 2019 for many reasons was a very difficult season. Some family members needed help, I had lost someone very important to me, my best friend was struggling with Stage IV cancer, and work was challenging. There were many days and nights when I would just sit with God and cry. I couldn’t even talk anymore. I felt totally helpless and lost. On Christmas Day, however, God was kind enough to give me the ability to see one of the most amazing gifts ever! He allowed me to see that I had 30 years prior thought I would get a “daughter”….instead he gave me four! The picture that I am sharing in this story is a picture of my beautiful “girls”. They are all the most amazing women I know. They each bring a special presence into my life with their uniqueness and love. That picture was taken on Christmas evening and I am so happy that it captures the love and happiness that those women bring into my home!

God knows what we want and need before we even ask. He knew us before we were born in our mothers womb.