

I Waited on God

On a Thursday in June 1987, three days before my due date, I was disappointed when my doctor told me he thought my baby would not come for another week. My husband, Andres, and I had been trying to have a family since we were first married two and a half years earlier, so even a few more days seemed like a lot.

On Sunday morning I awoke with light cramps. At daybreak, my husband and I began timing the contractions as we got ready to go to the hospital.

When the doctor examined me and listened for the baby's heartbeat, I sensed that something was wrong. Quickly, I was prepared for a Caesarean section.

When I awoke from the surgery, Andres stood beside my bed and told me that the baby was in critical condition. I spent an agonizing night.

Early the next morning, Andres left the room for a time, only to return with the news that the baby, Anne, was gone. Somehow I knew she had not been born alive. But my husband had carried the burden alone all night in order to break the painful news to me little by little.

We felt devastated. The day we left the hospital I was overwhelmed with grief.

This should have been a victorious homecoming with a baby in my arms, but I was going home empty-handed. I felt as though I were returning home from a great failure.

Our grieving was made more difficult by the cultural pressures of living in Mexico. There, children are highly valued, and I sensed women who were childless were looked upon as inferior.

Also, spiritual issues added to our inner struggles. We were

serving in a Christian youth ministry and had dedicated our lives to this cause. Friends tried to comfort us, but the most treasured help was from those who simply cried and hurt with us.

I couldn't bear to see friends from my natural childbirth class. It was hard to be around our friends who had children, especially those who had given birth at the same time I did.

A Christian counselor helped me to see that I was repressing mourning. I needed to face the reality of our loss in order to begin to experience healing, so I began visiting pregnant friends and new mothers I had once avoided.

Most difficult of all, Andres and I visited Anne's grave for the first time, a year after her death. There we experienced more release as we cried openly. Andres broke down and sobbed for the first time.

Having a child was still my greatest desire, but I was able to release it so that it was no longer an obsession. I asked God to take first place in my life again.

We continued seeing fertility specialists, and I had laser surgery and another procedure. After taking fertility drugs and becoming pregnant a second time, I had a miscarriage.

Finally, on March 31, 1994, after nine years of infertility and seven years after the loss of our Anne, a baby boy, Daniel Andres, was born to us. We brought him home from the hospital on Easter. Just as spring brings new life in nature, his coming meant new life for us.