



A Lenten Mosaic - Living In Grace Lent 2020

**Devotion for Monday,
March 23, 2020**

Gifts of Grace By Deborah Wright

When Catherine was in elementary school, she made a corn husk doll as a gift for Jody and me and presented it to us in its own wooden box, along with the following note:

Dear Mom and Dad,

This is a box for you when you are on a trip and lonely. Inside this box is my love and a simple corn husk doll I made for you. Talk to it and pretend it's me. I will talk to the corn husk (doll) you gave me. I hope this will help you feel happier. I love you dearly and can't wait to see you soon.

*Love,
Catherine*

P.S. Keep safe for next use.

I can't remember if Catherine was getting ready to leave for camp or if we'd recently returned from the mountains where she had fallen in love with the beautifully crafted corn husk dolls. I do remember the love we felt receiving such a precious gift from our daughter, a gift she made and gave from the heart.

Shortly after giving us our little doll, however, Catherine had a “major disagreement” with Jody and me (the origin of which has long been forgotten), she said some hurtful words to us, and she threatened to take back her present. After the outburst, Jody and I looked at one another in disbelief and one of us said to the other, “Well, that was certainly short-lived.” While I can’t recall what caused the argument, I can recall the pain it caused and the deep love that still remained.

Sometime later we received another note from Catherine which read:

Dear Mommy and Daddy,

I’m sorry. I do not hate you. I love you. I’m sorry if I hurt you. I don’t hate your cooking. I’m sorry for the things I said. I don’t want to be mad at you. I don’t want anything bad to happen to you. I’m really sorry

*I love you,
Catherine*

To this day I am still overwhelmed with love and joy when I read Catherine’s note apologizing for her angry words and affirming her love for us . . . and my cooking! The corn husk doll, the love note, and the note asking for forgiveness were all gifts of grace that our child gave her parents. The love that remained constant through it all was a gift of grace that we gave our child.

*“See what great love the Father has lavished on us,
that we should be called children of God!
And that is what we are!” 1 John 3:1*

*“Which of you, if your son asks for bread, will give him a stone?
Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a snake?
If you, then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children,
how much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask him!”
Matthew 7: 11-12*

Prayer

Nurturing God,
gather us under
the shelter of your wing.

You soften our nest
with comfort and care.
With vulnerable love,
you place yourself between
the source of pain and
your precious children.

Like a Mother Hen,
you try to shield us from suffering.
When we push against
your protection to move
into the world,
you give us life and breath and blessing.
You await and welcome our return.

Birth us again in your tender love.
Embrace us with your gentle spirit.
Cradle us in you presence.
Sing us the lullaby of your grace.

Sharlande Sledge

