

A Promise to the Creator

Lauren Abeita

Every morning, my children and I get up at the break of dawn, go outside with our white corn, and pray. We use white corn because it is sacred. It is our way of showing appreciation for everything in life. It is our way of giving thanks. We thank our Creator for all of our blessings in life. We are very fortunate to have one another and everything else. I get emotional every time we pray, because I'm so blessed to have my children in my life.

I remember when I was pregnant with my first child, I had a deep intuition that something was wrong. I asked my sister to take me to the hospital, and a doctor examined me and told me that I would have to go out of state to see a specialist. They put me in a helicopter right away. I did not have any time to pack anything. The only thing on my mind was my child.

I have never gotten to a destination so quickly! The specialists said my body was not strong enough to carry my baby. They said that my child

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would only have a 10% chance of survival. I felt my whole world was crashing down on me. I never felt this kind of emotional

pain before. I was always the strong one in my family, but here I was falling apart.

The doctor informed me that it would be best for me to abort my pregnancy, since the odds were not in my favor. I felt that she was pressuring me to make this decision. She did not understand me at all. I am Navajo and Navajos frown on abortion. I remember telling the doctor, "If there is a slim chance of survival for my child, I will take it."

A month later, I had a baby boy. He was born three months early. From birth, he faced obstacles. He had to get surgery to close a heart valve. And he was dependent on oxygen for about four months after leaving the hospital. But by the grace



of our Creator, he survived. I never gave up on my child. Today, he is the light of my life. He is a very healthy, smart, and fun-loving miracle. I made a promise to my Creator when my son was born that I would take care of him to the best of my abilities and raise him to be a great man. He has a dream of being a doctor, and I will be there to help him achieve it.

I learned how to pray from my mother and grandfather. They taught me to always appreciate and celebrate life. Everything we do is about living in harmony with Mother Earth. My children are the reason I continue to pray and believe in miracles. We go out every morning with our white corn and pray.

Lauren Abeita is Navajo and Isleta Pueblo. She is currently enrolled in the adult education program at her children's school, Bread Springs Day School in Gallup, New Mexico. Her youngest child is enrolled in the FACE (Family and Child Education) Program. She plans to go back to get her degree once her youngest child starts kindergarten.