

A Godmother's Journey

[Like parenting, godparenting is a journey... So explains the godmother who shared this story with me.](#)

Some 27 years ago, as a young woman, I was asked to be a godmother for the first time. I felt special. I was elated. I was chosen. My parents gently reminded me of the responsibilities I had to this child, yet unborn.

Early one Sunday morning in 1981, Luke* was born. His baptism was held one month later. How proud I was holding him, this beautiful baby, now a member of our Catholic community. My parents again reminded me that I was to be involved in his life and to help his parents with his faith development. So, as the years went by, I always tried to remember Luke's birthdays, was there when he started school and for his milestones: his high school graduation, his 21st birthday and his studies at university. I was his sponsor for Confirmation and he looked an angel when he received Jesus for the first time in the Eucharist.

Over the years, Luke and I were great friends. It would be fair to say we shared a natural chemistry. During the many hospital stays which were part of my own life's journey, Luke would always visit me. When he got his driver's license he would travel

widely for work. Many times he would call to see me for a quiet coffee, a talk, then he would be off again.

Over the past 18 months, however, Luke did not visit me as frequently. I felt something was wrong but could not put my finger on the cause. Perhaps as he grew older he did not need me as much. Then came the devastating news: Luke had been arrested and charged with a serious crime.

When I heard the news of his arrest, I wrote to him in jail. It was a difficult letter for me to write. I explained that what he had done was wrong and he had to pay society for his wrongdoing. However, who am I to judge? We are all human and make mistakes. So Luke, I wrote, I would never judge you. I will love and support you and will certainly pray for you. In this first letter I went on to talk about the events that had shaped our lives; the birthdays and family celebrations we had shared. After that first letter it became easier to communicate with him. My commitment now is to write to Luke weekly and to visit every three to four weeks.

To some degree, Luke had put God aside in his life. I asked him to consider the power of prayer. I will never forget my first visit as I hugged him and cried with him. I am happy to say that Luke has found God again in his life. He goes to Mass monthly in jail and sees the Catholic chaplain on a regular basis. Recently I required surgery again. I received the

most beautiful letter from Luke the day before my operation. He told me I was in his prayers and he would be praying the rosary for me on that day. His letter was also thanking me for the love and support given to him during his life, but most of all for being that special godmother to him.

These past months have been filled with emotion, pain, tears. In life, we never know what the future holds. My one certainty lies in the richness and power of my Catholic faith, especially the sacraments. From this comes the strength to face the challenge of daily living with its joys and hardships. •

* Name has been changed for privacy.

