

# DOMINIC'S STORY



The miraculous arrival of Dominic into our family is an event that our family celebrates daily. The story of how he came to bless our lives, however, starts one year before he came to live with us. My husband and I had four biological children at the time that we entered into the foster care system. We had met and fallen in love with a 13 year old girl who needed a home but by the time we were licensed, she had already been successfully placed with another family. We were so puzzled by this turn of events because we were certain that God was prompting us to take this path. When the county placed a two year old with us, we felt we had discovered God's purpose in our being foster parents. Later, we were pleased when he was adopted by a wonderful family member of his. Then one day in December I felt God tell me, "I will send you another foster child and this one you will love." The next day the county called to say that a 4 month old baby needed a foster home. I was certain my husband would say that we couldn't take a baby as we had decided at the onset of foster care that giving back a baby would be too hard on me, however, God had prepared his heart in much the same way as mine and Dominic came to live with us.

Dominic had been born to a 15 year old girl who had lived with her mother for 2 weeks with Dominic before her mother kicked them both out of the house. The girl then went to live with her mother's ex-boyfriend and many other teens. Dominic's paternal grandmother reported the poor living conditions to the authorities. Dominic and his mother were placed in a home for teenaged mothers where she was to learn parenting skills. The supervisors of the home discovered that his birth mom didn't take instructions well and refused the house rules. He was removed to receiving home where he waited for a foster home. At the time he was underweight and had a serious breathing problem that was made worse by cigarette smoke and inappropriate clothing for the cold.

He came to our home on December 19th and into our hearts about 5 minutes later. To assist him with his breathing we had to nebulize him every four hours which meant holding a plastic mask up to

his face which misted medicine into his lungs. He hated that! But even so, he was cheerful, content, and delightful. What joy he brought to our family!! We were told he would have asthma his whole life but today is completely cured.

My heart, however, was on the verge of breaking because my mind remembered that God promised that I would love him but didn't say anything about keeping him. For one year, we took Dominic twice a week to meet his birth mother as she tried to straighten out her life enough to get him back. After repeatedly losing jobs, missing parenting lessons with her social worker and not securing adequate housing, she willingly admitted that Dominic would be better off with a more stable home and hoped that we would be chosen as that home.

One of the exciting twists of this "love story" is that six months after Dominic had been placed with us; the county called and asked if we were still interested in the 13 year old foster daughter, as her previous placement was no longer available. More evidence that God knew what He was doing all along! In June of 2003 we stood before a judge and changed Dominic's last name to ours but his precious presence in our home had already changed our family forever. We are eternally grateful to the state foster care system for saving this child's life and blessing ours so abundantly.