



There is a saying in our house: “There is no ‘mine,’ only ours.” As our kids become obsessed with their material possessions, it’s easy to justify the hitting, yelling, and bickering if someone dares to take away something that is rightfully ‘theirs.’ With six kids, my husband and I constantly repeat, even when it falls on deaf ears, “there is no ‘mine,’ only ‘ours.’” In our house, we share. In our house everything is ours. In our secular culture which can be highly individualistic, customized, and territorial, we must overcome the tide that is working against us. As mothers and fathers, we strive to be counter-cultural and share: we share our bodies for nine months with another human being (or sometimes two.) We share our home, our time, our space, our money. We share our mental energy, our sleep, and our well-being--at times--on behalf of our children.

When we became pregnant with our twin girls, we learned a whole new meaning behind sharing. We were told at just six weeks, that our twins were identical, more specifically they were “mono-di” twins who had two amniotic sacs but shared one placenta. This created a new level of worry with us, as sometimes mono-di twins can have a number of health problems—the most common is a condition called twin-to-twin transfusion. It is where one twin develops and grows more than the other twin: one can be considered the donor and the other the recipient. As months went on, each ultrasound showed synchronic growth. Both twins were growing at the same, healthy rate. As we were nearing the end of the pregnancy, it appeared that all was well, each measuring within a few ounces of one another.

Faustina was delivered first, weighing about 5 1/2 pounds while Monica delivered feet first, weighing a full pound ahead of Faustina. This was not concerning. What was concerning was the different skin tones. Monica was a deep red and Faustina a sallow gray. The twin-to-twin transfusion had occurred with their blood counts, making Faustina anemic. Monica, more dangerously, risked damaging her organs because her blood was thick and sludgy. After a short stint in the NICU, we were released - Monica’s blood normalized, with Faustina, still working on building up her iron. This could have resulted in something much worse, but through the outpouring of prayer and wonderful medical support, we have two, healthy baby girls.



*Theresa Kuhn,  
with daughters, Faustina & Monica*

I share this story, because it offers insight into the unexpected results sharing can have. It can be joyful and wonderful. It can also be worrisome, risky, and even dangerous, for ourselves and others. Writing our story and hearing others’ stories can offer us a chance for reflection, discernment, and prayer, but it can also leave us vulnerable. Stories are personal, and often it is difficult to share something that may have been traumatic, emotionally-jarring, and wrought with suffering. However, it is in this vulnerability that we may undergo a purification, allowing both ourselves and others to be unified in suffering, sadness, and joy.

It is my great desire to hear others’ stories that foster our faith life. My husband says that “Faith shared is faith multiplied.” Our stories are impactful when we share: we can feel the solidarity with others; we can feel empowered; we can feel communal because of the shared story. It may be the reason why someone returns to the Church; it may be the reason others choose to be sacrificial and open themselves to having more children; it may be the reason a person can become more open to God’s call for us to suffer.

*Theresa Kuhn | November 2018*