

Sarah Child



All in the Family

Worrying Over the Kids Never Ends

After nearly two weeks touring Italy, we are in Rome, the last stop on our itinerary. Noting with satisfaction that we are just around the corner from the Colosseum and a few steps from the Roman Forum we enter the hotel and wait for our room assignments.

Even in the midst of delight at being in one of the most exciting spots in the world, I am mentally counting the days until I see our children again. It is a failing of mine. A failing of most mothers. We have tried to call them several times during the trip but because of the six-hour time differential, bus schedules and busy circuits we have not made contact.

Antonio, our tour guide, holds our room numbers. He also has another piece of paper. It

is a message for my husband and me. "Call home," it says.

The next 12 hours are worrisome. It is 6:30 in the evening Rome time; 12:30 in the afternoon in Rochester. The message arrived four hours before while we were on the road. Several people in our group come to us, give hugs and make reassuring noises.

We try to call home, but there is no answer. Next, we try my husband's office. Co-workers know of no emergency but they will try to reach our son at school.

They call back. No emergency. Our son doesn't know who called. A mystery, but our anxiety recedes and we go out to dinner not knowing that we will miss still another call from home.

Later we stop at the desk and ask them to help us to put a call at 1 a.m. (7 p.m. in Rochester) when we think our two youngest children will be home. But they reach us before then. Our college daughter in Connecticut has been injured in a soccer game in Rhode Island. She has run into a fence and connected with a metal rod breaking a bone in her mouth and pushing in three front teeth, splitting one of them. She has been given emergency treatment but needs insurance information for further work.

We learn our daughter will be back in her room by midnight and we make

arrangements with the desk to call her at 6:30 a.m., Rome time the next morning.

We wake several times in the night to look at our watches. When we finally get our daughter on the phone she is apologetic for spoiling our trip.

The worst, she says, is over and that trying to make decisions by herself as to what to do was the hardest part. Reconstruction and more root canal work lies ahead. Our orthodontist has called several times to reassure her and to help her find a dentist away from home, she reports, and says his concern and kindness kept her from panicking.

Later at breakfast in the dining room the group greets us with more questions, more hugs and hand squeezes.

Still later, I reflect how much worse it might have been. For the past 20 years, every separation from our children has been colored by the fear of such happenings.

A new friend in her 70s lays it on the line: "It doesn't get better. When they get older you worry about your children, their spouses and the grandchildren. All you can do is pray."

I nod in agreement and add a couple more to the prayers I've been sending up before going out in the Roman sunshine.

Women's Clubs

The Rochester Federation of Women's Clubs will open its October meeting 11 a.m., Thursday, Oct. 11 at HMS Bounty Restaurant. The event includes an executive council meeting, luncheon, general business meeting and a presentation by Dorothy Lewis, local author and publisher.

Focus on Eucharist

Msgr. John Duffy will celebrate Mass for Focus on the Eucharist, the evening of prayer and adoration which opens 7:30 p.m., Thursday, Oct. 4 at St. Philip Neri Church. The program includes Evening Prayer, rosary, meditation time and Benediction. The public is invited.

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