

Blessed by **ADOPTION**

GRATEFUL FOR LIFE, FRANKENMUTH
TEEN ENCOURAGES OTHERS TO
VOTE 'NO' ON PROPOSAL 3

BY DENYSE SHANNON | PHOTOGRAPY BY JEFF SCHRIER

When she was 15, Flynn Dupuie told her parents she was glad she wasn't born in the U.S.

"Why?" they asked. "We thought you loved it here."

Her response was telling.

"Because if I was, I would have probably been aborted."

Flynn, now 19, knows she could have been one of the estimated 63 million unborn children who have lost their lives to legalized abortion since the 1973 Roe v. Wade decision.





Kirk and Flynn Dupuie pose for a photo in April 2004 after bringing Flynn to the United States from Russia. *Courtesy photo.*



Flynn Dupuie was born in Russia and was adopted on Friday, April 9, 2004. She was 9 months, 9 days old. *Courtesy photo.*



Kirk, Flynn and Angela Dupuie are pictured in December 2020. *Courtesy photo.*

But Flynn instead was given the chance to live, the chance to ride motorcycles with her dad, to serve as an Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion at Blessed Trinity Parish in Frankenmuth, to graduate from Frankenmuth High School and attend Delta College. Born in Russia, she was adopted by Kirk and Angela Dupuie of Frankenmuth after their decade-long struggle to become parents. They were a gift to each other.

"We went through all the infertility processes and tried adopting domestically," Kirk recalled.

The Dupuies learned that most unplanned pregnancies resulted in abortion, rather than the child being placed for adoption. They encountered long waitlists for domestic adoptions.

They realized God was leading them to look elsewhere and expanded their search.

"We went to Russia just for the fact that we were tired of waiting," Kirk said.

"We had been married for 15 years, but it felt as if we were on hold until Flynn came home," Angela said. "All our friends were having children long before us, and they were moving on as their kids got older."

It was challenging watching their friends have children and participate in kids' activities, while the Dupuies waited for their own child.

"There was a couple from our church who were adopting domestically from Adoption Associates out of Lansing,"

"The first time I held Flynn, I knew she was meant to be my daughter." -ANGELA DUPIE

said Angela. "We went to one of their meetings and decided that Russia was where we wanted to go."

About a year later they got the call that changed their life: they could meet their new baby. In December 2003, they packed their bags and traveled to Russia for the first time. Flynn was just over five months old.

"The first time I held Flynn I knew she was meant to be my daughter," Angela said.

A GIFT FOR BOTH BABY AND PARENTS

"On the first trip, the (adoption) agency tries to show you a bit about the country your child is from to get an idea of the culture," Angela recalled. Still, their focus was on wanting to see their baby. "We had pretty much the whole day to play with and get acquainted with the baby except for nap time and feeding times."

Their first trip lasted about a week. Choosing to bring Flynn home from Russia wasn't without its challenges, but Kirk said everything fell into place.

In Russia, children can be left in orphanages for months and mothers have the chance to come back for them, Kirk said. After six months or so, the child is placed for adoption. Often, babies put up for adoption are diagnosed with a medical condition that needs treatment. They were told that Flynn had possibly experienced a head injury during birth, but that proved untrue.

The only thing she had was strabismus, or crossed eyes, which was corrected with surgery and eyeglasses.

"Otherwise, she's perfect," Kirk said.

In April the next year, the Dupuies returned to Russia—and came home with their daughter three weeks later. She was 9 months, 9 days old when she was adopted on April 9, 2004— Good Friday.

Kirk calls that day "Great Friday."

"When we were in (Russia) and on the plane coming home, we were just ready to start living!" Angela said. "(We had) no concerns because we were ready for it."

They were so thankful to be able to provide Flynn with a loving home and to have her as a daughter.



Think Adoption, Not Abortion participated in the 2020 Saginaw March for Life.



Kirk Dupuie, organizer of the “Knights on Bikes” charity motorcycle ride, presents Bishop Robert Gruss with his riding vest, updated with Saginaw Diocese patches.

“I can’t imagine loving a biological child as much as I love her,” Kirk said. “When she was little, I would ask her ‘how did you get so precious?’ and she would say, ‘because you adopted me!’”

Since they brought Flynn to Michigan as an infant, living in the United States is all she can remember. Still, she recognizes that her life is a precious gift—one that she may not have received under different circumstances.

“It makes me feel really good ... I was brought into a good family,” Flynn said.

The teenager is involved in the pro-life movement, participating in the March for Life and other events. She is also working to encourage Michiganders to vote “NO” on Proposal 3 in the Nov. 8 election, which would enshrine abortion access in the state constitution.

“I just (want to) make sure people think (about) adoption and not wanting to abort their baby,” Flynn said. “(My goal is to) get them to vote ‘NO.’”

■ “WE’RE SO LUCKY”

With his family’s own adoption experience in mind, Kirk has been on a mission to make a change and raise awareness about adoption. They’ve

also received support from Father Bob Byrne, who served as pastor of Holy Family Parish in Frankenmuth before his retirement.

An avid motorcyclist, Kirk is the District Grand Knight for Knights on Bikes in the Diocese of Saginaw. He’s also the founder of Think Adoption, Not Abortion, an organization that seeks to raise awareness and encourage expecting parents to consider adoption. With the support of Bishop Robert Gruss, Kirk and Flynn organized a “Knights on Bikes” charitable motorcycle ride to raise money for Think Adoption, Not Abortion on Aug. 13.

“My goal is to have a couple of billboards up on I-75 for my website ThinkAdoptionNow.org,” he said. Kirk has posted the story of Flynn’s adoption and the number of babies lost to abortion. He has purchased a few billboards along the busy interstate, and he is raising funds to buy more. Billboards cost about \$1,800 for four weeks.

He said it hasn’t been easy to get the word out. The mantra of pro-abortion advocates is that it’s all about the woman’s rights, but he wants to ask – what about the baby?

“They call us names when we say things like ‘what about adoption and not abortion?’” Kirk said.

Knights on Bikes riders attended a morning Mass with Bishop Robert Gruss at the Cathedral of Mary of the Assumption in Saginaw before heading out on an all-day ride. Their route started in Saginaw, taking them through the Thumb to Bad Axe, Bay City and Mount Pleasant before ending in Chesaning. About 20 people started the ride on 15 motorcycles. Bishop Gruss joined the group on their ride.

“We didn’t make a lot of money, but we raised some awareness and we had a good ride,” Kirk said, adding that the group uses their motorcycles to evangelize.

The ride wouldn’t have been complete without the girl whose adoption inspired the movement. Flynn has been Kirk’s riding buddy since she was in kindergarten. He picked his daughter up from school on his Gold Wing, and she’s been riding with him ever since.

“People say, ‘she’s so lucky she has you,’” Kirk remarked. “And I say, ‘No, we’re so lucky we have her!’ It’s all in perspective.”✝

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON KNIGHTS ON BIKES, VISIT WWW.MIKONB.COM.
TO SUPPORT THINK ADOPTION, NOT ABORTION, GO TO THINKADOPTIONNOW.ORG.