

January 2007

## SCHMIDT FAMILY

## Your supposed to eat that!

I can still hear Fabi's words to me. "If you keep saying that, she's going to do it." The words reverberate off my eardrum and into oblivion. There is NO WAY she would do that. I kept saying that to myself for a year or so, never really anticipating the impact of what I say can have on a child.

"Daddy, can I have some peanut butter in a spoon?" Becca asks. "Sure" I said, pleased with how nicely she had asked me. That was the first warning bell. I gave her the spoon with a good size glob of peanut butter on it and quickly went back to what I was doing. It was not abnormal for her to want this so I had no worries.

About five minutes later, I heard giggling. Then more giggling. Then a lot of giggling. "Becca, come here." "Why?" was the response. "Because I said so that's why." In comes Becca. "Gabi, you too." In comes Gabi. Oh man....

"Gabi, why do you have peanut butter all over your face?" I knew the answer. I used to do this type of thing with my brothers. Never with peanut butter, but sometimes with Icy-Hot liniment. I was laughing and angry all at the same time. Peanut butter is something we can't get here and so every jar is important to us. That's when I noticed that Gabi was missing some clothes.

"Gabi, where are your freakin' clothes!?" "I don't know" she giggled cautiously, not knowing if I was angry or amused. Gabi had come into the dining room and leaned up against the wall and when I told her to come closer, I saw the peanut buttery butt print on the wall. Now it was Fabi's turn to lose it. "Becca, what have you been doing!?" It is hard to say who Fabi was more frustrated with, the girls or me. Because now Fabi's words were coming back to haunt me.

"Johnnie, you gave them this idea!" Fabi yelled. Now mind you, I never sat down with my daughters and said, "It would be really cool if you two would coat each other in peanut butter. Mommy would really love that if you were to try that." But they have heard enough stories about me and my



childhood to have gotten this idea from those things they heard. Exactly what I said to my daughters I will leave up for guessing. But you can rest assured, I will not be saying it anymore.

Calvin from the Calvin and Hobbes cartoon was once asked by his mother why he was hammering nails into the coffee table. He stopped for a second and then asked "Is this a trick question?"

Becca looked at me like Calvin did his mom and asked, "So can I have more peanut butter?" Help.

## Thank you!!!

I wanted to take the time to thank you all. As many of you know, 2006 was a very difficult year for us. From Becca and Gabi's medical problems, to our financial state of affairs. There were times where my faith was kind of like my car keys; I knew they were in the house, but I didn't know where.

Since my trip to the states, things have been improving. First, Gabi's medical tests. All tests are normal. Praise God!! One test showed some minor abnormality but combined with all other normal results, the doctor wasn't worried. However, Gabi is still bruising. And now we have no medical reason for it. I don't know how to explain this but my spirit feels uneasy about this and I would appreciate the continued prayer for our daughter.

Now Becca. Since we moved here to our new apartment, she has had very little asthma. I say very little because there has been "some". The doctor has said that it is due to Becca being so weakened from our two month stay in the mold palace. She could have been put into a crisis by the littlest of things.

The good news to report is that she seems to be doing much better. She is able to tolerate more and more each week and we are hopeful that in a few months, we can get her off some of her meds. Thank you for your prayers for us and for Becca!



Becca

Finally, we want to let you know that our finances seem to have taken a turn for the better. The past couple of months have been a real blessing for us as we have been able to meet all our financial commitments as well as get ourselves out of the whole we wound up in. We are so appreciative to all those who made a special effort to give us help! Thank you so much for your prayers for us and for your financial support. A special thank you to St. Luke's church and St. Andrew's Episcopal church for their guidance and support.

I don't know if the Lord saw fit to bless us for a little while to remind us that He is still in charge or if this is a turn of the tide for us. We will see. We are thanking Him for this time though and just trying to have faith that He will always provide for us.

Please keep us in your prayers! It is so easy to have faith in finances when you actually have money. It is having faith when you have nothing which is so hard. Again, we want to say thank you so much. We can breath again.

## What we have

So often, we think materially when we ponder what we have. From the newest cell phone to the bigger and better TV. I have to get this or I have to get that. So rarely do we ever give anything other than lip-service to the other things; our health, our children, our spouses. The Lord.

This Christmas Fabi and I were reminded of what we have. Our children are such a blessing to us. Even smeared in condiments, they bring us a joy that is indescribable. Fabi and I have each other. We have our love for one another. We have a God who loves us more than we can comprehend.

Most of you should have received an email this past Christmas asking for prayer for Ana Gisele and her family. Gisele is a just-turned two year-old at the House of Hope. She and her mother were savagely beaten by her father a couple of days before Christmas. I wish she had what my daughters have. A safe home, a loving sometimes goofy daddy, and safe place to go when hurting.

She doesn't have those things. Her mommy loves her but is fearing for her life and for Gisele's life as well. How do we reconcile the two perspectives we see. Why does God bless and protect one family and allow another one to be brutalized by a psychopath.

Our family has so much to be thankful for. And this season has been a reminder that the Lord put us here to bring His

light and love to families like Gisele's. To love her through all things. For Fabi to be a woman for the mother to come to for help. For me, John, to be a man that doesn't hurt when he holds. We can get lost in projects and building extra classroom space and all the other things that occupy our schedule here at the House of Hope, but Gisele and other children like her is why we came here.

When I went to see Gisele on her first day back, I was startled. Her little body was bruised but she smiled when she saw me and came to me. She sat in my lap and rested her head on my shoulder. Then I believe the Lord spoke to me about her. This moment was for Gisele to learn about Him. Sometimes, being Christ-like is just holding someone who is hurting. I wanted to do so much more but she didn't need that. She just needed to be held, safely.

Later that night, I held my own daughters and thanked God for what I had. Not anything material. Just Becca, Gabi and my wife Fabiana. Give thanks for what you have. Even if "they" get on your nerves. And don't forget to hold them; it says more than any word could ever say.

## Photo of the Month



Many of you might remember Rebecca Arruda. She stayed with Dean and Gail Cole in Ohio several years ago. She was married recently and our daughters were the flower girls. They loved it and the wedding was beautiful.

**How to give to the Schmidt's!:** Make checks payable to St. Luke's Church and in memo line write "John and Fabi". St. Luke's address is 565 S. Cleveland-Massillon Rd., Akron, OH. 44333-2457

**Please do not make checks out to Wellspring!**

John and Fabiana Schmidt live in Recife, Brazil with their two daughters Rebecca and Gabriela.

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