

Dear couple in the pew: I see you

By [Laura Kelly Fanucci](#)

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I see the way you grip each other's hands when you notice us. I see the way you try not to cry while you watch our kids. I see the way you kiss her forehead quietly; I see the way you lean your head on his shoulder, blinking back tears.

I see the way both of you stare straight ahead, willing yourselves not to think about it.

I see you.

While my husband and I are trying to corral the mass chaos of three small kids, your eyes catch mine and then quickly look away. Turning from the sight of someone who has what you want. Anything to keep from dwelling on what a young, growing family means to you.

I see you at the grocery store, too. At the park. At the restaurant. At the work party, the neighborhood potluck, the family reunion. But somehow it feels even more painful when I see you at church. Maybe it's because I know you'll have to watch our motley crew for a whole hour, not just one quick turn down the store's aisle or a sidewalk's length at the park.

But mostly it's because I remember sitting right where you are. Praying with Kleenex balled in my fists, praying with tears at the corners of my eyes, praying for the strength not to envy, praying for this to be the month, praying to a God I clung to and yelled at all at once.

I know the way you're thinking, because I used to do the math just the same. *Early thirties, I bet. Three kids. They're so lucky. Our time is running out. It's never going to happen for us. I hate this.*

I wish I could tell you it gets better. I wish I could make the miracle happen for you. But besides my prayers—which you always have, and always will—all I can tell you is this: I see you.

I see your pain and I see your struggle. I don't ignore it or forget it just because my arms are full of drooling babies and squirming toddlers. I remember that is one of the worst side effects of infertility. Not just the crazy hormone swings or the monthly disappointment or the gut-twisting ache when yet another friend calls with yet another excited pregnancy announcement.

*It's the invisibility.* The way you feel like the world can't see your pain. And the awful truth? The church doesn't always see your pain either.

Rare are the prayer petitions for couples suffering from infertility or miscarriage or stillbirth. Even rarer is an outreach ministry, a support group, a prayer chain—any resource to tell you that this community cares for you and grieves with you and hopes with you.

But things can start to shift once we start seeing each other. Once we remember that we are seen. Once we remember all the ways that the body of Christ can be wounded.

Because when I see you, I remember those days, months, and years of infertility. I remember [not to take my kids or my chaos for granted](#). I remember to pray for all those who are in pain or who are longing.

So while you're sitting there at church on Sunday, feeling alone in your pew and alone in your heart, remember that someone out there sees you. That there are those of us around you who have lived with that heartache, whether we went on to have children or not.

And we never forget what it feels like to grieve, to cry, to curse, to pray every Sunday, every day, again and again, for the one chance that will change everything. Or for the strength to accept a [life that looks different from what we hoped](#).

*We see you.* And when we see you, we can start to be part of the change. Part of the church that can pray for your pain. Part of the community that can support you in your struggles. Part of the Body of Christ that remembers that without each other, we are not whole.

This is how we learn, how we love, how we grow. *By seeing what is invisible.*

And I see you.

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