



Diocese of Fargo  
*Our Stories of Faith*

For the complete series  
visit [www.fargodiocese.org/storiesoffaith](http://www.fargodiocese.org/storiesoffaith)

*The Lagein's Story*



I was 23 and Patrick was 30 when we began dating. We were on *opposite* ends of the religion spectrum. He was a strong Catholic and I was an equally strong Evangelical Free Protestant. I grew up thinking Catholics weren't Christians and that "we" Christians shouldn't be unequally yoked with Non-Christians. I had two thoughts go through my mind at the time we first started dating: 1) I can't date him because he isn't a Christian and 2) Who cares - I want to date him. I went with the 'who cares' thought! We dated for three years but after the first year I knew that we were meant for each other. We just had to get over the hurdle of our religious differences. Some may think "what is the big deal?" but it was a big deal to us. Neither one of us was going to waver in our religious beliefs but thankfully God has a way of taking care of things for those who sincerely seek Him, as

Pat and I were trying to do. So, Pat proposed and I accepted. Right after we were engaged, I called a friend and she offered this advice: "Ask God if he is the one for you. God will answer you." I got off the phone and did exactly what she said. I cried through the whole prayer. Do you know what? God answered me that very moment. He said, "Yes." It was like He was in the room with me because I could hear His voice. I asked, "Where are we to get married?" He said, "St. Mary's Cathedral, Fargo." I had so much peace after that. My stomach stopped hurting and I felt deep joy for the first time since getting engaged. God's grace was at work! The next big hurdle we had to go through was telling my parents. I knew that would be a challenge being my parents liked my husband but didn't approve of his Catholic religion. This was the first time I was able to hold my ground with my parents. Of course, like all parents, they tried to get me to change my mind. But when God speaks to you, you have to follow His will even if it contradicts your parents. God knew what he was doing, leading me in this direction.

The next BIG hurdle of faith we encountered and are still going through is inability to conceive children, or infertility. Because of family history, I knew that conceiving

may be a struggle, but I also thought that maybe God would bless us with our own offspring. Currently, it is not so; He chose to have us carry this cross and we are having our faith strengthened by it. Initially we struggled for two years before I started thinking about what it says in the book of James about going to your elders for anointing and prayer (cf. James 5:13-20). I didn't know where to go. I was newly married and had stopped going to my church and started only attending my husband's Catholic Church. I was also going to Eucharistic Adoration with my husband and that gave me the grace to seek a priest and ask for an anointing. We went and talked with a priest that we trusted, Fr. Peter Anderl. He said before we do an anointing, there are some other things we need to do first. As we left him he said to me, "You are going to make a great Catholic." I was very upset with him for saying that. Who was he to tell me that I was going to be Catholic? Yet, we went back to pray with him two weeks later. He prayed and prayed a special prayer of deliverance over me. He wanted me to be delivered from past generational sins and bondage. Fr. Peter Anderl prayed for about two hours. I was getting madder and madder inside until he started praying about self-esteem, disappointments, and many other things that I had gone through as a child. He hit upon a landmine; I started crying uncontrollably. Through this special prayer, many old wounds were healed. Furthermore, during the time of prayer, God once again spoke to me as if He was sitting

right next to me whispering in my ear, "It is OK to be Catholic." Wham! I felt God's peace. I didn't tell anyone including my husband at the time but at that instant I was Catholic in my heart. I quietly did research on how to pray the rosary and started praying it. And soon after, I started attending RCIA sessions. At Easter of 2006, I was formally welcomed into the Catholic Church and received Jesus in the Eucharist. I couldn't wait for that moment of my first Holy Communion. I don't know who was more excited about it, me or my husband! Well, to go back to the infertility, it is now 9 years after our wedding and I have had two surgeries but God has chosen to not bless us with our own children. We have, however, been blessed with three foster children. They are beautiful blessings from God. We have not given up on the possibility of having our own children but are faithfully praying and trusting what God has in store for us next on this journey of faith.



*Jennifer and Patrick Lagein  
Immaculate Heart Church  
Rock Lake, ND*