

# Adoptive mother of three says not to call her a hero

November 5, 2010

ROUND ROCK—Most people who meet Angela Richardson have trouble connecting her up-beat, breezy attitude to her role as a foster mother-turned-adoptive mother who cares for three emotionally wounded children.

Richardson welcomes the challenge, but she resists any suggestion she's special.

"I don't feel comfortable when people call me a hero," she said. "I was willing, and I showed up. God did the rest."



In 2006, a friend at church introduced Richardson to [Children at Heart Ministries' STARRY](#) foster care program. Richardson attended an orientation meeting and was hooked.

In February 2009, she received a phone call about two sisters and a brother who needed a temporary home. The siblings—ages 2, 3 and 7—had been severely abused and neglected by their parents.

“The shape they were in was worse that I could imagine and like nothing that I had ever seen,” she said.

For months, Richardson comforted the children through screaming, crying night terrors. And, although her hugs took much longer to be returned, she held them and encouraged them each and every day.

“My son wouldn’t hug. He would cower or hide. And my youngest daughter would just stand there like a rag doll,” she said.

“It was very sad, but I knew they would come to trust me eventually.”

Trust didn’t come easily. The children disliked police and feared most adults. But in time, they opened up to their foster mother, eventually disclosing even more details about their harrowing ordeals, Richardson said.

“One time, I had to go into the bathroom and cry after a conversation we had,” she said. “Their situation was so much worse than anyone knows.”

On Feb. 12, Richardson officially adopted all three, marking the end of one journey but the beginning of another.

Each day means untangling knots left behind by the children’s former lives.

“I tell them all the time that my job is to keep them safe, love them and be here for them,” Richardson said.

“I have learned through this process to be more flexible and rely on my faith.

“My faith is what really brought me through, because this tested me emotionally, spiritually and in every way possible.”

Richardson encourages prospective foster parents to attend an orientation session and talk to other foster parents to find out why they open their homes to foster children.

“Why do they do something that’s completely counterintuitive to our culture?” she said.

“Out there, it is about self and what can I get out of it. This is very much about what you can give back. You will hear foster parents say, ‘I did this to help them, and it’s amazing how God uses some of these children to actually help you.’”