

Readers' Favorite 10/3/15 Book Review

Reviewed by Jack Magnus for Readers' Favorite (5 Stars)

Dear Lois: Our Adoptive Journey is a non-fiction parenting memoir written by Karen Schlindwein and Amalie Bowling. Karen and her husband, Tom, were young college graduates who shared a dream of having a large family. They had purchased a home and had jobs, but found that their efforts to conceive were not successful. Karen chose to try infertility treatments and, at one point, it seemed that the couple's dream had come true. After two years of treatments and efforts, she was finally pregnant; however, their joy was short-lived, and Karen miscarried. Both Tom and Karen had grown up in families where members were adopted or fostered, and they soon began to accept that God's plan for them was to adopt their family. They began searching for a birth mother through their churches, and a friend of a friend put them in contact with Lois. Lois was in the process of a divorce and had two children. She wanted her unborn child to have the best opportunities possible and, after the three of them met, she agreed to let Karen and Tom adopt her baby. She arranged for them to be present in the delivery room, and, for their part, they promised to write her a progress letter each year on the anniversary of that birth until their daughter turned 18. Dear Lois contains those letters, as well as essays and letters by Karen, Tom, Amalie and their adopted son, Joey.

Karen Schlindwein and Amalie Bowling's non-fiction parenting memoir, Dear Lois: Our Adoptive Journey, is a poignant and moving tribute to the birth mothers who sacrifice so much for the sake of their babies. Karen and Tom's approach to instilling an understanding of adoption was beautifully imparted to their children, and I appreciated how they grew up appreciating how they were chosen, both by their parents and by God. The letters Karen wrote to Lois are marvelous snapshots detailing all the joys and experiences Karen and Tom shared with their daughter as she progressed from infant to toddler, all the way up to her graduation from high school. Reading Dear Lois makes the reader feel as though he/she were part of the family watching the kids grow up. While the authors' religious viewpoints are strongly felt and shared throughout the text, their insights into and views on adoption are of inestimable value to adoptees and potential adopters, no matter what their spiritual identity. Dear Lois: Our Adoptive Journey is highly recommended.