

Breastfeeding: What's Important? The Mother or the Milk?

By Sheila Kippley August 7, 2007

"It is mother who cannot be replaced." W. D. Virtue, *Mother and Infant*, 240.

What's most important concerning breastfeeding?

I have spent hours writing and talking about the benefits of breastfeeding. We look forward to new research so we can relay the information on to others. We go to breastfeeding conferences and see several tables with pumps so mothers can have others offer their breast milk to the baby in their absence.

I will bring up a can of worms now. I have thought and thought about this question: If I had a choice between two mothers, which one would I want? Which one would you choose? Mother A pumps her milk and leaves the baby for 9 hours, 5 days a week. Mother B takes her baby everywhere with her, stays home, but uses formula. If you were a baby, would you want the breast milk in a bottle or would you want the mother?

I proposed this question last week to a priest who couldn't be more pro-breastfeeding. His answer was: You know the answer to that. It's the mother who is so important to the baby.

You look at Scripture and there was Mary and there was Martha. Mary chose the better part. With regard to mothering, a mother who chooses to stay with her baby, usually at home, has chosen the better part. Hopefully she has also chosen to breastfeed as well.

Message: Do all you can to stay with your baby. You, the mother, are the most important person to your baby. The beauty of breastfeeding is that it naturally provides the baby with frequent access and closeness to the mother.