THIS TIME ROUND, I WANT A GIRL

I want more children

School holidays are here

again. Because I am under

par, and the doctor has

ordered bed rest, so I am

home alone with my children.

Having Peter, Joshua,

and Israel at home, all at the

same time, has its fair share

of challenges. Not that I am

complaining, though. I do not

ever take it for granted that

God has blessed me with children.

They are my pride and

joy. I know there are women

who do not want children

and are living fulfilling lives.

Personally, I am not sure what

my life would be without my

children.

So, even if during these

holidays my three musketeers

will be a handful and spoil my

bed rest, I will try as much as

possible to savour the moments.

I know these moments

are fleeting and I will die

to have them after my nest

empties.

Take Peter, for instance.

Just the other year he was

this little boy who ran to me

with all his questions, like

Joshua does. Now he runs

to his buddies and I have to

respect his space, although

he still lives in my space.

For several months now, I

have had “issues” which have

greatly affected my health.

But in all this, I never abandon

my parental responsibilities.

Even in bed, I crack the whip.

At times it is difficult for

one to balance parenting

three boys, living with HIV

— which has its bad hair

days — and being this career

woman who, seemingly, has

got it all figured out. It is an

act that some women have

mastered. Some, like me, are

still learning.

What will surprise many

people is that I still want to

have more babies. Another

surprise: I have never stopped

trying. The last time round,

when God blessed me with

Issa, I was criticised by some.

“What are you trying to

prove?” “You’re selfish…”

“You should be thanking

God for the children you have

instead of trying to push the

envelope.”

Let me just say that I have

not closed the conception

chapter yet. And, who knows,

I may pull a surprise just when

you are thinking that my biological

clock has stopped for

good.

I have a soft spot for children,

especially little girls. I

still have bittersweet memories

of HIV-infected and affected

girl children who have

lived under my roof and left

lasting impressions. I may not

always have been the perfect

parent to them, but I always

did my best. Girl, I am only

human.

When we were trying for

a baby and God blessed us

with Issa, I hoped and prayed

it would be a girl. For my partner

Richard, having three boys

— he has a boy from a previous

relationship — makes him

feel three times a man.

Do not get me wrong. I love

boys. I would not mind if God

blessed me with another one.

Still, I think there is something

innate in most of us women.

Many of my girlfriends have

shared with me that they love

girl children. This is strange,

because it is said that fathers

and daughters have crazy

chemistry. Yeah, I have it with

my boys, but I would not mind

chemistry with a girl child

next time round.

**Another chance**

I was recently watching an

interview of former Beatle,

Paul McCartney. His first

wife died of cancer and he

has now remarried and has

a small child. He said, and it

resonated with me, that now

that he is older and has a second

shot at parenting, things

are different. For his older

children from his first marriage,

he was building a career

while raising a family, a factor

that made his children to miss

out on a lot of things.

I feel that the same thing

happened with Peter and

me. When I had him, I was

dodging “live bullets”, trying

to find rhyme and reason

to life after a HIV-positive

diagnosis, trying to find my

footing in the HIV world. So

many things were going on

that, although I loved him and

he gave me a reason to live,

I was sometimes an absentee

parent emotionally.

It is different with Joshua

and Issa. They have me, lock,

stock, and barrel. Sometimes,

I can even call in absent just

to be with them. Just so they

can have all of me because

God has given me another

chance.

And I think that I am also

making up for lost time with

Peter, although he is not always

around.

And I believe that, when,

(not if), God blesses me with

other children, I will grab this

second chance and never let

go.

This is the diary of Asunta

Wagura, a mother-of-three

who tested HIV-positive 25

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