

N.Irish sextuplets mum ignored advice to abort

14 June 2009

A mother who gave birth to sextuplets told a British Sunday newspaper that she rejected doctors' advice to abort several of the foetuses because her children were a "gift from God".

Nuala Conway, 26, from Dunamore in central Northern Ireland, told the Sunday Express weekly that she was warned about the risks of carrying on with the multiple pregnancy.

However, the Roman Catholic former fashion store sales supervisor said she put her faith in God and pressed on regardless.

"These babies are a wonderful gift from God. Whatever God laid out for our lives we were taking it," she said.

"When I was 14 weeks pregnant doctors gave us the option of terminating some of my babies. They more or less advised us to. They told us about the risks we faced if we went ahead with the pregnancy.

"Doctors gave us a couple of days to think about it, but we knew without discussion what we both wanted."

In Northern Ireland, abortions can only be carried out if it can be proven that the pregnancy would damage the physical or mental health of the woman.

The babies -- Austin, Eoghan, Karla, Kerrie, Shannon and Ursula -- were born last month in a successful Caesarean section operation involving 30 medical staff at Belfast's Royal Victoria Hospital.

They were 14 weeks premature and weighed between one pound, seven ounces and two pounds, two ounces (650 grammes and 965 grammes). They were born without the help of IVF.

They are all in a stable condition in intensive care. Specialists hope the babies will be able to leave hospital within two months.

"I prayed as much as I could for a child. I would have been happy with one, but God blessed us with six, which is amazing. I can't wait to have them home," Conway said.

They were the first sextuplets born in the United Kingdom since 1983.

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