

A LITURGY FOR

Dropping Off a Child at School

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Creator God, who parents us all,
hold my heart as I practice letting go,
hold this child as the school day begins.

There was a time when I celebrated
each small milestone, witnessing steps
as they were taken. Yet now I watch
those same sweet legs walking away from
me toward people and spaces I know little
about, and I feel, at my best, an urge to slow
down time; at my worst, a fearful grasping
for control.

May this bittersweet pang point me toward
a deeper truth, where each small goodbye—
be it silly or tense, tired or tender—is a chance
to give thanks for the gift of this child,
and to remember that they are neither
my possession nor my identity.

I am not the author of their story, Lord.

You are.

I am not their ultimate protector, Lord.

You are.

This is both a relief and a surrender,
as I release the prideful notion
that my proximity secures their safety.

I have no shield with which to guard them,
but your unending faithfulness;
no comfort to console them,
but your transcendent peace;
no assurance to offer them,
but your perfect love.

Creator God, who parents us all,
hold my heart as I practice letting go;
hold this child as a school day begins.

Every day my child is more aware
of this beautiful, hurting, complex world.
As their mind grows in understanding
may they also grow in faith,
seeking and finding your presence, Lord.
Be to them a constant friend through
the crowded and lonely hallways
of these formative years.

When they feel anxious or insecure,
remind them they are loved.
When they feel pressure to impress
and prove their worth to peers,
remind them they are already loved.
When they make mistakes, great and small,
and feel the sting of shame,
remind them that no matter what,
they are fiercely and completely loved.

May this buoyancy of belonging
fill them with a confidence

to extend your generosity toward others.
May they have humility to learn from those
who are different from them,
and a soft heart for those who are struggling.
May each of their own hurts become a
source of empathy and compassion,
fueling the courage to choose kindness
over what is popular or easy.
May they see themselves as part of
your kingdom already breaking through,
shining light into shadows
with every action done in love.

Creator God, who parents us all,
hold my heart as I practice letting go,
hold this child as a school day begins.

In this passing moment full of
backpacks, buses, and bells,
I pause and acknowledge your goodness,
shown in and through this unique child
and the person they are becoming.
May they open their heart wider to you today,
allowing your hope to shimmer through them,
even as they rest in the truth
of who they already are:
a beloved child of God,
woven and held together
by your gentle and mighty hands.

Amen.