

31 Days of the Little Way: Folding Origami Bunnies in the Dark

Before I became a mother, I imagined bedtime as a peaceful time. I would rock my child while reading a story. Then, after prayers and maybe a lullaby, I'd tuck our sweet little one into bed.

That's not really how it works around here. In reality, brushing teeth is about as calm as a roller coaster ride. Then I watch as the energy fades as we try to get from the bathroom to the bedroom. Tonight, our younger son tells me, he is a sloth. And he's moving at that speed toward the bedroom.

Some nights my audience is giggling so much during the story that I wonder why I picked the books I'm reading. But on this night our choice—a Bunjitsu Bunny book—is a winner. The boys are listening, and I'm enjoying the story.

At the end of the book the main character makes an origami bunny. My listeners love this idea, and they can't wait to make their own.



It's late, and morning is coming soon enough. At moments like this, I find myself trapped in the struggle between sticking to a schedule and not worrying about it. Yes, the lights should out by 8:30, and the children should be asleep soon afterward. But I also want our children to have wonderful memories of sharing a room, of the special moments they enjoyed together. And aren't the little moments the most important ones of all?

Do they need the origami bunnies as much as they need rest? How do I know? And how often do I ask God for something I don't need simply because I'll enjoy it—not because I actually need it? And...origami bunnies. How long can that project take to do?



So I find two sheets of paper and cut them into squares. Then I leave the boys sitting next to each other in bed with a flashlight, the instructions in the book, and the two pieces of paper.

When I come back a few minutes later, they proudly show me their completed bunnies. Then the flashlight goes off, and they're whispering and laughing in the dark. I have to visit them a few times to help them calm down, but eventually they fall asleep, and the paper bunnies lie forgotten until tomorrow.



Bedtime in real life is different from that imaginary bedtime I had envisioned. Some nights it's raucous. Some nights our children need drinks of water or another stuffed animal or they remember there's a quiz tomorrow, or they have questions a child only thinks of after 9 p.m.

And some nights they huddle in the darkness, folding origami bunnies and then make the bunnies hop over and under and through their covers until they fall asleep.

