

31 Days of the Little Way: School Picture Day

I used to let our sons wear whatever they wanted for school picture day. But somewhere along the way I realized that it's the only day of the year we have a professional photo taken, so...well...maybe they should wear something nicer than a Star Wars T-shirt.

I know what you're thinking: What could possibly be nicer than a Star Wars T-shirt? It's a legitimate question, and I don't have a good answer.

Anyway, for school picture day this year, my only rule was that you had to wear a shirt with a collar. I didn't care about pants or shoes or socks. I just wanted a shirt that looked a little bit nicer.

So Leo picked his favorite "church shirt," his yellow polo.

Daniel chose a short-sleeved shirt that was just handed down to him from his godmother's youngest. He insisted on wearing a tie with it. The tie and the shirt didn't really match, but he's 6. He can pull off stripes and plaid—and somehow I think he'll pull it off even when he's 16 or 36.



So the boys were dressed. Yet, as we were rushing out the door, I was thinking that we were very much not picture perfect.

We were hurling backpacks into the middle of the car and worrying about who got to sit in which seat.

As we drove, we were arguing and fussing, unhappy about who was holding the phone to play Pokemon Go—and worrying about a math quiz that would be missed because we were late.

Oh, and we were late—really late, the latest we have been all year. We were so late we had to collect tardy slips from the office. I know. You're appalled.

When I get the proofs for the school pictures, I won't remember the craziness of the morning. I might not even remember how late we were to school that day or all we were balancing that morning that put us so far behind.

The pictures will capture a moment, maybe a crooked tie or a smile with a missing tooth. But they won't capture the reality that is our lives, the crazy chaotic moments of frustration and joy, the struggles and victories, our ordinary everyday life.

The truth is that even as we were jogging together to the school doors, later than anyone should be on a beautiful fall morning, we were making fun of ourselves for being late, joking around and laughing. Maybe those hectic moments show me as I

really am, not the cheese-smiling person in a professional picture, but the person inside that God knows so well—the person who doesn't care about lateness or matching ties.

Life isn't picture perfect. But it's amazing. And I wouldn't change a thing.

