

31 Days of the Little Way: What I Forgot to Send to School

The school year is well upon us, and I am feeling the weight of it.

Our children's folders come home full of forms to complete and homework assignments that are due tomorrow or next week or in three weeks. I just add them to the pile.

I believe our children should manage their own homework as much as possible, but I have to be involved in some of it. There are spelling words to ask again and again and again, there are math worksheets to look over, there are tests to sign, and there's probably some huge assignment due tomorrow that I've forgotten.

Just when I'm feeling smug that the St. Anthony project has been turned in and the mosquito poster is finished, here comes a book report to do.

Then a parent mentions she forgot to prepare her child for the vocabulary test today, and I realize I didn't even know there were vocabulary tests.

Almost every morning we're running late. As John and the boys raced out the door to school this morning, I kissed them and yelled, "I love you have a great day!", put some dishes in the sink, then turned around and saw the boys' water bottles sitting on the kitchen table.



Ugh, I thought. The last thing we need is for our children to pick up more germs from the water fountains at school. Every time they're thirsty, they'll think of how Mama forgot to send the water bottle. Why do I go to so much trouble to fill the bottles only to forget them at the last minute? And why am I so bad at keeping on top of all the stuff for school?

Then I stopped. This month of looking for holiness in the ordinary and seeing God in the little moments is not supposed to mean I am perfect. And maybe, just maybe, I should show myself a little of the mercy I keep telling myself I need to show my children—and others in my life.

"He has created the great saints who are like the lilies and the roses, but He has also created much lesser saints, and they must be content to be the daisies or the violets which rejoice His eyes whenever He glances down," St. Therese of Lisieux tells us. "Perfection consists in doing His will, in being that which He wants us to be."

Maybe God doesn't want me to be the mother who can keep track of it all. Maybe He knows that my children will be stronger and more resilient because I won't be in

their way. Or maybe He realizes that we're talking about first and third grade, and that none of this really matters in the long run. Maybe there's holiness in letting go. Our children are happy. They're fed. They're learning. They're loved. Maybe, just maybe, God wants me to be a lesser saint—a mother who forgets the water bottles and doesn't care about math flash cards. And maybe there's a reason why, when I apologized for forgetting to send the water bottles, our son just looked at me, shrugged, and went back to playing.

