

Everything I know about graduation I forgot in kindergarten

I owe my mother an apology.

A few weeks ago when we attended Leo's Pre-K graduation ceremony, I mentioned that I hadn't had a graduation until the end of my senior year in high school. I knew there was no ceremony for my eighth grade class, and I didn't recall graduating from kindergarten.



Wearing my new double-buckle shoes on my first day of kindergarten

My mother went looking through her albums to try to find photos of my kindergarten graduation—which she couldn't remember either—and she couldn't find any. So she and I figured it hadn't happened.

Then one of my St. Pius X friends corrected me. She remembered details from the ceremony, and she was sure her mother had photos.

I told my mother. Of course my friend's mom had photos, I said. Why didn't we? Was there a new baby born in our family that year? Did my oldest sister have a spelling bee to attend so my family skipped my graduation? Was I home sick? No, no, and no. My mother scoured the house. Nothing.

Don't bother looking anymore, I told her. I thought it was funny that she had photos of my five siblings' kindergarten graduations but not mine.

My mother was not amused, especially when I jokingly told her I would just include it as a chapter in my I-was-the-overlooked-middle-child-of-six book, *The Last Sprite*. Then I forgot about the photos.

I forgot, that is, until the other day, when the phone rang. It was my mother.

"Guess what I just found!" she said. The kindergarten graduation pictures had shown up when my mother was looking for something else.



Just because we found the photos doesn't mean I remember my classmates' names.

And they are great photos, including one of me standing alone in front of our house.



Looking a bit smug in front of our house on Hopkins Road

I didn't even think to take a photo of Leo standing on his own—though, in his case, he would have refused.

So I was wrong. Not only did my mother have the photos, but she found them within a few weeks. Considering all the photos a mother of six and grandmother of 11 has tucked away, that is impressive.



Receiving my diploma from Sister Raymond Marie, SSND, the principal

The only question left is, if a picture's worth a thousand words, do I need to offer an apology of the same length?

Dear friends, please continue to pray for Teresa Bartlinski, whose body is rejecting her heart transplant. You can find updates on the family blog or at the rapidly growing Facebook group, Pray for Teresa B.

God, please heal Teresa's heart and give her family the courage and strength to face each day. We also send prayers for the grieving family of the donor, who gave Teresa a chance at life.