

Mother's Day celebrations can be like dandelion bouquets

This morning we were on a tight schedule.

I woke up extra early, helped our sons get dressed, and started throwing school lunches together.

While John helped the boys get their shoes on and backpacks ready, I showered, dressed, stuffed my laptop into a bag, grabbed my purse, and we ran out the door.

If we hurried, I thought, we would make it to the Mother's Day breakfast at Leo's school just in time.

We did. Whew.



Yes, my hair is still wet. No, he is not posing for the blog. He is just having fun.

At Mother's Day Breakfast #1 we enjoyed seeing friends, the boys liked their donuts, and, as we opened the event with a prayer, I was reminded yet again how much I love our Catholic school.

As we were sitting there, though, I found myself wondering about Mother's Day celebrations. I don't want breakfast in bed, the idea of going to a spa makes me cringe, and I don't need large, expensive gifts. And I do enjoy the school events. But they are clearly not designed to reduce the stress and busyness in a mother's life.

I can barely get the children to school on time on an ordinary day, so getting there 45 minutes early is incredibly challenging. But you can't skip the events. The guilt and angst and disappointment would be overwhelming. So you go and enjoy it—even when it's hard.

I think I may have taken a sip of coffee when I wasn't pleading with my sons to stay in their seats or informing them that coffee stirrers aren't weapons. I did get to eat a muffin.

Then Daniel and I jumped in the car and drove to Mother's Day Breakfast #2 at his school. He

gave me a keychain and a jewelry box he had made, along with a card telling me that he loves me “to infinity” and that he wants to go to a waterpark and on a cruise with me.



He prepared a full plate of food for me. I looked down and realized he had picked some gorgeous pieces of mango. I am allergic to only one food, and that’s it. I felt like a terrible mother telling him I couldn’t eat it. Fortunately he bounced back quickly. Then he ran around the room, burning off the pink-frosted-with-sprinkles donut he had eaten at his brother’s school.

It was all marvelous. Truly, it was. Even when I was mopping up the spilled orange juice, I was thinking that today was my last preschool Mother’s Day event with Daniel, and I was a little misty-eyed.

But I also found myself realizing, as I do every year, that Mother’s Day really isn’t about the mother. It’s about the people who want to celebrate her. And just as when your toddler hands you a bouquet of crumpled dandelions on a hot summer day or a half-eaten soggy cookie, you accept it with a smile knowing all the love that’s behind it.

Besides, to be honest, do any of us mothers need to be celebrated? For me, at least, with or without pink donuts and mangoes, my life as a mother is one wild party.

Still, I would love to sleep in tomorrow.