

# Of the Mixed-up Lunches of the Buettner Family

This morning I got up, heated chicken noodle soup, and filled two thermoses.

I sliced and skinned apples. I filled lunch containers with blueberries (for Daniel) and turkey pepperoni (for Leo) and edamame. I added a pickle for Leo and some cold mac and cheese for Daniel.

Our boys never take the same lunch, and that's fine. They are both great eaters, and their lunches are always a little different.



*A different lunch from a different day*

Leo takes a morning snack and two boxed drinks. Daniel doesn't need those. And, of course, they have completely different tastes in desserts.

I put the food carefully into their lunchboxes—with a cold pack for Leo since his lunch is not refrigerated at school. Then I put the lunches in their backpacks.

I had just dropped Leo off at school when my phone rang.

It was my husband. While dropping Daniel off, he realized Daniel had Leo's lunch in his backpack. Leo must have Daniel's. It would take me more than an hour to sort it out, and I didn't have an hour. My day had begun—and there was no changing anything now.



"They'll just have to eat each other's food," I said. At least they both have chicken noodle soup, I thought. And hey, it's Lent.

I wondered what I would find when I went to pick them up. Would they be grumpy and

complaining? Would they be upset?

Naturally, they were fine. Children are much more resilient than their parents are. They were both happy to point out and discuss my error, but no one was starving.

As it turned out, Leo had ended up with both thermoses of soup. He thought that was funny—and ate them both.



Daniel—guzzling his brother’s juice box in the back seat on the way home—seemed content.

“So I made a mistake,” I said. “Even mothers make mistakes sometimes.”

“This was a big mistake,” Leo said.

It was time to change the subject. “I wonder who we can think of in the Bible who made a mistake,” I said, mostly thinking aloud.

“Well, there was Judas,” Leo said.

“I’m not sure I would call what Judas did a mistake,” I said, “but that was a very bad decision.”



Daniel spoke up. “Did Judas go to heaven?”

“We don’t know,” I said. “We are pretty sure he was sorry, but we don’t know where he is now. I guess we’ll find out when we get to heaven.”

Ah, heaven. A place where there is only joy—and where you never get stuck with your brother’s bunny-shaped fruit snacks.

For now, at least I have another chance to get it right tomorrow.

# ARCHDIOCESE OF BALTIMORE