

Preschoolers' arguments and faith are in bloom

The other morning we were walking toward our car, carrying the dozen bags or so we always seem to pack for our day away from home, when Leo stopped suddenly.

“Look!” he said. “A flower!”

There, beside our sidewalk, just feet from our front door, was a bright yellow flower. Its long petals were stretched out, pointing toward the sunshine, and it seemed to have come from nowhere. I’m not a flower expert, so I don’t know whether this is a weed or some exotic blossom. All we knew was that we had not planted it ourselves, it was an unexpected surprise, and—in the sunshine of a summer morning—it seemed like a rare gift.



Daniel ran over to look and—as any 2 ½-year-old might do—he smiled, took a breath, and proclaimed, “Fow-er! Mine!”

“NO!” Leo said. I braced myself for what was sure to come next, an argument about how he had seen it first, how he was the big brother, how yellow is his favorite color, or whatever other explanation he had up the sleeve of his Star Wars T-shirt. But I underestimated him.

“No!” Leo said firmly—and he spoke with the authority of a boy who became a big brother 10 months ago. “You are wrong. That is not your flower! Not! At! All! That is GOD’s flower. He made it, and He put it there.”

What else was there to say? Daniel didn't try to argue—and he didn't seem to care. Certainly I wasn't going to get in the way of this conversation. The boys gave the flower one more fleeting moment of attention and then raced off to the car to see who was the fastest.

As it turned out, I thought I had no idea where the flower came from, but I was wrong—and Leo remembered. Just when we think we're teaching our sons a little bit about life, we realize how much we have left to learn from these minds and hearts that are blossoming more every day.