

# The first day of kindergarten

Last night we opened a booklet Leo's teacher had given us to read the night before his first day of kindergarten. Inside Leo found a poem and a bag of confetti. His teacher asked him to sprinkle some under his pillow—and she said she'd be sprinkling some under hers, too.



Leo took his first assignment very seriously and even shared some with his younger brother. Then our new kindergartener, who has been so anxious about the experience, fell right to sleep.

When Leo woke up this morning, his father dressed him in his polo shirt, pants, the brown belt his mother ran frantically through the house last night to find, and soft brown shoes. We didn't pick a Catholic school specifically for the uniform, but it might be worth it. All of a sudden our little boy looked so grown-up.

I told Leo we were going to pose for pictures, but being a new kindergartener does not mean you suddenly want to have your picture taken. He only changed his mind about participating when Daniel came out and threatened to steal the show. So I have some great photos of the brothers together, but the best ones of Leo standing alone look like this.



Then we drove to school.

"What if I don't like kindergarten?" he asked on the way.

"We can talk about it then," I said. "But I really think you'll have fun."

Then I listed the million things that are terrific about kindergarten. For someone who didn't like school at all until high school, I have quickly become a huge fan of kindergarten, listing the numerous opportunities for fun and learning.



When I stopped outside the school, a teacher was standing there, ready to greet Leo. I gave him his lunchbox, his backpack, and a hug. "Mama, you're hurting my neck," he said.

Then he was gone, walking up the steps with a smiling, chatty teacher, off to begin this new chapter of his life—with just one glance over his shoulder at our car.

As I drove away, I cried, wishing time didn't pass so quickly, and wondering how we'd arrived at this moment so soon. But I wasn't sad as much as overwhelmed with emotion to be so blessed to be the mother of this long-awaited child, the answer to so many prayers, a gift entrusted to us by God, and who has already accomplished so much.

I wish I could tell you how Leo's first day went, but he won't tell me anything.

"Stop asking questions, Mama," he told me, "and keep driving."

All I know is that he said the Our Father, but not a whole Rosary, and they read a book, but it wasn't Dr. Seuss or the Berenstain Bears. And I know he found a note from his father in his lunchbox.



I'm sure I'll hear some details about school eventually. It just might not be until Daniel starts kindergarten in 2015.

But the way time is flying, that might be next week.

*How did your child's first day of school go?*