

What happened when we put all our prayers in one basket for Lent

If I were getting graded on how I've done this Lent, I am not sure I would pass.

Maybe that's why I am especially grateful for the prayer basket we filled with intentions before Lent even began.

Every morning we've pulled out a name for our intention of the day. We've prayed for people who are long deceased. We've prayed for people we see almost every day. We've prayed for teachers, friends, cousins, priests, and family members, some of whom our boys—and even we ourselves—have never met.

We've prayed for people we know are in heaven, people we hope are in heaven. We've prayed for people we don't even know by name.

There was no logic to the people we chose. We just cut up 47 strips of paper and wrote on them. So every morning has brought a discovery. And every day we have talked together about our intention for that day—and we have prayed for every single intention we've found in the basket.

And we've encountered some wonderful stories along the way. The day we prayed for our friend Father Brown, we were all wowed by the story of how he found his father's watch.

Miracles happen in all shapes and sizes, and I have loved making prayer a little more tangible for our children—and for all of us—on our Lenten journey. I have truly felt the Holy Spirit at work in our lives as we have kept our loved ones in our prayers each day.

On Good Friday morning when Daniel pulled the last name, we saw that it was the day to pray for his birthparents.



All day I kept thinking of how poignant that choice was for a day of such sadness, such darkness, such grief. That suffering, that loss, that pain, will always be there. But, as with Good Friday, there is also the joy that follows through adoption. In adoption, you can't have the joy without the grief.

Easter, we know, can't come without Good Friday.

Late in the day I walked with our boys to a local playground, and I watched as our younger son was recruited for a spontaneous baseball game. He stepped to the plate, swung at the first pitch, and hit the ball past the pitcher.

As he ran to first base, I thought of the people on the other side of the world who love him, too. And I prayed for them. I pray that they know some of the joy we

experience with this little boy we all love.

Before we headed home, our boys blew dandelion seeds by the baseball field.



What did they wish for? I'm not sure. But I find myself wishing the prayer basket didn't have to end as we move on to the joy of Easter. And...well...why should it? Maybe we'll just fill it with more intentions and continue this journey.