

A Children's Litany

Leader We pray for children
who put chocolate fingers everywhere,
who like to be tickled,
who stomp in puddles and ruin their new pants
who sneak popsicles before supper,
who erase holes in math workbooks,
who can never find their shoes.

People *Forgive us, O Lord, when such minor things irritate us.*

Leader And we pray for those
who stare at photographers from behind barbed wire,
who can not bound down the street in a new pair of
sneakers,
who never 'counted potatoes,'
who are born in places we would not be caught dead,
who never go to the circus,
who live in an X-rated world.

People *Guide them, help them, give them hope.*

Leader We pray for children
who bring us sticky kisses and fistfuls of dandelions,
who sleep with the dog and bury goldfish,
who hug us in a hurry and forget their lunch money,
who cover themselves with Band-Aids and sing off key,
who squeeze toothpaste all over the sink,
who slurp their soup.

People *We thank you for them in all their gory and glory.*

Leader And we pray for those
who never get dessert,
who have no safe blanket to drag behind them,
who watch their parents watch them die,
who can not find any bread to steal,
who do not have any rooms to clean up,
whose pictures are not on anyone's dresser,
whose monsters are real.

People *Be their strength, comfort and consolation in all their needs.*

Leader We pray for children
who spend all their allowances before Tuesday,
who throw tantrums in grocery stores and pick at their food,
who like ghost stories, and shove dirty clothes under the
bed,
who get visits from the tooth fairy, and never rinse out the
tub,
who do not like to be kissed in front of the carpool,
who squirm in church and scream in the phone,
whose tears we sometimes laugh at and
whose smiles can make us cry.

People *May we be forgiven their inadequacies as seen through our eyes.*

Leader And we pray for those
whose nightmares come in the daytime,
who will eat anything,
who have never seen a dentist,
who are not spoiled by anybody,
who go to bed hungry and cry themselves to sleep,
who live and move but have no being.

People *May their suffering be ours and our shame overcome by fulfilling their needs.*

Leader We pray for children
who want to be carried and for those who must,
for those we never give up on and for those who do not get
a second chance,
for those we smother... and for those who will grab the hand
of anyone kind enough to offer it.

People *In their suffering we see Christ and each other; help us, Lord, not to merely accept what we have seen and said in our prayers, but make us the instruments of change and love for all your children, without regard for age, sex, color, religion, or ability. This we pray through Jesus Christ of Lord. AMEN.*