

We pray for children
who sneak Popsicles before supper,
who erase holes in math workbooks
and can never find their shoes.

But we also pray for children
who can't bound down the street in a new pair of sneakers,
who were born in places we wouldn't be caught dead,
who never go to the circus,
and live in an X-rated world.

We pray for children who never get dessert,
who have no blanket to drag behind them,
who watch their parents watch them die,
who don't have any rooms to clean up,
whose pictures aren't on anybody's dresser,
and whose monsters are real.

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

We also pray for children
whose nightmares come in the daytime,
who will eat anything,
who have never seen a dentist,
who aren't spoiled by anybody,
who go to bed hungry and cry themselves to sleep,
who live and move, but have no being.

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

We pray for all children but especially the children of our school. Help us to
cherish them and love them and together to teach them to love and serve you.

With gratitude, thankfulness, appreciation, and praise. Amen!