

A Prayer for the Children

We pray for the children who sneak popsicles before supper,

who erase holes in math workbooks,

who can never find their shoes.

And we pray for those
who stare at photographers
from behind barbed wire,
who can't bound down the
street in a new pair of
sneakers,

who never "counted potatoes",

who are born in places where we wouldn't be caught dead,

who never go to the circus, who live in an X-rated world.



We pray for the children
who bring us sticky kisses and
fistfuls of dandelions,
who hug us in a hurry and
forget their lunch money.

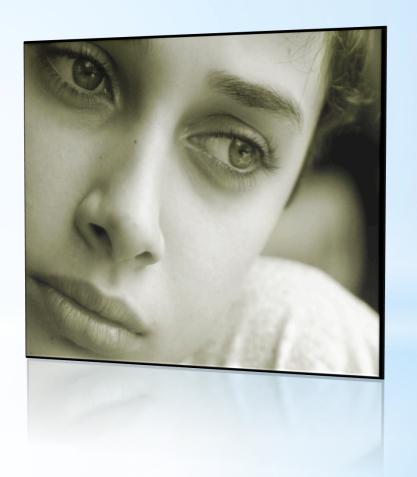
And we pray for those who never get dessert, who have no safe blanket to drag behind them, who watch their parents watch them die, who can't find bread to steal, who don't have rooms to clean up,

whose pictures aren't on anybody's dresser, whose monsters are real.



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

And we pray for those 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 for the children

who want to be carried and for those who must,

who we never give up on and for those who don't get a second chance.

We pray for those we smother and for those who will grab the hand of anyone kind enough to offer it.



Amen