



72. Life happens all around your toddler, even if she is not directly involved. Your toddler will feel the difference in the air on that day when you find out your mom has cancer or you lose your job. And even if you barely know it, and your toddler only knows it unconsciously, your child is watching your face and your actions. Kids want to know, “Am I okay?” That’s the same question we all have for God when life goes awry. Will we be okay? Be a model for your child. Go to God with that question, not just to a place of constant worry and fear. Go to your church friends and leaders with that question and seek their support. Witness to your child that your prayer will always be on the heels of your despair, and your community of faith sustains you.



73. It can be hard for both toddlers and parents to say good-bye at the door of preschool or daycare. When it is time for you and your child to part, predictable and pleasurable rituals can help both of you. When leaving your child for the day, or before you go out for an evening, get down at your child’s eye level. Mark a cross on his forehead and say, “Remember God loves you, and so do I.” Your toddler can do the same for you. Or trace the sign of the cross in his open hand “because God loves you.” Then put a “kiss to keep” in your child’s hand “because I love you too.” Fold his little fingers around it,

a handful of love that will last until you get back. Leaving one another in God's hands reminds us of who holds us 24/7. This good-bye ritual allows us to share our faith in a simple but powerful way.



toddler



prek-k



lower



upper

74. When custody arrangements mean that your child will be moving between parents, you want to keep the transition calm and predictable. Sharing a little prayer can become part of the leave-taking. If your child is concerned about anything, whether homework or a T-ball game, mention her need to God in prayer. Avoid turning concerns you may feel about your "ex" into a prayer in your child's hearing.

Dear God, I am so grateful for these good days we have had together, and for the good times *child's name* will have with *Daddy/Mommy*. Wherever *child's name* goes I know you are there already. Wherever I am, you are here with me too. I don't know how you do it, but I am so glad you will be with us both until we are together again. Amen.