

A Prayer for the First Day of School

O God of new beginnings,
As this child begins this new school year,
We are reminded that they are Yours
And Yours alone.

We have filled their backpack,
And we ask You to fill their heart
With the joy of new friends
And their mind
With the wonder of learning new things.

You are the God of science
And the God of art,
The God of equations
And the God of song.

Be with them,
This piece of my heart,
As they embark on this new adventure,
Becoming more themselves
And needing me less
Every day.

Give them courage
To extend kindness to teachers,
Fellow students,
And even themselves.
May they stand tall in who they are,
And may they find friends to sit with.

Ignite passions in them
For Your world and everything in it.
Spark creativity and stoke the fires of imagination.

Give them a heart to see the hurting
And strength to show love in the hallways.
Give them friends,
But help them not to find their worth in others.
Give them concentration
And a holy kind of mischief
That keeps them asking why.

Be with their teachers,
Who give so much of themselves.
May they have eyes to see each student
In their own challenges and victories.

God, we know each body and soul
Has a different way of learning.
Help [child's name] find
What helps them learn best
In the ways You've uniquely wired them.

Thank You for all that awaits,
And thank You for the tug in my heart
As I wave goodbye
And watch them enter the doors,
For those are the heartstrings of love.

May this child feel Your love
As they walk the halls,
And may You keep them safe
And bring them safely home.

May they rise to the challenges set in front of them,
And may they never be too busy
To bend down and help someone.

Give them focus
And eyes to see someone who could use a friend.
Give them imagination,
And may they know the power that lies within
A pencil or a paintbrush.
May they learn how understanding history
Can change the future.
And may they see how numbers can come together
To make a difference in our world.

God, as they prepare to start the school year,
I wonder if I have taught them enough,
If I have prepared them for this moment.
I care more about their character
Than their academic success.
For what is successful in the eyes of the Lord?

I think, too, of the students
For whom school is a refuge
From the storms of life at home.
May they connect with others who truly see them,
Not as under resourced or troubled or another statistic
But as Your beloved.

We thank You for the gift of education,
For we know it is a privilege
Not all have access to.
Even in our own city,
We know there are inequities
Baked into the bricks of our schools.

In my child's anxieties,
May they find comfort in Your presence.
In their worries,
May they find peace in Your promises.
In their challenges,
May they find victory in Your power.

May they be curious and compassionate.
May they share their lunch with a friend in need
Or risk being late to help a lost new student find their way.
O God, we give our own worries
And our parental desire for control
To You.

Thank You for the gift of the first day of school
And for all the days to come.
May this child learn and grow,
And may I learn and grow too.
Teach us how to love You
And our neighbor
More every day.

Amen.

From: Live perfectly imperfect