

Let's Pray...

Dear Jesus Christ, the first, the last, and the living one, the Alpha and the Omega, our risen Savior who is the first fruit of them that sleep, we give thanks to You for all that You have given us, and especially for the many *firsts* with which You bless Your people each day. In the uncertainty of this life, we joyfully live in the certainty of Your grace and look to our Baptism and the Lord's Supper as our first earthly glimpses of Your heavenly glory. As we face many firsts on this earth, we know that we are never alone, for You are before us, and after us, and have promised always to be with us, even to the end of the age. In Your Name. Amen.

REFLECTIONS

Here I am again, God. It's me, M. Today as a school bus passed by, I was reminded of when I walked my son to kindergarten for his first day of school. He chattered away in his usual manner, but then he suddenly said, "I think I better hold your hand." What a wonderful security a child finds in the hand of his mother! Hands that You created help us to perform so many daily tasks. We may wave a cheery "hello" to a friend or a tearful "good-bye" to a loved one. We give a courteous handshake or an encouraging pat on the back. We reach out to comfort others or to help someone in time of need. But even more comforting is when You extend Your loving hand to us. Just as Your Son, Jesus, reached out to grab Peter's hand to save him from drowning, so You offer Your hand to us when trouble comes or our faith grows weak. You handed Your Son over to sinful men to be crucified for our salvation. And when we leave this world, Your hand will be there to bring us home to You. Thank You, God, for the gift of hands — Your hand and ours.



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