

# LITANY FOR CHILDREN

## WE PRAY FOR CHILDREN

who put chocolate fingers everywhere  
who like to be tickled  
who jump in puddles, oblivious of the consequences  
who have no sense of time or routine  
whose shoes are always missing at school time  
who speak on the 'phone like experts'.

## AND WE PRAY FOR THOSE

who stare at photographers as if from another planet  
who have never had a pair of new shoes  
who have never made daisy chains or taunted the dog  
who are born in places we wouldn't be caught dead  
who have never had the chance to be children  
who only know a world of abuse.

## WE PRAY FOR CHILDREN

who give us sticky kisses and fistfuls of dandelions  
who hug us in a hurry and forget their dinner money  
who sing their hearts out to their own tune  
who squeeze toothpaste all round the sink  
who ask naïve questions and don't listen to the answers  
who have imaginary friends and conversations.

## AND WE PRAY FOR THOSE

who don't have a room to call their own  
who can't find any bread to steal  
who watch their parents watch them die  
whose minds are full of violent memories  
who don't feel important to anyone else.

## WE PRAY FOR CHILDREN

who spend their pocket money before it's actually in their pocket  
who throw tantrums in the supermarket and pick at their food  
who hide their possessions under their bed and leave a ring round the bath  
who get visits from the tooth fairy  
who set the DVD like second nature  
whose tears we sometimes laugh at and whose smiles can make us cry.

## AND WE PRAY FOR THOSE

who will eat everything they have chance of  
who have never had a medical or visited the dentist  
who know nobody to spoil them  
who go to bed hungry and cry themselves to sleep  
who do not know the meaning of the word security, of being safe.

## WE PRAY FOR CHILDREN

who long to be loved and hugged and given a name and a family  
and for those who fill our lives and make us feel special.