

Dear John,

As you know, We've been working real hard in our town to get prayer back in our schools. Finally, the school board approved a plan of teacher-led prayer with the children participating at their own option. Children not wishing to participate were to be allowed to stand out in the hallway during prayer time. We hoped someone would sue us so we could go all the way to the Supreme Court and get the old devil-inspired ruling reversed.

Naturally, we were all excited by the school board action. As you know, our own little Billy (not so little, any more though) is now in the second grade. Of course, Margaret and I explained to him no matter what the other kids did, he was going to stay in the classroom and participate. After the first day of school, I asked him "How did the prayer time go?"

"Fine."

"Did many kids go out into the hallway?"

"Two."

"Excellent. How did you like your teacher's prayer?"

"It was different, Dad. Real different from the way you pray."

"Oh? Like how?"

"She said, 'Hail Mary Mother of God, pray for us sinners...'"

The next day I talked with the principal. I politely explained I wasn't prejudiced against Catholics but I would appreciate Billy being transferred to a non-Catholic teacher. The principal said it would be done right away.

At supper that evening I asked Billy to say the blessings. He slipped out of his chair, sat cross-legged, closed his eyes, raised his hand palms up in the air and began to hum.

You'd better believe I was at the principal's office at eight o'clock the next morning. "Look," I said. 'I don't really know much about these Transcendental Meditationists, but I would feel a lot more comfortable If you could move Billy to a room where the teacher practices an older, more established religion.'

That afternoon I met Billy as soon as he walked in the door after school. "I don't think you're going to like Mrs. Nakasone's prayer either, Dad."

"Out with it."

"She kept chanting Namu Amida Butsu..."

The following morning I was waiting for the principal in the school parking lot. "Look, I don't want my son praying to the Eternal Spirit of whatever to Buddha. I want him to have a teacher who prays in Jesus' name!"

"What about Bertha Smith?"

"Excellent."

I could hardly wait to hear about Mrs. Smith's prayer. I was standing on the front

steps of the school when the final bell rang. "Well?" I asked Billy as we walked towards the car.

"Okay."

"Okay what?"

"Mrs. Smith asked God to bless us and ended her prayer in Jesus' name, amen just like you."

I breathed a sigh of relief. "Now we're getting some place."

"She even taught us a verse of scripture about prayer," said Billy.

I beamed. "Wonderful. What was the verse?"

"Let's see..." he mused for a moment. "And behold, they began to pray; and they did pray unto Jesus, calling him their Lord and their God." We had reached the car.

"Fantastic," I said reaching for the door handle. Then paused. I couldn't place the scripture.

"Billy, did Mrs. Smith say what book that verse was from?"

"Third Nephi, chapter 19, verse 18."

"Nephi what?"

"Nephi," he said. "It's in the Book of Mormon."

The school board doesn't meet for a month. I've given Billy very definite instructions that at prayer time each day he's to go out into the hallway. I plan to be at that board meeting. If they don't do something about this situation, I'll sue. I'll take it all the way to the Supreme Court if I have to. I don't need schools or anybody else teaching my son about religion. We can take care of that ourselves at home and at church, thank you very much.

Best Wishes Always,  
Dan