

Phyllis,

I was deeply saddened to hear about your unexpected loss. You have my deepest sympathy. Jessica was always a sweet, loving child. As I reflect back over years while attending Walnut Grove, I can still see her, quietly walking beside you, smiling. It was a joy to have Jessica in my Sunday School class during her preteen years. Please accept the poem below as my tribute to Jessica.

A Child Loaned

(conversation between God and a Mother of a deceased child)

I will lend you for a little time
A child of Mine," God said,
"For you to love her while she lives,
And mourn her when she's dead.
It may be six or nineteen years
Or twenty-two or three,
But will you, till I call her back,
Take care of her for Me?
She'll bring her charms to delight you.
And should her stay be brief,
You'll have her lovely memories
As comfort for your grief.

I cannot promise she will stay,
Since all from earth return,
But there are lessons taught down there
I want this child to learn.
I've looked this wide world over
In My search for teachers true,
And from the throngs that crowd life's lanes,
I have selected you;
Now will you give her all your love,
Not think the labor vain,
Nor hate Me when I come to call
And take her back again?"

I fancied when I heard you say,
"Dear Lord, Thy will be done.
For all the joy This child shall bring.
The risk of grief I'll run.
I will shelter her with tenderness,
I will love her while I may,
And for the happiness I have known,
Forever grateful stay.
But should the angels call for her
Much sooner than I planned,
I will brave the bitter grief that comes
And try to understand.

(Unknown Author)