**MOTHERING**

 (Exodus 2:1-10 & Luke 2:39-52)

March 22nd is **Mothering Sunday**: a special moment to consider mothers’ central role in their children’s lives. With this in mind, we reflect on the story of Moses and his mother (Exodus 2:1-10), and Jesus and his mother (Luke 2:39-52). This is a special time to appreciate what good mothers do for their children, but also how good children respond to their mothers care. Any motherhood has difficult and enjoyable sides. In Jesus’ childhood, Mary and Joseph had the responsibility for the family. Becoming parents brings other tasks. The Bible teaches us a lot about the care (motherhood) of Mary, the fatherhood of Joseph, but also the **Fatherhood/**Motherhood **of God**.

Considering the examples above, we may understand how God must suffer, as he watches us make mistakes, which he is longing to protect us from, as mothers protect their children. Yet God has given us the precious gift of choice, to run our own lives the way we choose. A good parent, or mother won’t take that away. Think of the ways mothers suffer when children do not behave correctly, especially when there are dangers facing them, or in time of difficulties like war, hunger and diseases like virus. Too much freedom for children in societies is a big challenge to mothers.

A Lebanese poet said that **parents are like the bows**, while their **children are the** **arrows**. Today is a special day for mothers, because of their care (motherhood); Mary and Joseph showed that **mothers are always together with fathers (both physically and spiritually)**, especially when it concerns their children. As the poet suggested, it is true that you **can point your child in the right direction**, but once they have left home, there is not much you can do to change the way they go. However, as a parent, you always keep trying. On the way home from the Temple, when Jesus’ mother could not see her son, they took the trouble to go all the way back to Jerusalem to find him.

Surely, when Moses and Jesus were children, they behaved like other children. They went missing, causing anxiety to their mothers. As any **mother they had influence on their children and loved them**: they sung lullabys, asked questions and sought to know whereabouts the children would be. Indeed, the children loved their mothers too and often went shopping for their mothers. Likewise, any good children obey their mothers - doing what the mothers ask them to do. This time, the coronavirus is fiercely spreading, killing many people; it might be very worrying for mothers to find proper ways to keep their children in the right situation. Thus, when we pray today, we should remember to commit both mothers and children to God.

Wonderful mothers always take great care to **put their children on a right path** into the world, whatever it takes. However, once the children have gone, there is no easy way to call them back. The decision never to interfere in their children’s lives is one of the hardest sacrifices mothers have to make. As children, the least we can do for our mothers in turn is to ask for and listen to our mothers’ **wise advice**, being grateful to them in all ways, and telling them that we are thankful and love them. There is so much more that you can do to express your gratitude to your mothers. Praying to God for your mother, and once in a while offering a little bunch of flowers to her symbolise that you are grateful for the care from your mother and that you love your mother.

A short prayer:

*Dear Lord, we thank you for you created us and gave us parents who care for us. Today, we especially thank you for our mothers and pray that you continue to surround them, strengthen them and bless them for the mothering task, the caring task they have, which impacts our welfare. We pray for this in your wonderful name. Amen.*