

Mothering Sunday

Collect:

God of love passionate and strong, tender and careful,
Watch over us and hold us all the days of our life through Jesus Christ our Lord
Amen

1st Reading : Exodus 2 1-10

The Birth of Moses

2 Now a man of the tribe of Levi married a Levite woman, and she became pregnant and gave birth to a son. When she saw that he was a fine child, she hid him for three months.

3 But when she could hide him no longer, she got a papyrus basket for him and coated it with tar and pitch. Then she placed the child in it and put it among the reeds along the bank of the Nile. His sister stood at a distance to see what would happen to him.

Then Pharaoh's daughter went down to the Nile to bathe, and her attendants were walking along the riverbank. She saw the basket among the reeds and sent her female slave to get it. She opened it and saw the baby. He was crying, and she felt sorry for him. "This is one of the Hebrew babies," she said.

Then his sister asked Pharaoh's daughter, "Shall I go and get one of the Hebrew women to nurse the baby for you?"

"Yes, go," she answered. So the girl went and got the baby's mother. ⁹ Pharaoh's daughter said to her, "Take this baby and nurse him for me, and I will pay you." So the woman took the baby and nursed him. When the child grew older, she took him to Pharaoh's daughter and he became her son. She named him Moses,¹ saying, "I drew him out of the water."

Gospel Reading: Luke 2 33-35

The child's father and mother marveled at what was said about him. Then Simeon blessed them and said to Mary, his mother: "This child is destined to cause the falling and rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be spoken against, so that the thoughts of many hearts will be revealed. And a sword will pierce your own soul too."

Hymn:

For the Beauty of the Earth sung by Paya Lebar Methodist Girls' School (Primary) choir

For the beauty of the earth
For the beauty of the skies
For the love which from our birth
Over and around us lies
Over and around us lies

Lord of all, to thee we raise
This our joyful hymn of praise

For the beauty of the hour
Of the day and of the night
Hill and vale and tree and flower
Sun and moon and stars of light
Sun and moon and stars of light

Lord of all, to thee we raise
This our joyful hymn of praise

For the joy of human love
Brother, sister, parent, child
Friends on earth and friends above
For all gentle thoughts and mild
For all gentle thoughts and mild

Lord of all, to thee we raise
This our joyful hymn of praise

For each perfect gift of thine
To our race so freely given
Graces human and divine
Flow'rs of earth and buds of heav'n
Flow'rs of earth and buds of heav'n

Lord of all, to thee we raise
This our joyful hymn, our joyful hymn of praise
This our joyful hymn of praise



Homily

Today is an opportunity for thanksgiving, to say thank you to those who have nurtured, encouraged and enabled us to be whom we are today. The term Mothering Sunday that the church uses transforms the commercial and social pressures around “Mother’s Day”. We embrace a richer more dynamic and inclusive vision around “mothering” by focusing on using our gifts in nurturing one another. The emphasis this morning therefore is not for Mother’s Day in the biological sense mother, but for those who have played a Mothering role in our lives, who care for, encourage and enable others to be what God wants us to be.

Our biblical texts this morning paint an honest and complex picture of the joy and cost of **love**, both old and New Testament readings reflect the gift of new life and the challenge of letting go. We know little about the mother of Moses except for her tremendous act of faith as she placed her child in the river, in danger, not knowing of his future. But she trusted God to watch over him.

We are also confronted by a moving moment in Luke’s gospel, where Mary is cryptically foretold her son’s death by Simeon, and her involvement by the words ‘and a sword will pierce your own soul too’. These few lines are the source and inspiration of the pieta – the grieving mother cradling her child, which not only resonates painfully with our experience of loving and letting go, but it also reflects the depth of God’s love for us; God who shares in our joys and sorrows, our pain and our laughter.



Today is an opportunity to recognize and give thanks to those around us who love us and faithfully stand by us, with the understanding that we need them as others may need us in our community. So as you look at the picture I invite you to think about Who's arms are cradling us, and who are we cradling.

This is a particularly difficult and frightening time for many in our community and it is through our love and cradling of others as well as being cradled that God's love light and hope will dispel the darkness and fear.

Happy Mothering Sunday

God Bless

Revd Anna

Prayer

Heavenly father

We ask you to be with all those who need cradling at this time of certainty, for those isolated, those struggling financially, for families and friends who have been separated. In this time of fear we ask you to give us the wisdom to act and be your calming presence in the world. We ask you to bless those working around the clock for our benefit, medical staff, scientists, supermarket workers, pharmacists, farmers the list is endless. Protect them Lord so they feel your loving presence surrounding them. We ask this in Jesus name

Amen

