

Mother's Day

May 13, 2018

Our Savior's Way
Worshipping Sundays 8:00, 9:30, & 11:00 AM
Pastor Tyson Labuhn

Grace, mercy and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Happy Mother's Day! Especially to all those who of you who love, care and nurture your children. It was Anna M. Jarvis (1864-1948) who first suggested the national observance of an annual day honoring all mothers because she had loved her own mother so dearly. At a memorial service for her mother on May 10, 1908, Miss Jarvis gave a carnation (her mother's favorite flower) to each person who attended. Within the next few years, the idea of a day to honor mothers gained popularity, and Mother's Day was observed in a number of large cities in the U.S. On May 9, 1914, by an act of Congress, President Woodrow Wilson proclaimed the second Sunday in May as Mother's Day. He established the day as a time for "public expression of our love and reverence for the mothers of our country." By then it had become customary to wear white carnations to honor departed mothers and red to honor the living mothers.

I know that some of you might think that this national holiday called Mother's Day is simply a "Hallmark Holiday" because more than 50% of American households send greeting cards. But motherhood is more than just a "Hallmark Holiday." It's a God given vocation of loving, caring and nurturing children. Motherhood is full of blessings, anguish, and frustration. And I remember that frustration and anguish on more than one occasion as my mother – while driving – tried to be an extra seat belt for me.

More often than not, mother's often give unselfishly. Too often they hide their struggles of not having enough time in their day – doing so much yet wondering if they accomplished anything at all, struggling to teach good values in a world that would teach children to do otherwise, worrying about their children's physical, social, and mental health, multitasking yet realizing when mistakes are made but hoping that their best will still be good enough. And yet, knowing that there will come a day when they'll have to let go, unable to be there the same way they had been when their child once needed them.

Before I go too far this morning, I have to confess something to you. While the Mother's Day flowers should have arrived already, I haven't been able to call my mother yet to wish her a Happy Mother's Day. So, if you're like me, this is a reminder to call your mother on Mother's Day. Because just sending her a card or some flowers simply isn't enough for all the pain and anguish I know that I've caused over the years.

Still there are many pastors who don't like to acknowledge Mother's Day during worship service because for some, motherhood can be unintentional and not always welcomed; for some, biological motherhood simply isn't possible; for some, mothers have had to say goodbye to their children way too early in life; for some, their mothers weren't all that nice; and for some, motherhood under the very best of circumstances is still less than a bed of roses. So why both with Mother's Day? Because with all its stumbling blocks, pitfalls and broken dreams, with all of those messes and dirty diapers, with all of those plans that got changed at the last minute, we're still talking about a beautiful part of God's creative plan to bring love, care and nurture to children in this fallen world.

A mother is a special gift from God. And while this has been the case since the Eve first conceived, we also see this special gift given in our short Gospel reading for today as well. There Jesus is dying on the cross, and we see Him give His mother Mary to His beloved disciple. And John becomes Mary's newly adopted son to love, care and nurture in a way that only a mother can provide,

even when their child is an adult. It's this adoptive motherhood that is given by our Lord that we see, as Jesus gives Himself completely and wholly for our sins that we might have forgiveness. And having been raised on the third day, He also gives to us new life as well.

It is by His Spirit that we are called to be His beloved disciples. Yet God gives to us His church where we are loved, nurtured and cared for as children of God. It's through the church that we experience God's love, our faith is nurtured, and we are cared for by our adopted brothers and sisters in Christ. This is Our Savior's Way in which we are cared for and yet, in turn, we care for others.

But not all children are loved, cared for in our world. Because of sin in this world, not all mothers are able to love, care and nurture their children as God intended. But here is where we, as the church comes into the picture. Next Sunday we will begin our annual MOSAIC baby bottle campaign. Lasting until Father's Day, we collect pocket money to support a local pregnancy care center.

Still Our Savior's Way also supports others who love, care, and nurture children in other parts of the world and today we have Dr. Franco from Go-Haiti. Once an orphan himself, and it was because of the love, care and nurture of an adoptive mom, that Dr. Franco was able establish an orphanage for children in Haiti.

As we are all children of God who struggle from time to time, today we join our nation in lifting up the gift of mothers – for the love, care and nurture that they give and thank God for His love, care and nurture in our own lives given to us through our mothers.

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