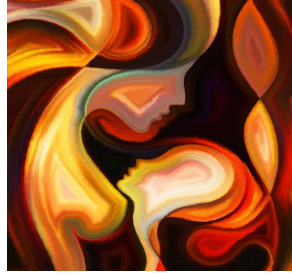


## Mothering Sunday- Reflection Service



Praise God who loves us: **Praise God who cares.**

Loving God, We thank and praise you for mothers and for all who have mothering hearts. For all who have loved and laughed, wept and laboured as they have cared for your children. **Blessed be God for ever.**

A child is a precious gift, given into the hands of birth parents, adopted parents, caregivers, relatives, and a church community. Together we undertake the raising of all children. Gift and strengthen us we pray for this important task. **Amen.**

### First Reading: Exodus 2:1-10

About this time, a man and woman from the tribe of Levi got married. The woman became pregnant and gave birth to a son. She saw that he was a special baby and kept him hidden for three months. But when she could no longer hide him, she got a basket made of papyrus reeds and waterproofed it with tar and pitch.

She put the baby in the basket and laid it among the reeds along the bank of the Nile River. The baby's sister then stood at a distance, watching to see what would happen to him. Soon Pharaoh's daughter came down to bathe in the river, and her attendants walked along the riverbank. When the princess saw the basket among the reeds, she sent her maid to get it for her.

When the princess opened it, she saw the baby. The little boy was crying, and she felt sorry for him. "This must be one of the Hebrew children," she said.

Then the baby's sister approached the princess. "Should I go and find one of the Hebrew women to nurse the baby for you?" she asked.

"Yes, do!" the princess replied. So the girl went and called the baby's mother.

"Take this baby and nurse him for me," the princess told the baby's mother. "I will pay you for your help." So the woman took her baby home and nursed him.

Later, when the boy was older, his mother brought him back to Pharaoh's daughter, who adopted him as her own son.

The princess named him Moses, for she explained, "I lifted him out of the water."

For the word of the Lord: **Thanks be to God**

### Second Reading: John 19: 25-27

Near the cross of Jesus stood his mother, his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene.

When Jesus saw his mother there, and the disciple whom he loved standing nearby, he said to her, "Woman, here is your son." And to the disciple, "Here is your mother."

From that time on, this disciple took her into his home.

For the Word of the Lord: **Thanks be to God.**

### **Reflection**

An African proverb says 'It takes a village to raise a child'. We see this in the life of Moses- His mother, the midwives, his sister, and Pharaoh's daughter- his adopted mother. All have a role to play in his safeguarding and upbringing.

On the cross Jesus poignantly asks his good friend John to look after his mother Mary, and for Mary to look after John once he has gone. We are shown by Jesus' example that we are to look after one another - to adopt one another into our family - to treat one another as if we are family.

Who will look after this child, this adult, this refugee? Who will treat as their own someone who is different to themselves - in colour- in gender identity - in economic status?

Jesus asks each of us mothers, fathers, aunts, uncles, siblings, carers, teachers, neighbours, friends - mothering hearts everywhere - to look after one another, especially another who is in need or hurting.

In Moses' story we see how love for children can overcome sectarianism and the crude and cruel human boundaries that we can put up between one another - separation of families at borders, young people being made stateless ... .

In Moses' story we see the bravery and sacrifice of his mum as she first seeks to protect his life by hiding him. The midwives who could have lost their lives through keeping her pregnancy and his birth secret and him alive. His wise mother's painful decision when knowing she can no longer keep him a secret, to place him in the river - but with his sister keeping watch. I am sure they had seen Pharaoh's daughter bathe before and had detected a kindness and humanity maybe in her interaction with the Hebrew women and children. So at a time she knows he will be found by her - the one person who can keep him safe - his mother puts him in the water. And sure enough Pharaoh's daughter although recognising him as a Hebrew baby - who her father has ordered to be killed - she has compassion and indeed saves his life. In a wonderful God only twist, Moses' sister I'm sure with heart racing, asks Pharaoh's daughter if she would like her to find a Hebrew wet nurse for the baby. It brings a tear to your eye doesn't it as his mum is fetched and gets to keep and nurture him until he is weaned.

Moses is safe. Real pain is of course still to come when she must hand him over/back to Pharaoh's daughter to raise. It is clear though the learning and love he receives from his background as a Hebrew and an Egyptian prepares him for the role God has called him to.

In Moses' story we see a mother's love, a family and communities care; compassion standing up against tyranny. And God's amazing tapestry which needed all these amazing women for God's purpose to be fulfilled.

May all our lives be beautiful compassionate tapestries of love. Amen.

### **Worship Music**

Oh worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LBEmXFkwcOE&t=22s&ab\\_channel=HIMaachen](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LBEmXFkwcOE&t=22s&ab_channel=HIMaachen)

Make me a channel of your peace:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OTg7aNJ7Z7E&ab\\_channel=PeaceWithinWithout](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OTg7aNJ7Z7E&ab_channel=PeaceWithinWithout)

Shout to the North and the South:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ctc3GqWaV3U&ab\\_channel=francisjustine](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ctc3GqWaV3U&ab_channel=francisjustine)

Give me joy in my heart:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QUd0VwMvCiU&t=52s&ab\\_channel=Radio%26TVmemories](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QUd0VwMvCiU&t=52s&ab_channel=Radio%26TVmemories)

Colours of Day – Lucy Gibson attached

### **Reflection Music**

Ave Maria:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=66zUY8UZn4M&ab\\_channel=Jorgeloves](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=66zUY8UZn4M&ab_channel=Jorgeloves)

### **Let us pray**

Loving God,

We bring before you all who we love; our family, friends and neighbours.

Our worldwide community of siblinghood.

Help us all to live so that we may strengthen and enrich the life of the family and one another.

Help us to build with you the kind of family which accepts and welcomes all.

We thank-you for the gift of loving mothers, and all who care for us.

We thank-you for the dedication of healthcare workers everywhere.

We pray for families devastated and separated by war and disaster.

For refugees, the homeless and families living in poverty.

For those who have family members who are missing.

For peace and reconciliation where there is brokenness.

We pray for all who find today hard. Who remember what might have been.

For all who grieve the loss of a mother, of a child... And we ask for your healing and comfort..

God eternal and loving one,

You gather us as your children.

You comfort and hold us in your warm embrace.

When we hurt your arms enfold us.

When we are afraid your wings protect us.

Nourish and restore us now we pray,

In your name.

Amen.

*We take a moment to lift the prayers of our own hearts before God ....*

Lord hear us: **Lord graciously hear us.**

## **Lord's Prayer (New Zealand Prayer Book version)**

Eternal Spirit,  
Earth-Maker, Pain-bearer, Life-giver  
Source of all that is and all that shall be,  
Father and Mother of us all,  
Loving God who is in heaven:  
The hallowing of your name echo through the universe!  
The way of your justice be followed by people of the world!  
Your heavenly will be done by all created beings!  
Your commonwealth of peace and freedom sustain our hope and come on earth.  
With bread we need for today, feed us.  
In the hurts we absorb from one another forgive us.  
In times of temptation and test, strengthen us.  
From trials too great to endure, spare us.  
From the grip of all that is evil, free us.  
For you reign in the glory of the power that is love, now and forever.  
May it be so.  
Amen.

### **Flowers: A Virtual Posy**



*Close your eyes for a moment.  
What are your favourite flowers –  
picture them - smell them - touch them...  
And virtually receive them with love from us all ☺*

### **Blessing**

The Holy Trinity of God, who gave birth to all creation, bless you.  
Jesus, who became incarnate by an earthly mother, bless you.  
The Holy Spirit of God, who broods as a mother over her children, bless you.  
And the blessing of God Almighty,  
The Father, Son and Holy Spirit bless you and those whom you love always.  
**Amen.**

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord: **In the name of Christ. Amen.**