

PRAYERS AND THOUGHTS FOR MOTHERING SUNDAY

This has to be the most strange Mothering Sunday in my, and quite probably your experience.

We all have very different thoughts about this day, which is so important to families and probably most of us, being an opportunity to celebrate our mothers, even if they are no longer with us. If that's the case, as it is for me, it is a time to reflect on their massive role in helping us become the people we are. And if they are still with us, a chance to let them know how loved and special they are.

For a moment I'd like to look at today's Gospel, from John 19: 25- 27. In keeping with the Season, which is Lent, the run up to Easter, this little passage focuses on perhaps the worst thing a mother can experience happening to her beloved Son, not only dying well before his normal lifespan, but in very obvious agony.

And in these times of social distancing, this is a poignant moment. Clearly Mary (and the Disciple) are isolated from Jesus, they cannot touch or hold him, they cannot offer comfort. The situation feels desolate. As perhaps many of us are feeling at this time, unable to act normally around our friends and families. Grandparents will hesitate to hug their grandchildren, brothers and sisters will be at 2 metres distance, we are not even shaking hands any more. And if a loved one is suffering from Covid-19 we would have to stay at a distance, and maybe even unable to see the person.

As I reflect on our present Isolation, I find the parallel with this Gospel very strong, and maybe this will bring us hope for the future. Yes, we know Jesus died. Completely and utterly, yet we also believe he rose again...we too can live in hope for a future resurrection. We might (well almost certainly) not be celebrating it at Easter this year, but it will come.

Then there is another thing, Jesus establishes a special new relationship between John and his mother Mary. John is to take Mary as his mother, while John is to be her son. Out of the very deepest pain imaginable a new and hopeful relationship is forged. This may well offer us food for thought. We may have to be distant physically, but we can still reach out in care and love to others...family included.

I will finish my thoughts with the Collect for Mothering Sunday:-

God of compassion, whose Son Jesus Christ, the child of Mary,
shared the life of a home in Nazareth,
and on the cross drew the whole human family to himself:
strengthen us in our daily living that in joy and sorrow
we may know the power of your presence to bind together and to heal;
through Jesus Christ your Son, our Lord,
who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
One God, now and for ever. Amen

In Christ's love Alice