

## Year C Mothering Sunday

Today is Mothering Sunday. A day when as part of our Church service we remember before God and give thanks for all who have shown us the love and care of a mother.

From the Gospels many of us have particular words of scripture which speak to us and guide us,

For me one of the most powerful statements in the Bible is this from Matthew

“I was hungry did you feed me, I was naked did you clothe me, I was sick did you care for me, I was struggling did you help me? –

During the past few weeks we have been looking at the Lord's Prayer – unpicking it if you like – drilling down into what it means for each one of us. You see it is a prayer that can so easily become mechanical –so automatic without stopping to think what it actually means. The week before last we focused on “Your Kingdom come, your will be done” - you see doing the will of God is not always doing what you want, but is sometimes stepping out of your comfort zone. It is about God's will acting through us in this world.

In the next few moments I am going to show you a short clip from the Christian charity compassion uk. Three years ago this charity made myself and my family step outside our own comfort zone. After listening to someone speak we were challenged to support and bring alongside and

welcome into our family a small girl aged 6 from Tanzania. This morning as we focus on the love and compassion we have for each other as families – I believe it is the right moment to consider families in other parts of the world.

Click on link below to see the video

[http://www.compassionuk.org/UserControls/mothersday/\\_video/workitu.mp4](http://www.compassionuk.org/UserControls/mothersday/_video/workitu.mp4)

The Compassion charity concentrates on Child Survival programmes which focus on pregnant mums and mums with babies and toddlers, these women are not only getting instruction on nurturing children, health care and nutrition advice but are finding spiritual direction and hope in Jesus.

The love, support and care they receive all add to the release that comes from being found by God. Suddenly their future is looking brighter. Through training, skills are being taught that will empower them to provide for their families for the future.

Proverbs 21:13 says 'If somebody shuts his or her ears to the cry of the poor, he too will cry out and not be answered.'

We have a responsibility to hear the cry of the poor and come alongside the hopeless and the helpless, whether in our local area or in another part of the world.

We can respond to the cry of mothers in the developing world by lifting them up, taking them and their children by the hand and giving them a great opportunity.

Just as God provided a well of water for them to drink, through supporting Compassion they are able to open up wells of provision – education, health care, social development, supplementary food and clothing and the opportunity to ‘see’ the One who sees them.

If anyone feels moved by what they have seen and would like to make a difference then please speak to me or Liz after the service.

Former Compassion assisted children will often testify to the fact that ‘God was with them as they grew up’. Last year I heard a lady about 25 years old talk about how compassion had changed her life giving her hope for the future. She was sponsored by compassion as a child and went onto read medicine, and although working in Europe now sponsors her 6 brothers and sisters through the work of compassion, their future is different because Compassion came alongside them. Their mothers around the world can thank God with immense pride that many of their children are now leaders in communities and some even leaders of nations.

Today we come to church on mothering Sunday – to give thanks for all the good that Mothers bring,

Just think about the great lengths the mother of Moses went to protect him from the cruelty of the Pharaoh. Just picture how different history would have been had she not protected him – It was the mother of Moses who hid him in a bulrushes. This very brave mother changed the pattern of history – she risked her life because of love.

Who knows the name of Samuels mother? She was called Hannah. When her baby was born Hannah called him Samuel, which means “asked of the Lord”. Samuel was an answer to her prayers. As God gave her a child, she promised when he was old enough she would give him to the Lord. She took him to the old priest Eli and let Samuel work for him and for God.

And then lets turn our attention to the most famous mother of all in the Bible – Mary mother of Jesus. Without Mary saying “Yes” to God, Jesus could not have been born. Mary’s conception was special; but then, so was she – favoured above all women. Because of Mary and her obedience to God, the Saviour was able to come into the world. Without Mary saying “yes” he would never have been able to come alongside us, to experience this world in the flesh, to minister amongst us in person – so yes, God clearly valued motherhood very highly. Mary was amazed at the things that were said about Jesus when he was still a baby. She nurtured her Son, and although she was warned that she would suffer because he would suffer, she was loyal to him throughout his mission on earth and even went all the way with him to Calvary. We learn in a family, when one person suffers all share in the pain: mothers often suffer deeply for their children. It is not just sleepless and giving time and attention; but the pain and the heartache suffered – When Mary stood at the foot of the cross and saw her suffering son it must have caused her tremendous pain.

So what can we get from this – that as a Church we know we must be an outward facing Church – a church that is working to create and be a living presence in our community. Work of the Christian charity compassion and other similar charities can evoke in us a response to help those in need .As we reflect and thank God for our mothers today I ask that you hold in your thoughts and prayers the young mothers and children we saw on the video extract. The building has been here for hundreds of years, and will be for hundreds of years ahead - but it is us that make a difference. As we engage with our community it is these qualities such as compassion, of kindness, companionship, helpfulness, thoughtfulness, as well as prayer that will help us to have that living presence. So on this Mothers Day – lets thank God for all they have do, for the examples of Hannah and Mary – the mother of Jesus, and let’s pray for Mother Church.

