



Sixth Sunday of Easter May 10, 2015 B

Happy Mother's Day!

Mothers, we salute you and thank you on this, your special day! May you feel blessed for the way you co-created new life with our divine Creator. We thank you for carrying us in your body for nine months, sometimes suffering much in the process. In one of the Easter Season readings, Paul reminds us: “*You must undergo many hardships.*” Mothers, in the course of your life, you have undergone many hardships in your role as mother. If at the end of the day you may not feel appreciated, know that God who sees all things appreciate the way you model his self-giving love to the world.

If at times you feel you have failed in your role as mother, you must forgive yourself because that is what God and Mary, our Mother, would want you to do. Carrying guilt around is soul-destroying. Say you are sorry to God and to your children and begin anew. If you have a poor relationship with your children or with your own mother, follow the wise advice of the serenity prayer:

*Change what can be changed
Accept what can't be changed
Pray for the wisdom to know the difference.*

Always remember, we are all in process. God is not finished with us yet. So here below we will often mess up and fail others and ourselves. Say a genuine “sorry” and go on—praying for the grace to do better.

What a mom . . .

This reflection is by Jay Cormier.

Brooke had been married for only a year when her life suddenly became a nightmare. The FBI burst into their house at 6 A.M. and arrested Brooke and her husband on charges of fraud and conspiracy. Brooke would soon learn that her husband had used her identity to embezzle tens of thousands of dollars from his workplace. She had no idea.

In an instant, she lost her home and her marriage.

The federal charges were held against her for 90 days. So Brooke went home to her Mom and Dad's. For 90 nights, she slept on their couch—and for those 90 nights, Brooke's mom slept on the love seat, across from the couch. Brooke did not ask her mom to sleep there. She just did.

*Brooke writes about the horrible experience and how her mother helped her through it in an essay in **The New York Times** (April 11, 2011).*

Brooke's mom quietly shared every sleepless night, every meal that went uneaten, every moment of anger and grief and despair, with her daughter.

“Are you OK?” Mom would whisper during those long nights.

“Are you OK?” Brooke would whisper back.

“It was our code,” Brooke writes. “There was no real answer, but asking the question was enough.

“To know that someone loved me so much, was willing to feel my pain so intensely . . . made me feel encased in a bubble of protection. I began to wonder if sadness was this finite thing, a big black mass of which there was only so much in the world. If so, my mother was sharing it with me so that I did not have to bear the full weight. The more she took, the more she was unable to eat and sleep, and the faster her heart raced, the less [pain] there was for me.”

Later, when the charges against her were dropped and she began to rebuild her life, Brooke shared the whole ugly story with her doctor.

“How have you survived this?” the doctor asked.

Brooke thought for a second. “While the charges were held against me, I slept on the couch in my parents' house. I spent 90 nights on that couch.” Brooke paused. “And my mom? She slept for 90 nights on the love seat.”

The doctor blinked, unable to hold back her tears. "What a mom," she said softly, "what a mom."
(Used with permission from Jay Cormier, Copyright 2010 by Connections/MediaWorks. All rights reserved.)

A Mother Gives Her Children Back to God

Happy Mother's Day to all you mothers! Most others frequently fret and worry about their children and grandchildren. The mother who wrote the following piece worried herself sick fretting about her children.

Then a wonderful thing happened. This is a little piece of the story.

The life of a mother is one great adventure. Not a day goes by without surprises. One such adventure that changed my own life and that of our family considerably I want to share with you. I am a mother of five children who are now twenty-one, twenty, nineteen, fifteen, and nine years old. I am a very happy mother now, but that was not always so. There was a time—not so long ago—that I was very unhappy. I realized that I was no longer able to help my children in their problems. We did not understand each other anymore. The children withdrew from my husband and me. The situation reached the point that psychological stress affected my health. I experienced heart failure; during the night I could hardly sleep. The atmosphere in our family was extremely tense.

I prayed much. One day I prayed to the Lord, "Lord, you alone can help. Tell me what I have to do!" And I received the answer, "Give me back your children. I have entrusted them to you for a while so that you can accompany them. But now, give them back into my hand. Don't you think that I can guide them better than you?" And that is what I have done—with much pain and deep joy. Each child individually I gave back to the Lord, with his or her weaknesses and faults, charm and love, hopes and dreams.

How much has changed since then! I am no longer afraid, no matter what happens to my children. If they go along paths which I do not understand, I still am sure: they are held in God's hands. All shall be well.

Something else has changed as well: our family life! Parents and children have found each other anew. Now, during the weekends, our children come home from college not just to get their laundry done, but they look forward with joy to our being together, to our sharing with each other, our experiences and conversations. It seems to me that the Lord has given me back my children in a new way. Thanks be to God!

The following is a prayer that any woman will appreciate even if she has never given birth to a child. If you like it, share it with other women.

Have a very blessed Mother's Day,

Le Sarah

A Prayer for Today's Woman

Show me the inherent goodness and beauty of my womanhood and teach me to rejoice in all its aspects.

Let me see the dignity of my sex so that I shall never permit anyone to abuse, debase or ridicule it.

Show me the wonder of my role as a life-bearer which is not limited to my biological function as a mother but extends to other aspects and situations of my presence in the world; let me recognize my power to nurture, comfort, inspire and guide others as part of the creation process of my life.

Fill me with the desire to build up rather than tear down, to heal rather than to wound, to reconcile rather than polarize, to risk rather than to seek compromise and security.

Help me to see what is of everlasting value in cultural and religious traditions; help me to forge ahead and to be true to my own nature without being hindered by false assumptions of the past or by passing fads of the present.

Let me understand that my femininity is a gift of God to be acknowledged with gratitude and delight; let me know that womanhood is not a situation in conflict with manhood but that both are created equal for the purpose of mutual love and support.

Help me to grow according to my own nature so that I may be able to fulfill my destiny according to your will.

I pray for all my sisters in the world—may they live as your children in freedom and peace. Amen.