



Sixth Sunday of Easter
May 13, 2012 B

Happy Mother's Day!

Prayer for Priests and Vocations

This weekend, we salute, remember and give thanks for all mothers living and deceased, near and far. Here are a few bits and pieces on motherhood.

Examples of inspiring women and mothers

The following anecdotes are from the *Christopher News Notes* (June 1988).

Her name was Eliza McArdle and for her time she was well educated. At the age of 17 she married Andrew Johnson, an unschooled 19-year-old tailor.

She taught him writing and arithmetic and he entered politics, becoming mayor of Greenville, Tenn., a state legislator, governor, vice-president and the President of the United States. As president he bought Alaska from Russia for \$7 million.

A woman who lived in obscurity helped shape history.

Throughout history many women have assumed important roles. Two thousand years ago a Jewish girl from Nazareth was the key player in a unique drama of salvation that is still unfolding.

On a totally different level, in our own time, the civil rights movement was launched when Rosa Parks refused to sit in the back of an Alabama bus.

Where this once was a man's world, it is now a woman's world as well. And Eliza McArdle could well aspire to and succeed in a political career in her own right.

The world is a better place for it. Women such as Rachel Carson, Mother Teresa, Coretta Scott King, Eleanor Roosevelt, Sandra Day O'Connor and Maggie Kuehn demonstrate that women are the equal of men as agents of constructive social change.

Nor is a woman's effectiveness necessarily limited by circumstances. Single women, homemakers, the widowed, the disabled, the divorced, grandmothers, business women—all have a role unique to them. God's work remains to be done, and women are called to do it in equal partnership with men.

Prayerful . . .

"Mary" was 82 years old and bedridden, confined to a Denver nursing home and feeling more and more useless each day. From her bed, all she could see was a tall crane on a construction site several blocks away. To occupy herself she prayed for the workers.

A visitor learned of her prayers and went to the construction site to find out the names of the workers so Mary could make her prayers more personal. Touched by Mary's concern, the workers signed their names to a hard hat and sent it to Mary. Shortly before the work was finished, Mary died. But toward the end she no longer felt useless. And not a single worker was injured on the job.

Homemakers . . .

Mrs. Gloria Pitzer, in Catholic Quote, tells of being watched by her daughter Debbie while doing the dishes.

Debbie commented on how many times she had seen her mother do this, and asked, "Mom, don't you ever get tired of doing the dishes?" Her mother replied, "I'm not doing the dishes, I'm building a home."

Caring . . .

When Kathy Burke of New Mexico finished her training in family medicine, she decided to limit her practice to the disabled and their families. She was told that she wouldn't be able to make a living out of such a specialty.

She went ahead anyway. Now her practice is thriving and her office has become the training ground for people planning to work with the disabled.

Selfless . . .

Mrs. Chessie Harris of Huntsville, Ala., told her family "we've got to move over and make room" after coming across a boy scavenging meat scraps and a girl looking for returnable bottles because they were hungry.

Her family did make room. Two years later Mrs. Harris obtained a boarding-house license. More than 800 children have since found love and shelter with "Mama Harris."

Determined . . .

Because women were not permitted to run in the Boston Marathon in 1967, Kathrine Switzer entered

under the name K.V. Switzer. At the four-mile mark, one race official physically tried to pull her out of the race but was stopped by one of her friends.

Kathrine Switzer finished the race. Then she campaigned for four years to have it opened to women, having decided “to devote some part of my life to changing this situation with women’s sports.” One of her goals: “to show the Olympic Committee that women could and wanted to run.” A marathon and a 10,000 meter race for women have since been added to the Olympics.

Agents of Change . . .

On trips to Mexico, Guatemala, Peru, Ecuador and Bolivia, Mrs. Jessica Linder couldn’t help but notice “how very hard the women work and for how little.” She decided to do something about it.

That something was People’s Exchange International—a way of marketing the handicrafts of Latin American women. Proceeds from the sale of the crafts are given in part to the women in salary; the rest goes into educational programs.

There is no limit to the ability of women to contribute to the solution of problems large and small. With Mary as a model—she who was God-fearing, accepting, courageous, prayerful, concerned for others—they need but believe in their own abilities, appreciating their special gifts and making use of them.

This is what Yahweh asks of you: only this, to act justly, to love tenderly and to walk humbly with your God. Micah 6:8

A Prayer for Today’s Woman

Lord God,

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 creative 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 day.

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

Catherine de Vinck

I thank God today for the many *inspiring women of Ascension Parish* who week after week give of themselves to our parish and wider community.

Some years ago, I wrote the following prayer for Priests and vocations.

Prayer for Priests and Vocations

Jesus, good and gentle Shepherd, I thank you for the men who have heard and responded to your call to priesthood. Place in their hearts a deep desire to love and serve you and the people you have placed in their care. May their word to us be your Word. And may we hear and act on your Word. Protect and guard your priests from false and sinful ways. Keep them in your truth. Help them to grow in holiness. Help us, your people, to love and support your priests by word and deed. Lord of the Harvest, may all those whom you are calling to the priesthood and religious life hear and answer your call. Show us, as a parish, ways to foster vocations. Jesus, bless all Vocations Directors. Help them to discover effective ways to call men and women to the priesthood and religious life. Amen.

Have a blessed Mother’s Day,

