

A Celebration of Mothers

A responsive heart and gentle love, caring attitude, and self-sacrifice - this is a mother. The word mother is the first word spoken by a child. A mother not only gives life to her baby, but also protects it throughout their life.

This Sunday we are honoring our mothers. Motherhood is a wonderful feeling, God has placed in the heart of a woman a motherly love that is sacrificial, selfless, caring, and open. There is a saying, a baby will have a sore thumb and a mother's heart will ache. The mother feels her baby, loves them, and lives through them. Children are happiest when they are being cared for by their mother!

Today, however, there are many challenges and temptations for motherhood as a holy feeling and God-given vocation. Increasingly, you hear about a mother as a businesswoman who has no time for family and children, but has time for business. Is such a woman pursuing the right thing? Whether it is for money, a car, or a house, will it replace the child's laughter and the joy of the mother's heart? No, material possessions can replace motherhood! The apostle Paul says, "a woman will be saved by the birth of children, if she is in faith, love, and holiness with modesty" (1Tim. 2: 14-15). The Lord has called every woman to motherhood. Once upon a time, women were afraid of being childless and today are afraid of having children. Children are God's blessing!

A mother is the soul of the family, she puts great feelings of love and tenderness in her children. Mothers and fathers are role models for their children, because they are brought up not only by word, but by their own example. The Holy Fathers teach that the family is a home church where a man must love his wife as Christ loved the church and even gave His life for her, and his wife must love her husband. Also, today, it is worth reminding children that they too must love and honor their parents. For this is exactly the commandment of God: Honor your father and mother!

Therefore, this Sunday, as we celebrate Mother's Day, the church recalls the responsibilities of motherhood and is pleased to congratulate all women and mothers on this beautiful day, which is celebrated on the second Sunday in May. As everything in May blooms and blossoms, so does your mother's heart always blossom with love.

Happy holiday, dear mothers!

Fr. Serhii Deiak

Fifth Paschal Sunday – Sunday of the Samaritan Woman

A special pearl in Jesus' dialogue with the Samaritan woman is the gentle and delicate tone, based on the tender and merciful love of God for the sinner, who respects the free will of man, never pressures or abuses, threatens, or intimidates.

It is on this day that the Holy Mother Church draws our attention to how we must carry God's love and his light, teaching it to our fellow man and to the whole world. In our lives, we have to communicate with different people who do not always share our thoughts and views. It is often enough that we are not always restrained. Let's see what the Savior teaches us in talking to a Samaritan woman.

Jesus, tired and exhausted from his journey, sat at the well of Jacob and waited for his disciples, who went to the nearest town to buy some food. Seeing a woman coming to the well for water, the Savior looked at her heart and saw that this Samaritan woman needed His help. Jesus kindly asked her for some water to drink. Astonished at the request of Christ, the Samaritan woman could not understand how a Jew could ask a Samaritan for a drink.

The Lord said to her, "If you knew the gift of God (that is, the great mercy of God that He sent you in this meeting) and who is saying to you, 'Give me a drink,' you would have asked Him and He would have given you living water" (Jn 4:10). The Savior calls divine teaching living water. For as water saves a thirsty man from death, so does his Divine teaching of the love of God save man from eternal death and leads to eternal life. Astonished at the request of Christ, the Samaritan women certainly could not fully understand what He meant by the "living water" of Christ.

In speaking with a Samaritan woman in plain language, Christ reveals to us other incredible truths: ... "Whoever drinks the water that I shall give will never thirst;" and "God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in Spirit and truth." In this way, the Lord has broken many of the stereotypes of his contemporaries regarding the attitude of God to man. The Lord spoke to the one who had "five husbands," whom all perceived as a sinner, and the Lord did not reject her, thus showing her Divine love and grace. These stereotypes continue to this day and remain dominant in our time.

We see that this gentle and sincere dialogue with the Samaritan woman filled her thirsty soul with the water of faith and the love of God, helped her to know the true God, and led her to deep repentance and conversion. She later became a preacher of Christ's faith, unrequited and the kindness that her soul longed for.

This story of the conversion of a Samaritan woman shows us the power and greatness of God's love - gentle and compassionate. There is no sin from which the soul of God's love would not be released from captivity, from which God's mercy would not purify it. Not even the worst state of the human soul is too terrible to be repaired by God's love. Jesus Christ tenderly touched the soul of a sinful Samaritan woman, helped her to know the true God, to be free from the bondage of sin, and to feel free and happy.

The special pearl of the Divine Teachings of Christ the Savior is God's love, which is marked above all by the gentleness and mercy towards each person.

May the wells of our hearts always be full of the living water of Christ's truth and love, and may the Lord help us generously share this truth and love with others.

