

Motherhood

- AGNES P. RAJ

“The loveliest masterpiece of the heart of God is the heart of a mother.” – St. Therese of Lisieux

The loveliest masterpiece of the heart of God is the heart of a mother. – St. Therese of Lisieux

A mother is an important role that has been given by God to us as women. Mothers have a unique and crucial role in the lives of their children. Motherhood is a pleasant task. A mother bears a child during pregnancy, feeds and cares for her child during infancy, plays an ongoing role in the lives of her children, whether they are kids, teenagers, young adults, or even adults with children of their own. While the role of motherhood changes, the love, care, nurture, and encouragement a mother gives never change.

In the Bible, a mother is a honored woman, and great stress is laid upon the influence of mothers. Let us see some of the Mothers, Grandmothers and Mother-in-laws of the Bible, their strengths, their faith, their role in bringing up their children and what they teach us today.

Eve

Eve was the first woman on earth, the first wife, and the first mother. She is known as the "Mother of All the Living." Her life teaches us that God wants us to freely choose to follow and obey him out of love. Her life also teaches us not to blame others for our own failings and to accept personal responsibility for what we do.

Sarah – Wife of Abraham

Sarah's loyalty to Abraham resulted in her sharing in his blessings. She became the mother of the nation of Israel. Her life teaches us that when we feel doubtful or afraid, we should remember what God said to Abraham, "Is anything too hard for the Lord?" (Genesis 18:14)

Rebekah – Wife of Isaac

Rebekah was assertive and fought for what she believed was right. Her life teaches us that impatience and lack of trust can sometimes cause a disaster that we have to live with.

Jochebed, the mother of Moses

Jochebed had faith in God's protection for her baby. Only because she trusted the Lord, she was able to abandon her son rather than see him killed. She knew that God would take care of her child. She teaches us to let go and trust God's plan.

Hannah – Mother of Samuel the Prophet

Hannah was a persevering woman. Even though God was silent toward her request for a child for many years, she never stopped praying. She had faith that God had the power to help her. She never doubted God's abilities. She teaches us to never give up, and to praise God for his wisdom and kindness.

Naomi – Mother –in–law of Ruth

Naomi, was a loving Mother-in-Law. Her love for God touched the hearts of Ruth and Orpah through her actions while living as a Jew in Moab. Her love for her two daughters-in-law was so strong that she urged them to stay behind in Moab where they were more likely to find husbands. She continued to provide motherly advice and guidance to Ruth. The strong character of Naomi led to her continued blessing from God. She teaches us not only to love our children but also their spouse.

Bathsheba – Wife of David

Bathsheba was wise and protective. Despite being mistreated, she learned to love David. She was a faithful wife to David. She used her position to ensure both her and Solomon's safety when Adonijah tried to steal the throne. (1 Kings 1:11–31) Her life teaches us sometimes circumstances seem

meaningless to us, but if we keep our faith in God, we can find meaning in life.



Elizabeth – Mother of John the Baptist

Elizabeth was sad but never became bitter because of her barrenness. She had enormous faith in God her entire life. She praised God for giving her a son. Elizabeth was humble, even though she played a key role in God's plan of salvation. Her focus was always on the Lord, never herself. She teaches us not to underestimate God's tremendous love for us.

Anne – Mother of Mary

She taught her Blessed Daughter to read the Holy Scripture, seeing in Her the fulfillment of all its prophecies. She teaches us to be the spiritual mother to our children.

Mary – Mother of Jesus

Mary was the most honored mother in the Bible, the human mother of Jesus. She was a woman of rare strength and obedience. She was the only human being to be with Jesus throughout his entire life — from his birth until his death. She also knew the Scriptures thoroughly. She was a shining example of obedience and submission to the Father's will. She teaches us to rejoice in God's plan, even when we know that it will cost us dearly.

Salome – Mother of the disciples James and John

She is an ambitious person. She was one of the most faithful followers of Jesus to the end. And evidently she handed down a rich spiritual legacy to her sons. It was to her son John that Jesus entrusted His own mother at the end. And it is commonly agreed that James was the first apostle to be martyred. She teaches us to be a faithful follower of Jesus.

Eunice and Lois – Grandmother and mother of St. Timothy

They are the women who strongly believe that there is nothing important in a mother's life than teaching them the scriptures at an early age. Timothy was only 15 years when he began his ministry with Paul and Silas. They both teach us to train our children to have good values.

These few Mothers in the Bible inspire us through their lives and their children's life. Let us take them as our role models in fulfilling our responsibilities as mothers. Rather than being a job wedged among other responsibilities, motherhood is also a vocation. Happy Mothers Day.

A Gratitude Prayer for Mother's Day.

Dear Lord, today I turn to you to give you thanks for my mother. With your own gift of life, she bore me in her womb and gave me life. She tenderly, patiently cared for me and taught me to walk and talk. No one delighted in my successes more; no one could comfort me better in my failures. I am so grateful for how she mothered me and mentored me, and even disciplined me. She gave me my faith, and to know Jesus and his ways. She taught me how to love and how to sacrifice for others. Give her strength and courage, compassion and peace, when she is down and give her hope when she is discouraged. Most of all, Lord, on this Mother's Day, give my mother the graces she most needs and desires today. Bless her this day with your love. Amen.



Mother Mary's Way

As we celebrate mother's day this month I would like to write about my favorite mother in the Bible, our mother, Mother Mary. I like her character very much especially the way she practiced the fruits of the Holy Spirit (love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control) in every action she did throughout her life.

God sent the angel Gabriel to Mary to inform her that she is going to be the mother of Christ but she kept quiet about it. If we are in this situation we would have announced this with a loud speaker to the whole world that "I am the holiest on earth because God chose only me to be the mother of His only son". But Mary did not do like that. She even did not tell anyone about what Angel told her.

Next her endurance. She got conceived before marriage by Holy Spirit. From our life experiences we all know if a woman got pregnant before marriage how her friends, relatives, neighbors and people she met everyday might have treated, humiliated and gossiped about her. Normally, we cannot close our mouth if someone says anything against us but our mother bore everything even the worst humiliation. She never retaliated. As mother Theresa said "You acquire humility only by accepting humiliations. All that has been said about humility is not enough to teach you humility. All that you have read about humility is not enough to teach you humility. You learn humility only by accepting humiliations. And you will meet humiliation all through your life. The greatest humiliation is to know that you are nothing. This you come to know when you face God in prayer."

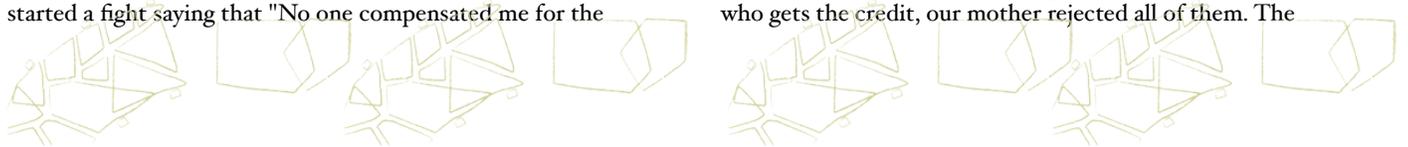
Next her helping mind to others. Jesus' very first miracle (changing water into wine) came because of mother Mary's request. No one told Mary that all the wine was gone in the wedding party at Cana. Somehow she found that there is no wine. Mary said to Jesus "There is no wine". Even though Jesus said "My time has not come" Mary believed Jesus will not say no to her request. So she told the servants "Please do whatever He tells you to do".

Next she has no pride at all. If we look at the above example Mary told no one about the miracle her son did. The master of the banquet does not know, the bridegroom does not know. The servants only know because they are the ones who filled up the jars with water. So the master of the banquet called the bridegroom and said "Everyone brings out the choice wine first and then the cheaper wine after the guests have had too much to drink; but you have saved the best till now" (John 2:10). The bridegroom must have been very confused because he might not have any idea what the master of banquet is talking about. If we are in this situation we would have advertised that "my son is the holiest person in this world because he can do miracles" to the whole wedding party (if possible to the whole world) with whatever communication channel available and we would have started a fight saying that "No one compensated me for the

miracles my son did or my name is missing in the thank you note or I did such a wonderful job for this marriage function to go smoothly, how come no one bothered to say a thank you note for me". But Mary did not even tell the bridegroom about it and she did not expect anyone to thank her or appreciate her or her son because she knew whatever done was to glorify God and not to please any human beings. Our mother herself blocked all the ways of pride by not telling anyone about it then how come she can expect someone to appreciate or thank her.

Next her simple life. Her family lived a very simple life with the income coming from the work of Joseph as a carpenter. If Mary wished she could have requested Jesus for everything needed to live a luxurious life (the so-called "Blessings") for her family but she did not request that. There are two ways we can live simple life. One way is when we cannot afford luxury. The second and the hardest way is we can afford but choose to live simply by giving up everything. Our mother chose the hardest way. In a world where we are constantly comparing & competing with each other to secure a high social status over others, our Mother led her family as simple as possible. We often think people are blessed if they live luxurious life and all the poor people are cursed by God not blessed because they are suffering. If we think that way, the Holy Family (Jesus' family) was not blessed because they were poor and they had to work hard for their daily living. That was also one of the reasons for the Jews not to accept Jesus. All the poor people may be untouchable and unwanted in human eyes but they are precious in the eyes of God. We read from bible that the poor man Lazarus died and the angels took him up to heaven. Lazarus did not go to church every day. He never followed anything religious. He did not pray, fast, read bible every day, never followed any law or never associated with any holiest denomination. It is even a good question to know whether he heard about God or he is a Christian. The only qualification he had was extremely poor. Extremely poor in the sense dogs licked his wounds. It means there was no one to care for him even to clean up his wounds. He was all alone in this world. Such an unwanted & neglected man by this world was carried by the angels and he got the best seat in heaven (Abraham's bosom). So let us help all the poor people we see around our houses and all over the world because one day they may intercede for us in heaven because their path to heaven is easy than us. On the other hand, let us be very clear that it is very hard for the rich to enter the kingdom of God. "Again I tell you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God" (Matthew 19:24). Also Jesus said we cannot serve for two masters (God and money) no matter how hard we try to balance. That is the reason He told the rich young man in Matthew chapter 19 to sell all his possessions and give it to poor to inherit the eternal life even though he followed all the commandments from his childhood.

In this world where everyone is running behind recognition, appreciation, rewards, advertising their works done for God and who gets the credit, our mother rejected all of them. The



cont...

incidents we read from the bible happening around her were the witnesses for it.

Whenever I think of mother Mary the first think comes to my mind is the way she lived. Let us ask our mother to give us whatever needed to practice the fruits of the Holy Spirit in our lives so that we can live the way she lived. Our mother requested her son to help in the wedding at Cana without anyone asking her to do so. But when we ask, our mother will never say no to our request.

Instead of praising our mother by simply being Catholics and arguing with others, let us live as our mother lived. That is the real pride for our mother and for the Catholicism. And we all become the living proof for it and our mother will be very happy than praising her in any other way.

While we honor and pray to our mother for all the blessings and miracles did we ever pray to her that we should live the way she lived or tried to live like her? (We won't because it is very hard for us to give away our hard earned money for someone) Am I a living role model for our mother? These are the tough questions testing our faith and our real affection with our mother. If we say "I need mother Mary only for blessings and miracles and for everything else I am on my own way not in mother Mary's way" then there is no greater insult to our mother than this. I don't have words to describe this kind of love we have with our Mother.

Wish you all a very happy mother's day.

- LEENUS RICH

Saint of the Month – St. Damien of Molokai



Joseph de Veuser, who later took the name Damien in religious life, was born into a farming family in the Belgian town of Tremlo in 1840. During his youth he felt a calling to become a Catholic missionary, an urge that prompted him to join the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary.

Damien's final vows to the congregation involved a dramatic ceremony in which his superiors draped him in the cloth that would be used to cover his coffin after death. The custom was meant to symbolize the young man's solemn commitment, and his identification with Christ's own death. For Damien, the event would become more significant, as he would go on to lay down his life for the lepers of Molokai.

His superiors originally intended to send Damien's brother, a member of the same congregation, to Hawaii. But he became sick, and Damien arranged to take his place. Damien arrived in Honolulu in 1864, less than a century after Europeans had begun to establish a presence in Hawaii. He was ordained a priest the same year.

During his ninth year of the priesthood, Father Damien responded to his bishop's call for priests to serve on the leper colony of Molokai. A lack of previous exposure to leprosy, which had no treatment at the time, made the Hawaiian natives especially susceptible to the infection. Molokai became a quarantine center for the victims, who became disfigured and debilitated as the disease progressed.

The island had become a wasteland in human terms, despite its natural beauty. The leprosy victims of Molokai faced hopeless conditions and extreme deprivation, sometimes lacking not only basic palliative care but even the means of survival.

Inwardly, Fr. Damien was terrified by the prospect of contracting leprosy himself. However, he knew that he would have to set aside this fear in order to convey God's love to the lepers in the most authentic way. Other missionaries had kept the lepers at arms' length, but Fr. Damien chose to immerse himself in their common life and leave the outcome to God.

The inhabitants of Molokai saw the difference in the new priest's approach, and embraced his efforts to improve their living conditions. A strong man, accustomed to physical labor, he performed the Church's traditional works of mercy – such as feeding the hungry, sheltering the homeless, and giving

proper burial to the dead – in the face of suffering that others could hardly even bear to see.

Fr. Damien's work helped to raise the lepers up from their physical sufferings, while also making them aware of their worth as beloved children of God. Although he could not take away the constant presence of death in the leper colony, he could change its meaning and inspire hope. The death-sentence of leprosy could, and often did, become a painful yet redemptive path toward eternal life.

The priest's devotion to his people, and his activism on their behalf, sometimes alienated him from officials of the Hawaiian kingdom and from his religious superiors in Europe. His mission was not only fateful, but also lonely. He drew strength from Eucharistic adoration and the celebration of the Mass, but longed for another priest to arrive so that he could receive the sacrament of confession regularly.

In December of 1884, Fr. Damien discovered that he had lost all feeling in his feet. It was an early, but unmistakable sign that he had contracted leprosy. The priest knew that his time was short. He undertook to finish whatever accomplishments he could, on behalf of his fellow colony residents, before the disease robbed him of his eyesight, speech and mobility.

Fr. Damien suffered humiliations and personal trials during his final years. An American Protestant minister accused him of scandalous behavior, based on the contemporary belief that leprosy was a sexually transmitted disease. He ran into disagreements with his religious superiors, and felt psychologically tormented by the notion that his work had been a failure.

In the end, priests of his congregation arrived to administer the last sacraments to the dying priest. During the Spring of 1889, Fr. Damien told his friends that he believed it was God's will for him to spend the upcoming Easter not on Molokai, but in heaven. He died of leprosy during Holy Week, on April 15, 1889.

St. Damien of Molokai was beatified in 1995. Pope Benedict XVI canonized him in 2009. We celebrate the feast of St. Damien on the 10th of May.

- JOE NATAR



A Gift to all the Children on Mothers Day:

அன்பின் சின்னமாய் உதித்த முத்துக்கள்
பண்பின் எண்ணமாய் வளரும்
மொட்டுக்கள்
எண்ணச் சிறகில் பறக்கும் சிட்டுக்கள்
எங்கள் மழலைச் செல்வங்கள்...

இயற்கையில் மலர்ந்த பூக்களா
இறைவனால் கிடைத்த பரிசுகளா
இனிதாய் பெற்ற வரங்களா
எண்ணி மகிழ்கிறோம் நாங்கள்...

தெரிந்ததை சொல்லித்தருகிறோம்
தெரியாததை உங்களிடமே கற்றுக்
கொள்கிறோம்
முடிந்தவரை முயற்சி செய்வோம்
முமுதாய் அன்பு செய்வோம்

நீங்கள் எங்கள் தோழர்கள்
நீங்களே எங்களுக்கும் ஆசான்கள்
வழி காட்டும் குட்டி விண்மீன்கள்
உலகம் உங்கள் கையில் நம்புங்கள்...

ஒன்று மட்டும் இறைவனிடம் கேட்போம்
எல்லா நலன்களும் எல்லா வளங்களும்
என்றும் உங்களைச் சூழ
பல நூறு ஆண்டுகள் நீங்கள் வாழ!...

Thanks for your love and
Celebrations!

- AGNES MATHILDA



ஆண்டவர் அருளிய தாலந்துகள்!

- கவிதா ரெமி

ஆண்டவரை நாம் கணப்படுத்துகையில்,
அவர் நம்மை கணப்படுகிறார்!
பரிசுத்த ஆவி நமக்களித்த வரங்களை,
மனநிறைவுடன் ஆண்டவருக்கு
ஒப்புக்கொடுப்போம்!

சிரியளவேணும், பெரியளவேணும்,
மகிழ்ச்சியுடன்,
பிதாவிற்காற்றும் பணியினால்,
தேவனுக்கு பிரியமாவோம்,
ஞாபக புத்தகத்தில் இடம்பெறுவோம்!

தேவ காரியங்களை, நாம் கவனிக்கையில்,
நம் காரியங்களை, தேவன் ஆசீர்வதிக்கிறார்
என்பதை மறவாமல்,
பரிசுத்த ஆவி உடனிருக்கும் திடனுடன்,
இறைபணியாற்ற முன்வருவோம்!

தாழ்வுகளில் நம்மை நினைத்தவருக்கு,
ஆச்சரியத்தக்க புதுமைகள் செய்தவருக்கு,
சோர்வுற்ற போது தேற்றியவருக்கு,
அருட்பணி செய்து நன்றி கூறுவோம்

எளியவர்களையே தம் அப்போஸ்தலராக்கி,
மிகப்பெரும் காரியங்களை
வாய்க்கச் செய்தவர்,
நம் இயேசு ஆண்டவர்,
என்பதை நினைவில் கொள்வோம்!

தயக்கத்தை தகர்த்து,
தேவன் அருளிய தாலந்துகளை,
தேவனின் மகிமைக்கே அர்ப்பணிப்பதில்,
பெருமிதம் கொள்வோம்!

WILLING TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE NEWSLETTER?

Writing for the newsletter is a rewarding way to contribute to our BATCC community. Members are encouraged to submit articles of interest directly to BATCC Board (board@tamilcatholic.org). Personal transitions like marriages, babies, awards, college admissions, etc. are also welcomed. Accompanying digital photos and other artwork are strongly encouraged. A# articles, transitions and photos are subject to editing, available space, and the acceptance policy.



INDIAN-FUSION DANCE ACADEMY
4030 LOUVRE AVENUE
SAN JOSE CA 95135
408-238-4034
admin@indian-fusiondance.com

Dove Dental Smiles Shirley Irudayaraj DDS

Modern Office
All PPO Insurances Accepted
Open Saturdays
Senior Discounts
Affordable Monthly Payments

877 W Fremont Ave, Ste L1
Sunnyvale CA 94087
(408) 498-0244
www.DoveDentalSmiles.com