LIVING FAITH
FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

ROMAN CATHOLIC
ARCHDIOCESE OF ST. JOHN'S

THE WORD OF GOD TODAY

John 14:1-12

'Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house there are many dwelling-places. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, so that where I am, there you may be also. And you know the way to the place where I am going.' Thomas said to him, 'Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?' Jesus said to him, 'I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. If you know me, you will know my Father also. From now on you do know him and have seen him.'

Philip said to him, 'Lord, show us the Father, and we will be satisfied. 'Jesus said to him, 'Have I been with you all this time, Philip, and you still do not know me? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, "Show us the Father"? Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own; but the Father who dwells in me does his works. Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; but if you do not, then believe me because of the works themselves. Very truly, I tell you, the one who believes in me will also do the works that I do and, in fact, will do greater works than these, because I am going to the Father.

REFLECTION ON THE GOSPEL

"I am the way." Did you ever stop to think about how these words of Jesus apply to us? People often think that Jesus will be there when we get to our destination, when we get that diploma, take that vacation, buy that house, achieve that milestone. Others think that Jesus dwells in the past, in the lovely memories of friends, of family, and of times long gone. Neither of these are really true. Today, Jesus tells us that He is the way, that He is the road itself. He is how we get to our destination.

The early Christians first called themselves "The Way." They saw themselves not only followers of Jesus, but the road to Him, the way that others learned about and got to know Him. How wonderful it would be if we saw ourselves as "The Way!" Wouldn't it be a wonderful thing if we really realized that we are the way by which others come to God. We bring our loved ones, our co-workers, our friends, our neighbours and—yes—even our enemies, to God. Wouldn't we think differently about ourselves and our role, our place in God's great, continuing story?

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A Mothers' Day activity and prayer for families.

What can we say about Mothers that has not already been said in poems and prayers, in songs and in tributes? What gift could we give them that would ever express the gratitude Mothers deserve? What gesture could we make that would reflect the honour and love that is worthy of them? It is the thoughts and feelings deep in our own hearts that can best delight our Mothers. It is the gift of our respect and admiration of the woman who is our Mother that can most adequately thank her. And it is the warmth of our presence and selfgiving to her that can most truly affirm and honour her.

In whatever way Mother's day is celebrated in your family, take some time to thank and bless your Mother. Perhaps at the end of the day, gather round a meal with your Mother, light a candle or two and each family member name what it is that you value and appreciate about your Mother. Having done so, stand in a circle around your Mother, each placing your hand upon her shoulder or head as you bless her. The blessing that would most deeply touch your Mother would be the blessing that you write as a family.

Use the following as a guide.

May you be blessed Mom, with God's loving support as you give yourself to us in all that you do for us. Mother's Response: Amen

May you be blessed Mom with the wisdom and strength of God's Spirit as you faithfully do what you know to be good and right for us your children
Mother's Response: Amen

May you be blessed Mom with joy and laughter, wonder and delight in our family life together Mother's Response: Amen

May you be blessed Mom with our support, understanding and love in those times when you are tired, stressed and in need. May God always bless you, protect you and be gracious to you. Mother's Response: Amen

Here is a simple prayer for those families and children whose Mothers are no longer with them, through death, or through alienation and separation.

God of compassion and of tender mercy, we remember today our Mother who is no longer with us (Pause in silent prayer). We ask you to bring comfort and healing to us as we grieve and pain at the loss and separation of our Mother. May time bring us, through your grace, peace and understanding of all that we struggle to accept in our lives. We make this prayer in your name, O God of Love. Amen.

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YOU ASKED....

THE EUCHARIST

The holy Eucharist completes Christian initiation. Those who have been raised to the dignity of the royal priesthood by Baptism and configured more deeply to Christ by Confirmation participate with the whole community in the Lord's own sacrifice by means of the Eucharist. (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 1322)

What does the Catholic Church teach about the Eucharist?

The Catholic Church teaches that Jesus Christ is literally, not symbolically, present in the Holy Eucharist—body, blood, soul and divinity. This is called the doctrine of the Real Presence.

What does "Eucharist" mean?

Eucharist actually means "to give thanks." In the Eucharist, we give thanks. That's what **we** do. What's more important is what **God** does in the Eucharist.

What does God do in the Eucharist?

Jesus said, "'I am the living bread which came down from heaven; if any one eats of this bread, he will live for ever; and the bread which I shall give for the life of the world is my flesh.' (John 6:51). At the Last Supper, on the night he was betrayed, our Saviour instituted the Eucharistic sacrifice of his Body and Blood (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 1323). He gave us His Body and Blood; whenever we "do this in memory of Him," He is present. When we receive the Eucharist, we receive Him, are nourished by Him, and become more and more like Him. Thus, we go forward to be His Hands and feet in the world, as missionary disciples.

"The Eucharist is 'the source and summit of the Christian life; 'The other sacraments, and indeed all ecclesiastical ministries and works of the apostolate, are bound up with the Eucharist and are oriented toward it." (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 1324)

This is why we celebrate the Sacraments of Initiation in this order—Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist—because Eucharist is the summit, toward which all other Sacraments flow.

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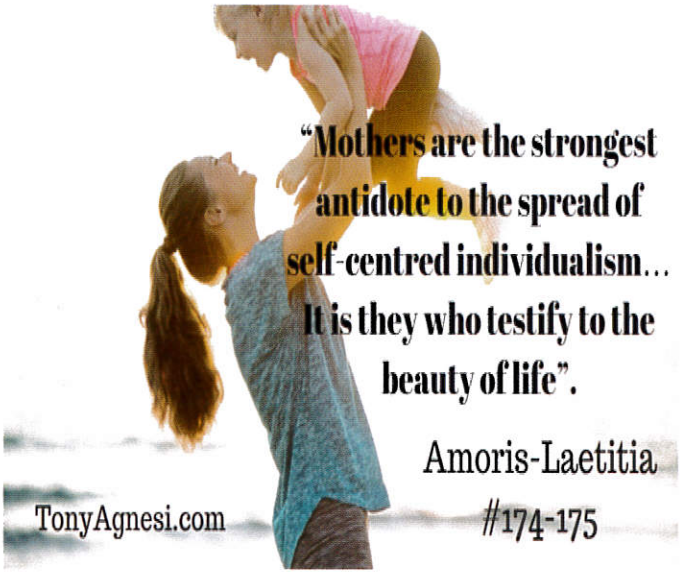
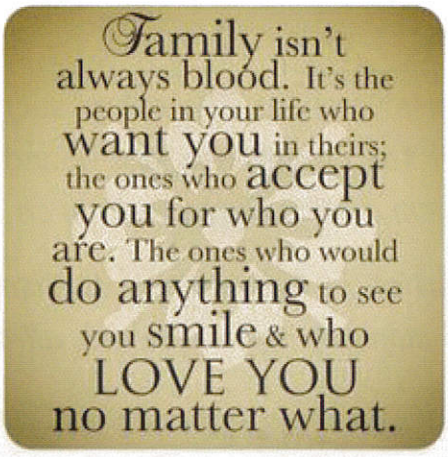
MOTHER'S DAY



MOTHERS AND THOSE WHO ACT AS MOTHERS

All of us are children of a birth mother. Many of us have also been blessed by the presence and influence in our lives of people who have acted in a mothing role, guiding, directing, encouraging, challenging and sustaining us, loving us no matter what.

Today, we give thanks for those who gave us life and those who taught us life. Today, be sure to reach out to your mother... and also to those who have been like a mother to you!



MOTHERHOOD AND MOTHERING

a reflection by Catherine Jordan

Director of Catechesis,
Diocese of Corner Brook and Labrador

Happy Mother's Day! I've been giving some thought to mothering and motherhood and what those words mean. I don't think they mean the same thing. My first thought is that motherhood is a noun...a definite thing, a certainty. It is what it is, a state of being a mother through giving birth. Motherhood is a wonderful gift from a gracious God.

Once the gift is accepted, whether gratefully or not, comes the action of mothering. This is the challenging part; the part that needs constant prayer, watchfulness, guidance and the grace of God. Mothering is caring for, and nurturing the life, or lives, that have been placed in our care. Mothering can be very difficult for those who have no experience in being nurtured, and unfortunately that includes many who have been given the gift of motherhood. That's when we as community have to sometimes mother the mothers and fathers who are lost in the web of the craziness of this world.

How do we do that? How do we as men and women of faith provide the mothering that our Christian family so desperately needs? We do it by being the people that Jesus calls us to be in being open to the Spirit of God and responding to that inner voice that compels us to care for our brothers and sisters; the voice inside that leads us to treat others with love and compassion with a non-judgmental attitude. We are all called to be a mothering people. Are you up for the challenge? Happy Mother's Day to us all!

Thank you to Catherine Jordan for her submission this week!