

SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

Year B: Acts 10:25-26, 34-35, 44-48; Ps 98; 1 Jn 4:7-10; Jn 15:9-17

May 9, 2021

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Perhaps the greatest challenge for us as Christians is to love others as Christ loves them. We all know that Jesus commanded us to love others. As we just heard in the Gospel, He said, “*This I command you: love one another*” (Jn 15:17). But, even more specifically, Jesus said, “*This is my commandment: love one another as I love you*” (Jn 15:12). And the way Christ loved us was with a sacrificial love, a love of self-denial. He said, “*No one has greater love than this, to lay down one’s life for one’s friends*” (Jn 15:13). And that’s what He did for us. He laid down His life for us by offering it on the Cross, to show us how much He loved us.

So, this is the way that Christ says we should love others – as He loves all of us – with a sacrificial love. And, isn’t this the kind of love we often see in our mothers, which is just one of the reasons we honor them today, on this annual Mother’s Day. Mothers often show us an unselfish love, a sacrificial love. They deny themselves, often spontaneously, as if by instinct. They don’t have to think and decide whether to deny themselves and make sacrifices for their children. They often do it spontaneously, as if by instinct. It’s their maternal instinct to deny themselves for their children, and often also for everyone else in their lives. Whether it’s by using their time and energy for others, or even by denying themselves the food that they know others in the family really want to eat, mothers often demonstrate a sacrificial love that may or may not be recognized and appreciated by others. This is how mothers often reflect the love that God has for all of us.

Another way that mothers often reflect God’s love for us is by their constant thinking of us. It seems that mothers are programmed to be thinking about their children all the time – where they are, what they’re doing and whether they’re on the right path. Many mothers are also experts at worrying – they’re preoccupied with thinking about our safety and our welfare. They also think about what we need, when we need a course-correction, and what we need for our long-term happiness. And, isn’t this what God also does for us? He’s constantly thinking about us – about our welfare, our safety, what path we’re on, and what we need to be truly happy in this life. In the detailed care that our mothers show for us, we see a reflection of God’s divine concern for our lives; for, God, too, is preoccupied with thinking about our welfare.

And lastly, mothers are also the ones who often remind us to be faithful to God. They remind us of God's love for us, but they also remind us of our duty to love God in return. Mothers are usually the ones who teach and remind us to say our prayers, and to turn to God when we're in need. All fathers are supposed to do the same thing, but for some reason, mothers are usually better at it. In fact, mothers often have a more religious instinct that they try to pass on to their children. And maybe this is because it takes humility to be religious – to remember our utter dependence on God – and mothers are often better at humility, too.

For all these reasons, we love our mothers, and we honor them today, on this annual Mother's Day; and, we ask God to reward them for their goodness and for all the sacrifices they make for us. We thank God for creating a mother's love, which reflects His own divine love for us. And we thank God for giving us our Mother in Heaven, the Blessed Virgin Mary and Mother of God, who watches over us with a mother's eye. We entrust our own mothers to her maternal care, and we ask her to obtain for us all the graces and blessings we need for our families and for our parish. Through the intercession of Mary, our Mother in Heaven, may we all grow in greater faithfulness to her Son, Our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.