

Mothering Sunday Talks **19-3-22 (SC)**

Talk 1

Now of course today is Mothering Sunday. And in a moment, we are going to hear our Bible reading. And there are three characters in our reading today. Jesus, his mother, and his friend John. Now that tells us something important. Even though Jesus is all-powerful God, and didn't need anything or anyone. And when he became one of us, to rescue us, he surrounded himself with people who cared for him. Even though he didn't need anyone, he received from these people their care.

Now I want to tell you a story. When I first got ordained, when I was all shiny and new, I thought I knew everything. I thought I didn't need anyone. I thought I was very important. Now, one of the great joys of being ordained in your early twenties, is that half the congregation immediately take pity on you, and want to be mother hen. But remember, I thought I knew everything, I thought I didn't need anyone. I thought I was very important.

Well, one Sunday, I went to church for the early morning communion service. And a wonderful lady called Judy was setting up for Communion. Now Judy was chief Mother Hen in the parish. So of course, I made an extra effort to be self-important around her. And she asked as she always did, do you need a hand with anything this morning.

"No thank you, I'm perfectly capable, Judy."

And off I went to the vestry to prepare for the service.

Anyway, as I was getting ready, I started to put on my robes, and try as I might, I could not find the hole for my head. And the more I tried to find it, the more I got tangled up, like a cat in a ball of wool. And when I eventually managed to stick my head through, it was all twisted and got tangled up in my collar.

I had no other option, but to swallow my pride.

"Judy Judy Can I have some help after all?"

Now, I learned a valuable lesson. It seemed, I didn't know everything, I did need other people, and that I was only as important as everyone else. And if Jesus, who really does know everything, needs no one, and *is* important accepted the love of a mother, and the support of a friend... so should we.

So, this Mothering Sunday, think about who the Judys are in your life. Who are the people that have cared for you? Who are the Judys who have shown you the motherly love of the church?

Let's have our reading.

John 19: 25-27

Talk 2:

A moment ago. I told you about Judy. And how I learned a very important lesson about learning to receive other people's care and compassion.

In our reading just now, we heard about how Jesus, even on the cross, was offering his care and compassion to those he loved.

I want to tell you now about another person I met at another church, many years ago.

When I was a teenager, I was walking home from church one Sunday. And I saw Victor. An older gentleman who always got to church early, and sometimes played the organ. And after coffee, he and I left church at roughly the same time. So I started to make some small talk.

I asked him.

"Are you off home for lunch now Victor?"

"Oh yes."

"And that will be with your wife I suppose." I said.

"Well, actually, I'm unmarried."

"Oh, then with your other family, I'm guessing?"

"No, I don't have a family, Simon."

And of course, as a teenager I had all the emotional intelligence of a bag of spuds.

"I'm so sorry Victor ..."

"It's OK Simon, you see, the church is my family."

The church is my family.

On the cross, Jesus was bringing people together. He was connecting Mary his mother, with John his friend. And even now he continues to connect us with his love. And there is a very special name for the network of people joined together by Jesus' sacrificial love. Do you what that name is? The Church.

The Church is the network of people brought together by Jesus' sacrificial love.

So here's a question. Earlier I asked you, who is your Judy? Who are the people who have shown you the motherly love of the Church?

But now I ask you, who are the people like Victor? Who are we in turn, showing the motherly love of the church to? In a sense you see, we should all be like Judy, we all should be like Victor. Jesus has called us into his Church, to love and to be loved.