

THE GOOD NEWS # 5 God Raises Us Up FAMILY SUNDAY

Theme: God Raises Us Up

1st Corinthians 13:1-13

Hello Dear Friends,

Happy Mother's Day! Blessings on Family Sunday May 10th.

I've been pleased to speak to many of you. PLEASE PHONE—519 365 5511—anytime—
I love to get your input--& hear your voices!

We light the Christ Candle:

Hear the WORD of the LORD:

“Her children rise up and bless her; Her husband also, and he praises her,”

(Proverbs 31:28)

This scripture from Proverbs 31 is in praise of a wife & a mother.

And **all of us** want to be blessed and praised. Sometimes, it is hard to receive criticism. We all want to be praised. – and loved just for who we are.

Today our focus is on families and mothers in particular. All of us have mothers—of course!
We wouldn't be here!

They have loved us and nurtured us.--Our scriptures today describe this kind of love-

Jesus loves us & shelters us “as a **hen** does gather her brood under her wings” (Luke 13:31) This is a beautiful image of the mother. She always protects and defends her family – with great love!

Of course, this passage is talking about the “perfect Mom”. Our mortal Moms sometimes fall short--& forgiveness is in order by her & us.

I know for some of my friends, it wasn't their Mom that showed them God's love—maybe it was an Aunt or neighbour—or a Father, Uncle or a Friend that nurtured & cared for them as a special person. God does work often in mysterious ways. But God does always raise us up— if we allow this Holy One into our lives and embrace this awesome unconditional love of our God in Jesus Christ. .

We would sing: **“ I will raise you up on eagle's wings (God speaks to us)
bear you on the breath of dawn
& make you to shine like the sun”**

This captures so well the love of our God.

Today we celebrate Moms & Family. Sometimes it isn't our biological links that we celebrate—But it is always the ones who have loved us—with their whole heart-- unconditionally—with all our flaws, inconsistencies & uniqueness. Each one of us is very special in God's eyes.

As Christians we aspire to see one another as Jesus would see us and welcome us—always—no matter what. How powerful & wonderful this LOVE is!

Let us turn to today's scripture. Those who follow the Lectionary will note, I deviated from the assigned scripture—because it is Mother's Day & Family Sunday.

The 1st Corinthians seemed to be the one for today--

**“Love is patient,
Love is kind,**

It hopes all things, endures all things—Love never ends.” (1 Corinthians 13:1-13)' This passage was written by the apostle Paul. In the ancient world, he was for a short time, the pastor for the people of Corinth. After he left, he wrote this letter to them—the epistle we refer to as 1st Corinthians.

When people become Christians, they don't at the same moment become good and kind people. This may come as a surprise, but conversion to Christ and his ways doesn't automatically furnish a person with wonderful manners and perfect morals. Apparently, the

people of Corinth had a reputation for being unruly, hard-drinking and of questionable morals. Paul wrote this letter to remind them of **the “good news” of Jesus Christ**. It is believed that Paul had received a report from one of the families in the church at Corinth that in Paul's absence, things were falling apart. Hence, Paul wrote this beautiful poem/letter. It is absolutely ‘core Jesus’. – The Gift of Love

“Love is not envious or boastful, arrogant or rude. It does not rejoice in wrongdoing. Love does not look for what is wrong—but rejoices in the truth!”

I have a modern story for today—a true story that talks about this kind of love—in the family. It is entitled, “ Love Is Not Blind”. There are 3 people in this true story : Grandmother Doris, Mom Kate and Mandy the grandchild/daughter. The narrator is Kate, the Mom.

“Mom!” Said Mandy, **“Come look at the sunset!”** My 6 year old came running from the window in the retirement home where my Mom (Grandma Doris) had just been placed. “ This is terrible! You putting me in this—jail!”, said my Mom. At 88, my Mom was now blind. I was trying to raise 2 very active girls, balance 2 jobs, pay the bills and make meals for everyone. I was overwhelmed and I thought for everyone's sake, it was best that Mom/ Grandma be in a senior's residence. This one had a very good reputation. I knew other elders who were actually happy here. One had told me, “Well, the meals are very good and we have several activities each week”.

But my Mom was in a huff, gloomy and not talking to me. The PSW came in with a cup of tea and said, “Mrs. Linton, I hear you like Earl Gray. How about a nice cup of tea? My Mom turned away and the tea was left on the table beside her.

I started to pray silently, “O God , help me. I'm going to cry! I don't know what else I can do. She hates me for bringing her here. But she really can't live alone with her blindness.”

The helper saw my distress and took me just outside the room. “Quit blaming yourself. That won't help either you or your mother. Right now, you have to be firm, but loving. She will adjust. And you are only just down the road—not far away. **She is blessed to have you** that near.”

Then I heard the excited voice of a child, --my Mandy! “Look, look”, she hollered. She had her grandmother's hand and they were at the window in Doris' room.

“It is purple! Real deep purple! --like grapes!”

“And what about red? Is there red too?” I heard an elderly voice ask.

“Yes, there is. It is just like the colour of my bike—the one, you & Grandpa gave me. Do you remember, Grandma?” “Yes, of course, Dear.” Mandy & her grandmother were standing by the window and in the warm sun Mandy had gently taken my mother’s hand and pressed it to the window. “I know, Grandma that you can’t see the red anymore, but you can feel it. And the yellows & oranges.”

My mother smiled and clasped Mandy’s hand. She pulled her grand daughter close for a hug and said, “ **Yes, I can. I can feel the colours of the sunset.**”

Mandy guided Doris back to her chair.

“And when you tell me what you see, well, it makes it all real for me.”

Then she turned to me and said, “Well this quilt you made for me & put on my bed, tell me, what colour is it?” “Your favorite, Mom, rose & lilac.”

From then on, Mandy set the stage with Grandma Doris. She would phone or visit and tell her about the colours—lots of brown at the school. --Yellow of the happy face on the door to the class room. Later when she travelled, she told Grandma about the blue-green of the ocean out east. Her graduation gown for college was black with a yellow rose corsage. When she went to Hawaii, the volcanic sand was black. And when she fell in love, the shade of the hair of the young man that she fell in love with was dark and wavy—just like the old pictures of Grandpa in the photo album.

Well, my daughter Mandy taught me a valuable lesson: I could not give my mother her sight back, or the life she once had, and I had to stop feeling guilty. I needed to focus not on what I couldn’t give her but rather on **what I could give**—my time-- and the colourful sharing that comes from **a love that is never blinded.**

Today, we give thanks for family and those who love & support us. And we pray that we too, may be patient, kind and forgiving with ourselves & others in our daily living.

Thanks be to God for these many blessings!

Amen!

PRAYERS for healing, comfort & courage:

Canadian Armed Forces families who lost loved-ones in the in the recent downed helicopter. All persons on the front lines battling COVID- 19 We pray for ourselves too. Help us to be safe, take precautions & not be in constant fear.

In our faith community: Cheryl Fisher, Dorothy Vogt, Lisa (Downie) Power, Donna Jewett, Larry Saylor Shirley Bolton, Deb Griffith, Luis Pereira.

With love, we remember Brad Martin. (May 12)

PRAYERS for blessing, praise & celebration:

Birthdays for May—Kevin Burgess, Tilley Platt, Thelma Jacques (103 years young) Scott Liberty, Don Reid, Francois Verster, Daniel Kerr, Harold Elliott, John Nurse, Bruce Sinclair, Judy Winter, Susan Arrends, Sharrina Robertson, Ariel Patton, Shirley Robinson, Theresa Bell, Keith Imeson, Xander Herr, Doug Johnson, Bev Coleman.

If I have missed someone, let me know & I’ll get them on our calendar.

For THE MERRY HEART

•England has no kidney bank, but it does have a Liverpool.

*They told me I had type-A blood, but it was a Typo.

•Jokes about German sausage are the wurst.

•I know a guy addicted to brake fluid - he says he can stop any time. •

•I'm reading a book about anti-gravity. I just can't put it down. •

Did you hear about the cross-eyed teacher who lost her job because she couldn't control her pupils?