

## Said Ed - May 11 Mother's Day

As we celebrate Mother's Day this year, I begin these reflections with a familiar quote from the Gospel:

I was hungry and you gave me food,  
I was thirsty and you gave me drink,  
I was a stranger and you made me welcome,  
Naked and you clothed me.  
Sick and you visited me,  
In prison and you came to see me.

In this passage from the Gospel of St. Matthew, Jesus describes the works of mercy that lie at the heart of the Hebrew Bible (cf. Isaiah 58:7). More than that, he expands on Isaiah and makes these good deeds the charter of Christianity. In the awesome setting of the Last Judgement, they are the only things the Lord is interested in.

But who are the hungry, the thirsty, the naked, the stranger? We are; or at least we were. There is one period in our lives when those words fit us perfectly, the time of our birth and infancy.

If we had been given a choice when our birthing moment came, we almost certainly would have said, "Thanks, but no thanks!" We were being asked to leave the small dark aquatic world of the womb, the only world we had ever known, to be thrust unceremoniously into an incredibly larger world, utter strangers, totally naked, and scared out of our little wits. To compound our misery we were given a sharp whack to introduce us into the larger affairs of the human race. We were imprisoned in a tiny body, so preposterously helpless that we were quite incapable of anything but bellowing a protest.

Were we hungry or thirsty? After nine months of intrauterine nourishment we had a gigantic appetite and not the faintest idea of how to satisfy it. But then we met a lady, the first really friendly face in the enormous new world we had stumbled into. She warmed us and calmed us in the circle of her arms, fed us and clothed us and welcomed us. We had met the marvelously caring person called a "mother."

Some mothers are adoptive and some biological but all have one thing in common; they are delightful embodiments of the "works of mercy" that Jesus described. They were the first to teach us how to live by the great charter of Christianity. No wonder Jesus tells them: "Take for your heritage the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." After all, He was once a baby too.

I join all our Staff in thanking all our mothers Happy Mother's Day. We honor you this special day and thank God for the blessing that you are and have been to us.

Have a good week!

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