

Column051020

Companions on the Journey

May 10, 2020

Dear friends,

This is going to be a very different Mother's Day. This annual Day of Remembrance and tribute to our mothers is so often celebrated by gathering together around our mothers, or taking them out for a fine dinner or celebrating them with cards and homemade drawings from the children. Restaurants experience a big day. Florists experience a big day. The travel industry experiences a big day. Not so much this year.

New family traditions will have to be thought up and put into practice this year. That will be difficult but good nonetheless. Our creativity can be piqued. Perhaps the more creative among us can use the Social Media to create special moments for our moms. Poems, songs, skits are all possibilities. Cooking, baking and adapting will all be on display. I was speaking with one of my nieces yesterday and she mentioned that this is the first time in her life when she has not had to purchase a Mother's Day card. Her mom died last November 14<sup>th</sup>. There are a lot of us in that same boat with the aftermath of this coronavirus pandemic.

There will be new matriarchs in certain families because the family matriarch has been called home to the Lord. This May will be a little different. It puts me in memory of Our Blessed Lady (in this her month) when the body of her son was placed in her lap as he was taken down from that bloody cross. Her loss is so real. The deep sorrow in her eyes will be matched by sorrow in other eyes this year. But besides the sorrow perhaps there can also be the hope that lived in Mary's soul even as she held the broken body of her son. Remember those words of Simeon in the Temple when she and Joseph had presented the baby Jesus those many years before. "And you, your own soul a sword shall pierce (the sword of sorrow)."

But there is so much more to Mary than pain and sorrow. She is more than acquainted with both but that is not who she is nor where she lives. She is a woman of faith. THE woman of faith. She is filled with hope because she is filled with love. She is told by the Archangel Gabriel that she is full of grace. And that means that she is in full relationship with God.

My friends, there are not masculine and feminine features in the Godhead. But our human words fail before the mystery of the reality of the Trinity or try to describe the three persons there. We are often forced to use poetic language or even mystical language to describe what is beyond description. Some of the mystics down through the centuries have referenced the inscrutability of God as a kind of Divine Womb (in the interior darkness) from which comes all life. There is at least something there to think about. Out of the darkness—life!

All of us were carried in the wombs of our mothers. All given life in the touch of our God at conception. All brought forth in the moment of birth. To those, our mothers, who conceived us, carried us, brought us to birth, nurtured us, sustained us, comforted us, fashioned us, corrected us, disciplined us, liberated us and blessed us. To the women who did all this let us offer up our prayers to the Living God on their behalf this Mother's Day whether our mothers be with us still on this earth or await our eventual arrival in the kingdom of God. To our Mothers! Salud!

Peace,

Msgr. McHenry