



A Service for Mothering Sunday



Mothers' Sunday traditionally falls on the fourth Sunday in Lent. Since the Sixteenth Century people have been encouraged to visit their 'Mother Church' on this day, either where they were baptised, their cathedral, or a nearby parish church.

As this practice developed, servants were released from duties to visit their families, often some distance away. Here they would have been welcomed by their parents with simnel cakes (decorated with marzipan eggs) and feasting. Since the strict observances of Lent are set aside on Sundays (and today especially) for worship and the Sabbath rest, it is sometimes known as 'Refreshment' or 'Simnel' Sunday.

Rose-coloured vestments are worn on this day, as they are on the third Sunday of Advent; a visible sign of the lighter tone when compared with the usual violet colour of these seasons.

Today we also remember Mothers. This is often joyful but can understandably be a challenging time for some, and we endeavour to minister sensitively to the variety of circumstances in which people find themselves. The focus of our worship is always on the love of God through Jesus Christ. The Church is a community which has the perfect example of Motherhood in Mary, who during her life knew sorrow and sadness as well as moments of rejoicing. Ultimately Mary's faithful trust in God brought redemption to the whole world through Jesus her Son. May the Church persevere in the example of Mary, awaiting the coming of Christ for all, as we look forward to Easter morning together.

*"As a mother comforts her child, so I will comfort you;
you shall be comforted in Jerusalem."*

Isaiah 66:13

Gathering to worship God

Praise God who loves us

All Praise God who cares.

The love of God is a light in the darkness

All Blessed be God forever.

We praise you, our God, for all mothers who have loved and laughed, lamented and laboured as they cared for their children

All Blessed be God forever.

We praise you, our God, for all those who have been like mothers to us

All Blessed be God forever.

We praise you, our God, for Jesus, born of a woman and nurtured in her love, and for Mary, a reminder of your patient, waiting love

All Blessed be God forever.

We take time to remember mothers who are no longer with us; and also those who have nurtured and cared for us.

All Loving God, as a mother gives life, and nurtures her children, so you watch over your church.

Bless all those whose example of love we remember today; and help us, their sons and daughters and friends, to honour their memory.

Heal and restore us, and unite us all in the bonds of mercy, grace, and peace for which we were made.

Amen.

Saying sorry to God

Let us call to mind our sin, our failure to value the love of others and our failure to love as Christ has loved us.

We keep a brief time of silence for reflection

Your love gives us life from the moment of conception.

We fail to live as your children. Lord, have mercy.

All Lord, have mercy.

You call us to do good. We seek our own good.

Christ, have mercy.

All Christ, have mercy.

You hear us when we cry for help. We ignore the cries of others. Lord, have mercy.

All Lord, have mercy.

May the Father of all mercies
cleans you from your sin,
and restore you in his image
to the praise and glory of his name,
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

The Collect for Mothering Sunday

God of compassion, whose Son Jesus Christ, the child of Mary, shared the life of a home in Nazareth, and on the cross drew the whole human family to himself: strengthen us in our daily living that in joy and in sorrow we may know the power of your presence to bind together and to heal; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

Hearing and responding to the Bible

Reading: *Psalm 19:1-6*

**All Gather your little ones to you, O God,
as a hen gathers her brood to protect them.**

1 Jesus, like a mother you gather your people to you;
you are gentle with us as a mother with her children.

**2 Often you weep over our sins and our pride,
tenderly you draw us from hatred and judgement.**

3 You comfort us in sorrow and bind up our wounds,
in sickness you nurse us and with pure milk you feed us.

**4 Jesus, by your dying, we are born to new life;
by your anguish and labour we come forth in joy.**

5 Despair turns to hope through your sweet goodness;
through your gentleness we find comfort in fear.

**6 Your warmth gives life to the dead,
your touch makes sinners righteous.**

7 Lord Jesus, in your mercy heal us;
in your love and tenderness remake us.

**8 In your compassion bring grace and forgiveness,
for the beauty of heaven may your love prepare us.**

Anselm of Canterbury, 11th Century

**All Glory to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning is now
and shall be for ever.
Amen.**

Reading: John 19:25b-27

Sermon

Affirmation of faith

Let us declare our faith in God:

**All We believe in God the Father,
from whom every family
in heaven and on earth is named.
We believe in God the Son,
who lives in our hearts through faith,
and fills us with his love.
We believe in God the Holy Spirit,
who strengthens us
with power from on high.
We believe in one God;
Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
Amen.**

Prayers

Prayers of Intercession are offered, followed by the Lord's prayer:

As God's children, and heirs with Christ
we cry in the Spirit, 'Abba', Father.

**All Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Lead us not into temptation
but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours
now and for ever.
Amen.**

The blessing of the flowers and the peace

The flowers are blessed

Praise God who loves us.

All Praise God who cares.

Through the prophet Isaiah, God says,
'As a mother comforts her child, so I will comfort you.'

The peace of the Lord be always with you

All and also with you.

Final prayer and blessing

Praise God who loves us.

All Praise God who cares.

For the care of Mary the mother of God;

All Thanks be to God.

For her patience and perseverance;

All Thanks be to God.

For God's love when we wander far from the Way;

All Thanks be to God.

For the hope in Christ which is our inheritance;

All Thanks be to God.

For the nurturing we receive by faith;

All Thanks be to God.

May God, who gave birth to all creation, bless you

May God, who became incarnate by an earthly mother, bless you

May God, who broods as a mother over her children, bless you

May almighty God bless you in the name of the Father, the Son
and the Holy Spirit, now and for ever.

All Amen.

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

All In the name of Christ. Amen.

St Bart's Church - Stay Connected

Find out what we're up to at:

Website: www.stbartholomews-wb.com

Facebook: www.facebook.com/StBartholomewsChurchRWB

Instagram: [@st_barts_rwb](https://www.instagram.com/st_barts_rwb)

Keep in touch, or let us know if any help is needed at:

Telephone: 01793 853272

Join our email list for updates and information:

Email: churchadmin@stbartholomews-wb.com

Keep Praying With Us

'Prayer continues - but in our hearts and homes, not in our churches.'

Why not join us using this Church of England link:

<https://www.churchofengland.org/prayer-and-worship/join-us-service-daily-prayer>

(If you would like to follow along on your smartphone or tablet then the Daily Prayer app is available for download from the Google Play and Apple stores:

<https://www.chpublishing.co.uk/apps/daily-prayer>)

Listen out for our own audio recordings here:

<https://soundcloud.com/user-173253054>

And watch out for the occasional live-streamed service on Facebook:

www.facebook.com/StBartholomewsChurchRWB

The church remains open for private prayer between
9am - 4pm every day.

Please observe all the protocols about hygiene, touch and physical distancing. Thank you.