

NURTURED IN LOVE : CELEBRATING ALL WHO MOTHER

Read Exodus 2:1-10 & John 19:25-27

These readings are just two of many illustrations within the Bible demonstrating some of the many facets of mothering. Many Bible texts make clear that good mothering is a synonym for the always loving actions of our God (eg Isaiah 66:7-13). Of all the facets of good mothering, these notes will focus on **love, protection, guidance** and **sacrifice**. It is important to state from the beginning that if mothering was only done by mothers, it would be very hard to ensure that everyone received



the nurture we all need, which is certainly God's intention for us all. Always the best place to start celebrating mothering is with **love**. Let's remind ourselves of God's definition of love. **Read 1 Corinthians chapter 13**. Whilst this reading was primarily directed to teach and guide how we are to love; **reflect also, that it is a statement of how God loves us. Are there aspects of this passage that cannot be applied to the love of a mother? If so, which?**

No question that **protection** is an important aspect of mothering; there are examples in all of nature, both human and animal, as depicted in the picture above. **Can you recall instances of receiving protection in your early life, from those in a mothering role to you?** One of the many good developments in recent times is the expectation and acceptance that mothering is no longer a role exclusively reserved for females. This is perhaps particularly relevant when considering protection, as this aspect might well have been primarily considered a male roll. **But to which aspects of mothering, if any, do you think females are instinctively better equipped?**

One of the most beautiful yet scary aspects of being a mother is that, in most cases, a mother has the complete trust of the child, and thereby is best placed to provide **guidance**. This aspect alone makes mothering one of the most valuable and responsible roles life can offer. I'm confident that most of us can recall with great affection some wise words given by our mothers. **What 'pearls of wisdom' from your mother, which have held you in good stead all your life, would you like to share with the group?**

A mother's love is **sacrificial**, which brings us truly to the synonym with the love of God. When required, a mother will not hesitate to put her child's needs before her own. **Is this the image of God shining through, the image in which we have been fathered by God?** As we mature our understanding of, our view of, our respect for, our mothers, also matures. **Do you feel this maturing has enabled you 'to know' your mother better? Those of us who can, let's take some time to sing the praises of our mothers.**

Prayer: *Loving Father, we give you thanks for providing our mothers and others in a mothering role, who have loved us, protected us, guided us, and sacrificed their own needs for our benefit. We recognise, once again, your hand at work. Amen*