

By: Rev. Mark Breese

Pastor Mark is the Agency Minister and the Director of Ministry & Community partnerships at Community Missions.

Mothers, Love, and Laughs

I've been wondering what to do about mother's day for the past couple of weeks. Taking my wife out to a dinner or a movie can't happen right now. Making sure to have a nice day at home and doing all the cooking doesn't work because, well, all we are right now is home—and I normally do all the cooking anyway!

Then there is my mother. I will call of course, and I would like to see her, but she is in an assisted living home, and they are not allowing visitors right now. I would still go visit, stand outside and talk to her through a window, but she is a nine hour drive away from me.

Many, many people are in the same situation, and it's hard. What are all of us sons and daughters and husbands to do?

For myself, and I think for all of us right now, this is the Mother's Day to dig deep and really reflect on what our mothers, and motherhood in general, means to us. So, by way of example, I'm doing just that in this, a reflection about the two mothers I know best.

My mother, Margaret, did endless things for me, but here is what stands out most when I really think about it. My mom always listened, with real interest, to my endless talking and fanciful embellishments of my day when I was young. She showed me what it meant to be committed to a task even when you didn't want to do it—a lesson I am still trying to learn to her satisfaction, I would say. She taught me what it is like to give, even when you get nothing in return. She taught me how very important the small things, the small kindnesses are in building and nurturing relationships.

Some Applicable Verses For My Mother's Day Reflection



“Her children rise up and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praises her: ‘Many women have done excellently, but you surpass them all.’”
– Proverbs 31:28-31

“She opens her mouth with wisdom, and the teaching of kindness is on her tongue.” – Proverbs 31:26

“Above all, keep loving one another earnestly, since love covers a multitude of sins.” – 1 Peter 4:8

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Now, to be sure, parents are never perfect. None of us are, and that is true of my mom. But she was pretty darned close!! She got mad sometimes, but mostly only when I deserved it. She didn't always have the right answer to my troubles, but she always *tried her hardest*. And even though she was not perfect, my mother (and father) most significantly taught me what it takes to give love even when you don't feel like you have it inside to give—OR when the person you love lets you down. I know she would never say it, but there were lots of times I let her down, yet she never let that get in the way of her love. She gave me life and taught me what loving others is like, what it can be when we let love be our goal. It is, I think, part of what let me begin to understand what God's love is like.

And weirdly, she taught me how important a good laugh is—like the actual way a laugh sounds when it is genuine. My mom has the second most perfect laugh in the world!

The other mother I know best is my wife, Sandra. I know it's irrational to say this, but I don't know anyone who loves her children more. As a mother she taught me so much about love. Sandra always made the hard decisions—ones I could not make as a father. So much more intelligent than me, she could think layers and layers deep in those split second decisions, especially when the kids were little and we, or at least I, had no clue what to do.

Most of all, no matter what struggles Sandra faced, she always found love to give them. She deliberately gave up so much personally because our two children mean more to her than anything else. I believe it was, and is, the absolute fierceness of her love for our children, that let her do that, and so be the one pulled them through some pretty tricky times. It never ceases to amaze me what her love for them lets her accomplish, and in turn, has let our kids accomplish. The fierceness of her love has taught me so much.

And wonderfully, Sandra has *the* most perfect and beautiful laugh in the world. Sincere and easy when it comes, and filled with delight. If Sandra were not so wonderful and beautiful in so many ways, I would still have fallen in love with her, married her, and raised children with her just for her laugh! I have probably done her a big disservice in life because I *am not* a funny person. Well, I think I'm funny, but you know how those kind of people are.

My mother and Sandra and are not perfect parents, nor were my dad and myself. Believe me, there have been some epic parenting fails all around, especially from me. But Mom, you were and are the best mother I could have ever wanted. Sandra, I could never have dreamed of a better mother for my children because you make up for all my failings as a father.

So, Mom, Sandra, thank you for what you both have taught me about love—and the deep significance, importance and blessing of having a wonderful laugh.

Happy Mother's Day!
Mark

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