MOTHERING SUNDAY

A version of a Service of The Word for Mothering Sunday which may be used on its own or adapted for use with prescribed services.

GATHERING IN GOD'S NAME

GREETING

The Lord be with you.
And also with you.

SENTENCE

As a mother comforts a child so will I comfort you, says the Lord. Isaiah 66.13

INTRODUCTION

For many years the Fourth Sunday in Lent has been observed as Mothering Sunday. The tradition arose from a sentence in St Paul's Letter to the Galatians, which for many centuries was read in the Epistle of this Sunday: in it St Paul writes of "Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all". So, on this day we give thanks to God who gives us New Birth, and for the Church which, like a mother, nurtures us in the life of the Spirit. We also give thanks for our own human mothers, and for all the qualities of mothering, given and received in this congregation.

HYMN

CONFESSION

Let us confess our sins to God our Father

Almighty and merciful God
we have sinned against you,
in thought, word and deed.
We have not loved you with all our heart.
We have not loved others as our Saviour Christ loves us.
We are truly sorry.
In your mercy forgive what we have been,
help us to amend what we are,
and direct what we shall be;
that we may delight in your will
and walk in your ways;
through Jesus Christ our Saviour. Amen.

The priest says

Through the Cross of Christ,
may God have mercy on you,
pardon you, and set you free.
Know that you are forgiven and be at peace.
May God strengthen you in all goodness,
and keep you in life eternal. Amen.

Stand

O Lord, open our lips:
and our mouth will proclaim your praise.

O God, make speed to save us:
O Lord, make haste to help us.
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.

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 our Lord. Amen

Amen.

THE MINISTRY OF THE WORD

Praise the Lord.  
The Lord's name be praised.

PSALM

Psalm 27.1-6 or 34 or 84 or 87 or 122 or 139. 1-18

READINGS

First Reading: 1 Samuel 1. 20-28 or Proverbs 4. 1-9 or Proverbs 31. 10-31 or Micah 4. 1-5  
Second Reading: Ephesians 5. 22-6. 4 or Colossians 3. 12-17 or 2 Timothy 1. 3-10  

CANTICLE

THE SONG OF OUR ADOPTION Ephesians 1. 3-6

1 Blessèd are you, God and Father of our Lord | Jesus | Christ:  
you have blessed us in Christ with every spiritual | blessing • in the | heavenly | realms.

2 Even before the world was made you chose us to be | yours in | Christ:  
that we should be holy and | blameless | in your | sight.

3 In love you destined us for adoption as your children | through Christ | Jesus:  
such was your | pleasure | and your | purpose,

4 to the praise of your | glorious | grace:  
which you have freely given us in | your beloved | Son.

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.

or

THE SONG OF HANNAH 1 Samuel 2. 1-4,7,8

These words may be used as a refrain: My heart exults in the Lord: my strength is exalted in my God.

1 My heart exults • in the | Lord:  
my strength is exalted | in my | God.
2 There is none holy like the Lord:
there is none beside you, no rock like our God. R

3 For you O Lord are a God of knowledge:
and by our actions are weighed.

4 The bows of the mighty are broken:
but the feeble gird on strength. R

5 You Lord make poor and make rich:
you bring low and you also exalt.

6 You raise up the poor from the dust:
and lift the needy from the ash-heap. R

7 You make them sit with princes:
and inherit a seat of honour.

8 For yours O Lord are the pillars of the earth:
and on them you have set the world. R

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.

or

A metrical version of MAGNIFICAT (e.g. Tell out my soul)

THE SERMON

THE RESPONSE

THE APOSTLES' CREED

A symbolic act like children presenting flowers to mothers and other adult women in the congregation,
drama or mime may be included at some stage. But care needs to be taken that minority groups are not
ignored e.g. single people, those unable to have children, adopted children and orphans.

THE PRAYERS

These may include some of the following:

THANKSGIVING

We thank God for giving us others to share in our lives:
For parents, and the love which brought us to birth:
We praise you, O Lord;
and bring you thanks today.

For mothers who have cherished and nurtured us:
We praise you, O Lord;
and bring you thanks today.

For fathers who have loved and supported us,
We praise you, O Lord;
and bring you thanks today.
For brothers and sisters with whom we have shared our home:
We praise you, O Lord;
and bring you thanks today.

For children and their parents:
We praise you, O Lord;
and bring you thanks today.

For other relatives and friends, who have been with us in our hopes and joys and times of sadness:
We praise you, O Lord;
and bring you thanks today.

For all who first spoke to us of Jesus, and have drawn us into the family of our Father in heaven:
We praise you, O Lord;
and bring you thanks today.

Help us to live
as those who belong to one another,
and to you, our Father, now and always. Amen.

or

The Thanksgiving in THE BOOK OF COMMON PRAYER

Almighty God,
we praise you for the blessings brought to the world through your Church.
We bless you for the grace of the sacraments,
for our fellowship in Christ with you and with each other,
for the teaching of the Scriptures, and for the preaching of your word.
We thank you for the holy example of your saints,
for your faithful servants departed this life,
and for the memory and example of all that has been true and good in their lives.
Number us with them in the company of the redeemed in heaven;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

INTERCESSIONS

For mothers.

Lord Jesus, you know well the blessing an earthly home can bring:
Receive our thanks for all the love we have received in our homes,
especially from those who have nurtured us from our earliest years.
Hear our prayers for mothers everywhere,
that they may never lose heart nor ever be taken for granted,
but receive from their children the honour and love you showed to your mother, Mary,
even as you were suffering on the Cross.
Bless and keep them all,
for your love's sake. Amen

For those in need

Remember, O Lord, all those in need:
people with no good food or proper clothes,
no home of their own, or no work to do;
those who have neither family nor friends
and no knowledge of the your love.
Supply their needs.
Bless those who try to help them
and bring us all to trust in you.
We ask this is Jesus' name. Amen.

For those who live alone

God our Father,
we ask you to bless all who live alone,
those who have lost their partner in marriage,
those who have never married,
those whose families are grown up and away from home
and those who have outlived other members of their families
and many of their friends:
Be with them to assure them of your love
and of their value to you every moment of their lives,
and enable them to rejoice in the fellowship of your Church
on earth and in heaven;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

A prayer which may be said by children together
or repeated phrase by phrase after a Sunday school teacher or other person.

Father in heaven,
bless all mothers
and those who look after us in our daily lives.
Make us grateful for their goodness
and thankful for their care.
Help us to respond to them in loving obedience;
following the example of Jesus, your Son, our Lord. Amen.

If the service is Holy Communion and elements from the above have been included,

If Holy Communion One is to follow it begins with

'Lift up your hearts...' (page 186)

If Holy Communion Two is to follow it begins with the Peace (page 207)

The Blessing below may be used.

If there is no communion the service may conclude with the LORD’S PRAYER, announcements, and collection. The Blessing below may be used.

Suitable hymns may be used at various places following the Creed.

GOING OUT AS GOD’S PEOPLE

BLESSING

May the Lord who brought us to birth by his Spirit,

May the Lord who provides for all our needs
sustain us day by day. Amen.

May the Lord whose steadfast love is constant as a mother's care,
send us out to live and work for others. Amen.

And the blessing of God Almighty.
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be with you and remain with you always. Amen.