

## Homily on Mary, Mother of God

One day a boy said to his father, Daddy, Daddy, I want to get married! The father said, for that my son, you have to have a boy and a girl. The son responded, I've found a girl. Who? asked the father. The son replied, my grandmother. Let me get this straight, the father said. You want to marry my mother? You can't do that. Well, why not? the son says. "You married mine!"

Today we celebrate the Motherhood of Mary. In most cultures motherhood is held in high respect. There is an awareness that we not only begin our lives totally dependent on our mothers, but we also go through most of our lives with an assumption that our mother will always be there for us. Mothers stand for home, security and love, even when they struggle to live up to such an ideal. Without this bedrock of support, both families and societies fragment and lose their way. Motherhood is a very high calling. What relationship can ever replace the love of a mother ?

There is no doubt that motherhood is a very high calling. But, to whom can mothers look as the real model of motherhood? Today's modern culture offers many role models through television, movies and women's magazines. However, often these role models are either all together wrong or they offer a very limited and unrealistic view of true motherhood. All mothers who wish to be true to their high calling need only look to the woman who became the greatest mother of all. Born into humble surroundings, she was called by God to be the mother of the Son of God. Mary is the mother not because she gave birth to Jesus but she stood with him in all his ups and downs, contemplating, considering and holding in her heart all that happened. Mary's response to all the demands was one of profound reflection. She affirmed her obedience to the call of God and lived out her vocation throughout her entire life. Mary, the mother of Jesus, our Blessed Mother, is the true model of motherhood.

A son said to his Mum, Mum teacher was asking me today, if I have any brothers or sisters who will be coming to school."Mum: "That's so nice of her to take such an interest in you. So what did she say when you told her that you are the only child, my dear?"Son: She just said "Thank goodness!" Motherhood is exactly what I thought it would be, said no one ever. Mothers hold their child's hand for a moment and their heart for a lifetime.

George Washington once said, "My mother was the most beautiful woman I ever saw. All I am I owe to my mother. I attribute all my success in life to the moral, intellectual, and physical education I received from her." Abraham Lincoln spoke similar words when he said, "All that I am or ever hope to be, I owe to my angel Mother." We live in a world where actions speak louder than words. We are measured by our achievements in terms of what we produce. One aspect of Mary's life that has particular meaning and inspiration for many mothers today is the profound suffering that she endured during the passion of Our Lord. The **Stabat Mater** - Mary stood at the foot of the cross. Divorce, separation, single moms, widows, mothers forced to work out of necessity, grandmothers raising grandchildren, prodigal children and prodigal grandchildren, are realities that cause deep, daily suffering for many women. All mothers need to find in Mary, our Blessed Mother, the faith, hope, love and fortitude to stand firm at the foot of the cross. All suffering has power when we unite our suffering to the cross of Jesus. Take your suffering, united to the suffering of Jesus, and offer that suffering for your children and grandchildren. Give to your own what you have - interest, accountability, and the courage to work hard. Today it is January 1st. Another day and another year has begun. The dawn of the New Year offers us Hope in the darkness of the chaos in the world. God promises a future filled with hope. The life and example of Mary should inspire us to keep our hopes alive and live optimistically. "May God fill you with joy and peace in this new year.