



6<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter

10<sup>th</sup> May 2026



*Happy Mother's Day*

*Jesus promised "I will never leave you"*

A very Happy Mother's Day to all of our precious mothers, and indeed all of those who care and nurture others, so many people take on a "mothering" role in our communities, bless them one and all. I pray that your day will be filled with the peace and love of our Lord as we gather with friends and family. Unfortunately, this gathering is not always possible, and so Mother's Day is not a time of joy and celebration for everyone. We need to be sensitive to others' situations.

We see today that Jesus has certainly taken up a mothering role with His disciples and followers since his resurrection, caring for them and providing for their ongoing role as they plant and grow His church. We hear about Jesus preparing His disciples and followers, as He promises them the gift of the Holy Spirit. Yet another experience for them, revealing the incredible love that Jesus has for His people in this new mystery that they will experience.

Since the death and resurrection of Jesus over these past weeks of Eastertide, it has certainly been a roller coaster ride for them, a whole new way of experiencing Jesus and his miraculous gifts He has given them along the way.

This amazing love that Jesus has for his people, and this includes us of course, is sometimes best understood by comparing it to the love that parents have for their child or children. However, Jesus' love is found to be even greater than a parent's love, but at least we have something to compare, something to help us understand the reality of our Lord's love for us.

Parents love their children unconditionally, at times we may not always like or agree with what they do, especially as young adults, but we still love them, we have an unbreakable bond with our children. And this is how God regards us, he loves us so much, so much that he gave His Son for us, so that we are forgiven and made whole once more.

I can remember during my Theology training, Father Stephen Williams spoke to us about love and baptism, and saying what a privilege it is that parents and families will bring their most treasured possession, their tiny new baby to be baptised, often by people they don't know, how powerful is the Love of Christ that people are drawn to the church for baptism.

In non-churched families often grandparents or other relatives may insist that the child is baptised! Jesus will do anything to lead His children back to the fold and we always acknowledge this.

I must add that some families who come for baptism are not prepared to make promises on behalf of their child and therefore decide to have a blessing of the child instead. We would never refuse baptism, however the parents need to be prepared to make promises on behalf of their child and some parents don't feel that they can do this.

So we hear many words of love and encouragement as Jesus prepares His followers for their journey ahead, which proves to be very difficult, as the church grows and spreads across all nations.

As I mentioned, Jesus' love is at the forefront once more. Loving Jesus means keeping His commandments, the relationship between love and faith is a common theme in John's Gospel. The basic requirement is to believe in Jesus as the revelation of the Father, and then to enter wholeheartedly into the divine communion of love to which faith is the gateway, and of which love for His brothers and sisters is the leading expression.

Jesus' presence had provided His followers with guidance, comfort and strength in the face of hostilities, and now, even though Jesus is leaving them, He says He will not leave them as orphans, He will ask God the Father to give them the Holy Spirit, Who will remain with them until the end of the age. In future situations the Spirit will take over the role of Jesus in their lives.

The world will not physically see the Spirit, since the Spirit is not physical, nor will the world have the Spiritual capacity to detect the Spirit in the disciples. But the disciples will recognise the Spirit's presence both in their communal life and their individual relationship with God.

How believers today recognise the presence of the Spirit within their community, and individually is an interesting question.

Experience of the Spirit is not exclusively for the members of the Charismatic movements. The Ignatian spiritual tradition of entering into a program of spiritual exercises and promoting a life attuned to the will of God, rests on the prompting and tugs of the Spirit consistently operative in people's lives, this can be detected through proper direction and discernment.

Closer to home, our tradition encourages the practice of meditation, of quiet time with Jesus, of reading the scriptures and developing an awareness of the Spirit surrounding us.

It is a difficult thing to put into words, this connection we have with the Spirit, this difficulty brings us back to faith. I think because we are human, we are inclined to expect concrete evidence of the Spirit around us, and this is not always the case. The Spirit comes to us through knowledge from the scriptures, listening to the word of God and therefore understanding the Triune God, three in one, Father, Son and Holy Spirit and their role in the lives of our ancient ancestors and of course us, as the people of God.

I encourage you to continue to spend quiet time with Jesus, to learn to meditate and still our ever babbling thought processes, not an easy thing to do, as I have often referred to.

I would like you now to share with the person next to you, only if you feel comfortable, how you, as an individual experience the Spirit in your lives. Just take a few minutes to share.

Ask, any experiences that you might like to share?

AMEN.