

# POCKLINGTON GROUP OF CHURCHES

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## THE BULLETIN - READINGS

**11 March, Lent 4, Mothering Sunday**

### **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 your Son our Lord,  
who is alive and reigns with you,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever.

(or)

God of love, passionate and strong, tender and careful:  
watch over us and hold us all the days of our life;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

### **1 Samuel 1:20-end**

In due time Hannah conceived and bore a son. She named him Samuel, for she said, 'I have asked him of the LORD.'

The man Elkanah and all his household went up to offer to the LORD the yearly sacrifice, and to pay his vow. But Hannah did not go up, for she said to her husband, 'As soon as the child is weaned, I will bring him, that he may appear in the presence of the LORD, and remain there for ever; I will offer him as a nazirite for all time.' Her husband Elkanah said to her, 'Do what seems best to you, wait until you have weaned him; only - may the LORD establish his word.' So the woman remained and nursed her son, until she weaned him. When she had weaned him, she took him up with her, along with a three-year-old bull, an ephah of flour, and a skin of wine. She brought him to the house of the LORD at Shiloh; and the child was young. Then they slaughtered the bull, and they brought the child to Eli. And she said, 'Oh, my lord! As you live, my lord, I am the woman who was standing here in your presence, praying to the LORD. For this child I prayed; and the LORD has granted me the petition that I made to him. Therefore I have lent him to the LORD; as long as he lives, he is given to the LORD.' She left him there for the LORD.

### **Colossians 3:12-17**

As God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience. Bear with one another and, if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other; just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom; and with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God. And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

### **Luke 2:33-35**

And the child's father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him. Then Simeon blessed them and said to his mother Mary, 'This child is destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be opposed so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed - and a sword will pierce your own soul too.'

### **John 19:25b-27**

And that is what the soldiers did.

Meanwhile, standing near the cross of Jesus were his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing beside her, he said to his mother, 'Woman, here is your son.' Then he said to the disciple, 'Here is your mother.' And from that hour the disciple took her into his own home.

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Readings for 18 March, Lent 5, are: Jeremiah 31:31-34; Hebrews 5:5-10; John 12:20-33</b></p>
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### **Mothering Sunday has pain as well as joy** *by Rodney Nicholson*

A poem about Mothers hung on my grandma's wall. I still remember some of the words from over fifty years ago. It began with: "It's a wonderful thing a mother" and ended with: "and the only bad thing she ever does to you is to die and leave you". Maybe as a child I was disturbed by the thought of my mother dying. Little did I know then that, after a healthy life, she would spend her final years in care, suffering severely from Alzheimer's, with the result that we wanted her to die and be with Christ and with those whom she had loved. This happened when she was 96.

Mothering Sunday for many is a day when much love is shown. It is also a time for remembering much-loved mothers who are no longer with us. It can also be a time to think of children down the years who have been robbed of the one who gave them birth. In my own family I am aware of my brother's children who lost their mother to cancer when she was 50, leaving a son still at school and two older children who were students.

I think of C.S. Lewis, creator of Narnia, who at 9-years-old was in bed with a raging toothache, crying for his beloved mother, only to be told that she had died. The future professor of English literature and renowned Christian writer sobbed bitterly and bore that loss throughout his life. Happily, even though he and his father had little contact with each other, they enjoyed a glorious few weeks together just before his father died.

Mothering Sunday also calls us to remember children who have lost their mothers – and fathers – in the carnage in Syria, in the famine in Yemen, or in the abominable cruelties in South Sudan and the Democratic Republic of Congo. Many meals of French or other attractive cuisine will be enjoyed this weekend. France is indeed a wonderful country. It also has its darker side, if we think of the refugees cowering in the woods around Calais with little hope of kindness from the UK, or those Christian refugees whose makeshift, yet treasured church in the “jungle” was destroyed by the French authorities.

May our mothers know today that they are greatly appreciated. May our hearts also embrace mothers who must let their children suffer and starve, as well as children who must get on with life without the one who would nurture them in those vital early years.