

### **Pastor Roy's Sermon from May 14, 2017 (Easter 5)**

This is a meandering sermon—what often happens on Sunday holidays. We're going to talk a bit about our mothers, a bit about Jesus' encouragement to trust, and offer a call to pray for grace to trust when trust just isn't there like we'd like it to be.

Of course, today is mother's day. Would anyone like to share a memory of a time or a way your mother or a mother figure demonstrated faithfulness to you or someone else? Lunches 180 x 12 = 2,160 bagged lunches. Plus many more dinners. Homework in elementary school-- math and spelling especially and Bible memory verses Saturday night for Sunday morning... She pushed me to make the most of situations, to learn the most to accept a challenge and do the homework and studying required—to learn how to write—as hard as that was. She took care of me in so many ways—and it wasn't always easy for her. She has always been there and been concerned.

Life can be tough sometimes—the daily wear and tear. Mothers inevitably teach us a great deal about trust. We'll come back to the challenge of trusting.

This is a day of intense feelings. During this day we think about our own mothers. Perhaps we think about their journey in motherhood, their values, their decisions, their love, perhaps we also think about their weaknesses, though we don't so much talk about that, we do, perhaps, think about it, with mixed up feelings of guilt and shame. It's helpful to think about it and talk about it in safe places so that the mixed up feelings can be named for what they are. Then we can with patience and effort, move on. Our thoughts today are often filled with ideals and inevitably mingled with grief. We can be grateful for the life given us by our mothers and for all who have had a mothering role in our lives.

Jesus says, "Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God, believe also in me." And what might it mean to believe? Is not the essence of believing, a resting trust? Jesus didn't talk about faith in terms of what we think with our brains. Faith grows out of trust, the foundation for faithfulness. Faithfulness is what we do. Faith is active, a verb. It's the way we live.

Now, one faithful person can be inspiring. And a community of faith brings life to many---. The beloved community of the faithful is a "force to reckon with." When we trust together, we are united. To trust together is to all push in the same direction with the same energy. There are examples of trust and faith everywhere we look. Wherever there is harmony, community, love, vibrant and abundant life, the foundation is trust.

A large tree reveals and inspires trust. A forest of trees multiplies that trust with power. A business reveals a certain kind of trust. A healthy city or town all the more so. A family reveals trust. What we have learned about trust and disappointment, no matter the source, influences our faith. Some, based on their experiences, find it easy to trust, others, quite difficult. We gather in this community of faith to help each other trust. To walk together in faithfulness.

Jesus says, "Do not let your hearts be troubled." Trust. If you can't trust as much as you wish you could, trust as you are able and pray for faithfulness and mercy. Lean into faithfulness even as your mother leaned into motherhood. Experiment with trust as we all must do as we sail the river of life. Take chances in helpful, healthy ways. As my "Introduction to personal relationships" professor in college said, "Trust the relationship." He was in the middle of a divorce when I took the class, but it was still true. Even when it seems to be a failed one, "trust the relationship." "Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God, trust also in me." May we do so with courage.