

## **Like a Mother, Christ Loves Us!** **John 17:6-19**

### **Mother's Day**

As you know, I had two weeks off to write a book chapter. On Friday, Juhee's mentor visited us and we had lunch together. As we checked in with each other, I shared my struggle with writing a book chapter. It has been said that writing a book is like giving birth. So, I figuratively said, I feel the pain of giving birth. Upon hearing my response, she smiled and replied, "Do you really know the pain of childbirth?" Well... I can imagine it but honestly, I do not really know about it. Only mothers experience the pain of childbirth. Becoming a mother is not easy and of course, being a mother is also not easy.

I've heard that "you know you're a mom when you're up each night until 10 PM vacuuming, dusting, wiping, washing, drying, loading, unloading, shopping, cooking, driving, ironing, picking up, changing diapers, bathing, helping with homework, folding clothes, putting to bed, dragging out of bed, brushing, chasing, buckling, feeding (them, Not you), PLUS swinging, playing baseball, bike riding, catch, bubbles, coloring, crafts, PLUS raking, trimming, planting, edging, mowing, gardening, walking the dog. You get up at 5:30 AM and you have no time to eat, sleep, drink or go to the bathroom, and yet ... you still managed to gain 10 pounds. You know you are a mom!" Thanks to all mothers who put their children before themselves.

### **Mother's Prayer**

Becoming and being a mother is difficult but it's also a blessing. A mother experientially knows what it means to bear, give birth and nurture new life. If you are a mother, you can relate to the heart of Jesus Christ in today's scripture. Today's reading is a part of Jesus' final prayer during the Last Supper. Jesus knew his time had come to depart from the world and he prayed for the disciples he loved. Jesus prayed, "I'm praying for them, [disciples here]... now I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them in your name that you have given me, so that they may be one, as we are one. While I was with them, I protected them in your name that you have given me. I guarded them, and not one of them was... But now I am coming to you... I ask you to protect them from the evil one."

Jesus' prayer is exactly like a mother's prayer for her children when she is no longer able to be with them or when there is nothing she can do for them. Do you know the name of Moses' mother? Her name is Jochebed (Exod. 6:20, Num 26:59). Do you know what she did for Moses? When Jochebed could no longer hide him from Pharaoh's order to kill all Hebrew male children, she placed him in a basket and set him adrift by the riverbank." Have you ever thought of her heartache as she sent him away? What she did for Moses? Let me share a beautiful song, titled, "Jochebed's song." (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q8Dnjy8SISQ>) This song beautifully describes her prayer. When there was nothing she can do to protect her baby, in her prayer, she entrusted him to God, the creator. This is what Jesus did and what we do in our prayers. During our time of sharing joys and concerns, I have heard many of you share prayer concerns for your children going through difficult times. No matter how much you love your children, you cannot receive their chemotherapy on their behalf or heal them or overcome their struggles. So, we pray for them and in our prayers, we entrust them to God and ask God to protect them and guide them just like Jesus prayed for his disciples.

The closest thing to the heart of Christ is the mother's heart for her children. If you don't understand how much Jesus loves you, think of a time when you had to desperately pray for your

children. Like a loving mother, our Christ loves us, so that he prays to God to protect and guide us and like a loving mother, our Christ, still prays for us.

### **Mother Church**

While many of you have completed your task of raising children and even grandchildren, as a church we still have this important task. Many of us were introduced to church by our mothers or experience church as a Mother church where we are nurtured and cared for, but not everyone is so blessed. Some people still have difficulty relating to the image of a loving mother. It's our task to share love with those people and embrace them in our love. That's what we do as mother church.

Last Tuesday, Juhee invited all of the volunteer teachers of the Haven Community Music Project to dinner. If you have been to their concerts, you know how good they are. About 20 young adults came and of course, Juhee and I were busy preparing food. Juhee trained me to be the grill master and I grilled meat for twenty people. I thought there was more than enough food for 40 people, but I underestimated young people. All the food was gone. While they ate and laughed together, one student said that "Juhee is like a second mom at Brown." For the past 4 years, Juhee has fed these young hungry college kids and taken care of them. Some of them have experienced love in her actions and developed a loving relationship with her. As a mother church, we can do the same. We share the love of Christ with people who didn't know God loves them. In love, each one of you can be like a mom or grandma to someone. This is the meaning of mother's day.

Again, thank you to all mothers for your love of children. Happy Mother's Day!