

## **A reflection for Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> March, 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Lent and Mothering Sunday**

Well, what a week it has been! If I had been leading our service at 10am as planned, with all ages present including our Junior Church, I was going to encourage us to think about 'special people'.

We all have special people in our lives. Today we especially give thanks for mothers, but there may be others who have had a special place in our lives, those who have cared for us and whose lives have shaped our lives: friends, teachers, and neighbours, to name but a few. I have a dear friend, now in her 80's, who I have known since I was a child, and who still, all these years later, prays for me every day; she is one of the special people in my life. So today is an invitation to give thanks for those special people, and to pray God's blessing upon them.

In the Christian tradition there are many special people: Biblical people, those who have been recognised as Saints, and many others not named as Saints but who have passed the faith on from generation to generation through the way they have lived their lives.

Mary the Mother of Jesus is one such special person in the Christian tradition, and the person after whom our Church is named. In the Gospel reading set for this morning, we return to the occasion when the baby Jesus was taken by Mary and Joseph to the Temple in Jerusalem and Simeon, who had been watching and waiting for God's promised Messiah, took Jesus in his arms and praised God, recognising Jesus to be the one that he had been awaiting. Simeon also blessed Mary and Joseph, saying:

"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 also" (Luke 2:34, NRSV)

Many see this as a reference to Jesus' death on the cross, and when we read the story of the crucifixion we see that whilst many of Jesus's disciples had run off, it was the women who remained, and Mary is named as one of the people with Jesus at the foot of the cross. We can only begin to imagine the pain she must have felt as she watched her son die the cruellest of deaths.

And so on this Mothering Sunday, as we give thanks for the special people in our lives, we also remember those for whom this is a painful and difficult day, and we pray for them.

In a week that has changed the way we live our everyday lives, we have seen many acts of kindness and generosity. As Christian people, let's see what we can do to support others at this time, and be special people for one another.

**Revd Hazel**

### **A collect for Mothering Sunday** (from Common Worship, Church of England)

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.  
Amen.

As a little entertainment, here is a quiz for you. It's a missing vowels quiz. The vowels have been removed from the answers and the remaining letters have been bunched into threes. So, if an answer was **SELLY OAK**, the clue would be written as **SLL YK**. Good luck!

#### Titles of Pantomimes

1. • SNW WHT NDT HSV NDW RFS
2. • LDD N
3. • SLP NGB TY
4. • RBN HD
5. • JCK NDT HBN STL K
6. • DCK WHT TNG TN
7. • LBB NDT HFR TYT HVS
8. • CND RLL
9. • BTY NDT HBS T
10. • PSS NBT S

#### Musical Instruments

1. • PN
2. • VLN
3. • GLC KNS PL
4. • HRP
5. • RGN
6. • TB
7. • TRM PT
8. • SXP HN
9. • B
10. • CLL

#### Countries of the world

1. • NTD KNG DM
2. • PRT GL
3. • PR
4. • THP
5. • DNM RK
6. • CB
7. • CHL
8. • MN
9. • NRW Y
10. • RGY

#### Areas of Birmingham

1. • WLY CST L
2. • BRN VLL
3. • DGB STN
4. • FVW YS
5. • CCK SGR N
6. • HRB RN
7. • RDN L
8. • SPR KHL L
9. • RDN GTN
10. • STN

Send your answers to [benedictreeves@icloud.com](mailto:benedictreeves@icloud.com) before Friday 27th March. There's no prize, but the entrant with the highest score will receive a warm glow next week!