

Love You Mom

What is on my mind... Love you mom!

It is on this day that I think about a little boy who wanted to build a Spanish Mission for his religion class. He was struggling with the project and really wanted his work to be impressive. Sensing his needs, this young man's mother watched as he struggled for several days with the details of the project. And as she watched his frustration build she decided to offer her help. Together they made a wire frame for the mission. They slathered newsprint with paste, and formed the newsprint to the frame. They painted the dried paper mâché to match the Spanish Missions they saw in the encyclopedia. And as a finishing touch the young man's mother even cut greens from the shrubs around the house to make real shrubs for the courtyard of the Mission.

Finally, the day came to present the project and as she helped him carry it into school... She noticed how proud he was of the work they had done together. His Mission was not only impressive... It was perfectly beautiful, and it took center stage in the classroom for several days. This mom's heart burst with joy for her son's success.

He has never forgotten the feeling of that school day or that project.

It was a labor of love between a mother and her son and what they had accomplished together spoke to her greatest hopes for him... And as her life moved on through joys and sorrows, trials, struggles, doubts, and fears, she clung to one hope in particular... that her children would stay close to God and His Church.

In today's Gospel we see the disciples struggling... they are not sure what He is trying to tell them. And in their confusion and frustration we see Christ in their midst reminding them that he is the way. In their anxieties, fears and doubts he reassures them... "Let not your hearts be troubled." And it is through the doubts of Thomas and Philip that Christ gives the apostles a reason to hope... He reminds them of who He is... "I am the way, the truth, and the life." This is His promise to all of us, for He is the source of our hope.

It is Christ who tells... Philip "Whoever has seen me has seen the Father." And it is in this moment that Christ establishes for his disciples and for all mankind, definitively who he is... God.

This revelation has tremendous cosmic significance. To see Jesus is to see what God is like... It is to see God living our life. And it is because we can see God living our life that we can say precious things about Him. Things that connect us to Him, through time enabling us to experience him in a deeply personal way.

We see that God comes to an ordinary home and an ordinary family. In Jesus, God once and for all sanctifies human birth, he sanctifies the humble homes of ordinary people, and he sanctifies all childhood.

God also shows us the importance and value of work. It was as a "working man" that Jesus entered the world. He saw His mother and father work, and he experienced them working

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with Him. In Christ we see that common work is tinged with glory because it is touched by the hand of God.

Jesus shows us that he knows what it means to be tempted and to struggle. The life of Jesus shows us how God struggles with the tensions of the world. And because Jesus struggles we can be assured that God knows our struggles. And like any good parent he wants to help.

In Jesus we see God loving. There is one certainty in life... The moment love enters our life... so does pain. Sadly every parent knows this. If we could be absolutely detached... If we could arrange life so that nothing and nobody mattered to us, then there would be no such thing as sorrow and pain. And there would also be no need for love.

Jesus shows us a God who cares intensely... and God who loves. He yearns for men and women to love him. He feels our deepest pains, and he loves us unconditionally bearing the wounds of our imperfect love upon his heart. Like a good parent, especially a mom... He sees the struggle, and feels the frustrations, and knows our needs.

Most importantly... In Jesus we see God on the cross. We witness to the sacrifice and the suffering of the son. We often see sacrifice in our parents... but never is this more true than in our moms. And although this is hurtful to see, there is also nothing so incredible as this selflessness. Our culture encourages us to imagine a God who condemns people. And makes it easier still to imagine a God who would wipe out those who oppose him. But no one would ever dream of a God who chooses the cross to obtain salvation for us. Except a mom!

And finally Jesus shows us something else... He himself insists that the things he said and did came not from His own initiative, or his own power, or his own knowledge. They came from His Father. This again is something that every parent comes to understand. Against the great forces of the world parents know what it means to be reduced to nothing. They know what it means to need supernatural help... something outside of them selves. It is every mother's hope that she has the supernatural strength to help her children, and give them what they need. And whether we realize it or not Jesus is the channel by which that supernatural grace comes to us. And it is through Him that we gain God's assistance... that we see God's accent... that we hear the message of God's mind and heart.

We must always remember that everything is of God. Everything is from a God who is good through and through. A God who loves his creation intensely and most especially a God who loves us. Jesus does not come to the world to soften a hard-hearted God. He comes because a loving God sends Him... it is love that moves God to act for our good... it is this same love that moves a mother to act for the good of her children.

That young boy, like the apostles, had what I like to call a "God Moment" as he worked on that project with his mother. It was a moment where the eternal touched the real and left its mark. And in that young mans life... There have been many God moments since... And it is through those moments that he has come to know that Christ is the way, the truth and the life.

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And along the way that young man has come to appreciate just how good and wise his mother truly was. She had hoped and prayed for one great gift for her children... that they know and love God

I think today that young man's mother would be so very proud... Because she can see that he has tried to honor her by putting God at the center of his life and by being a faithful "son" of God's Church. This is what she wanted most... this is what she hoped for... and I am sure she knows that God has answered her prayers.