

Homily for the 5th Sunday of Easter, May 10, 2020

Today is Mother's Day. Happy Mother's Day to all mothers.

In this year of the corona virus and our requirement to stay home with our families it is really important to thank the mothers in our community. So a special, special thank you to all of you.

I wanted to know where and when Mother's Day began, so I googled it and found out the following information. In 1905 Anna Jarvis, an American, conceived of the idea of a special day to honor mothers for the sacrifices mothers make for their children and their families. So since 1905 we have had this special day to honor and thank mothers.

Before we went into this forced quarantine I went to visit a 94 year old mother and great-grandmother who has been living in a nursing home for the last 4 or 5 years, due to a stroke. She knew that she was suffering and not going to get any better and as I was leaving she begged me and asked me to pray that she go home. After talking to her during this visit I knew she was not talking about going home to be with her daughter and her family but she was longing to go home to God.

It is impossible to exaggerate the importance of home. Since we have been living in a kind of forced quarantine we can appreciate the love of mothers in our homes even more. We appreciate how being home makes us safe. Mother's Day reminds us to thank our mothers for this safety.

In the Gospel for today Jesus is sharing a dinner with his disciples at the Last Supper. He knew He was about to leave them. Listen to his words: *"In my father's home there are many dwelling places and I am going to prepare a place for you so that where I am you may be."* Why does Jesus use this image of home? Because a home is a place of close ties with people who accept us simply for who we are. For all of us, especially a

child, a home is not so much a place but a relationship of love and trust. This relationship of love and trust leads to feeling of safety. A child can move around a lot and not feel homeless as long as the child has love..

This relationship of love and acceptance gives us the comforting feeling of belonging. But despite all the places we erect and the roots we put down as our home on earth, we know that this home is not a lasting one. St. Paul in the First Letter to the Corinthians describes our lives as “tents” or portable homes. At death, this tent is folded up and our permanent home is now with God in heaven. The point is we need a home not only on earth but also in heaven. For we need a place to go to when death brings down the curtain of life. Without such a home, our life’s journey would be a journey to nowhere!

Jesus left us the Holy Spirit and the sacraments as a means for Him to remain close to us, to be apart of our lives and be comforted by His love. Because we cannot receive sacraments now, we can feel abandoned in these difficult days, but God does not abandon us. So, for us as believers to die is to go home to see God and to be with God forever. Is it any wonder that my friend wanted to go home? In the past month she actually died and now is at home with God.

And home is what mothers give us. A place of love and affection and a place of safety. So, thank God we have Mother’s Day to tell them we love them and we thank them. Happy Mother’s Day