

Motherly love

Heather Smith *reflects on* Exodus 2:1-10

The distress that must have been felt by the Hebrew mothers whose children were killed on Pharaoh's orders is unimaginable. Unfortunately, countless mothers down the centuries have felt the pain of the loss of their children because of war, famine and senseless violence. Moses' mother, whose name we are not told, hatched a plan to save her son. Presumably she intended simply to hide him until the slaughter ended, but events took a surprising turn when Pharaoh's daughter discovered him, decided to save him, and the baby's quick-thinking sister came up with a suggestion that returned the child to his mother.

Mothers are often very determined when it comes to doing the best for their children and that deep, fierce love is something to celebrate today. It is God-given and like all love ultimately reflects the divine. We are used to describing God as father, implying the male, but of course God is not to be placed in any human category. Today, we might consider divine love as expressed in motherhood. It could give us a tiny glimpse of the love that God feels for each of us. Looked at through the eyes of a mother our world presents the distressing prospect of a family at war, where equally loved children fight among themselves and destroy each other. No wonder God's love, like that of Moses' mother, resulted in a plan for salvation. ☺



Loving God, teach us how to love one another as a mother loves her children, seeking the best for each other and working for the harmony and peace you desire across the whole of your creation. Amen.

The ordination of women

Part 4 – “pearls”

by Georgina Byrne

Last year, the Church of England celebrated the first women who took their priestly vows in 1994. It allowed me the opportunity to reflect on their ministry, recognising that what they did enabled me to take the same vows three years later in 1997. In marriages, thirtieth anniversaries are marked with pearls, and those women were certainly “pearls of great price” for me.

Many of those first female priests were ordained in older age, faithful servants – who had been

deaconesses and then deacons – for whom presiding at the Eucharist brought into sacramental focus the extraordinary pastoral ministry they had already exercised. But there were younger, fresher faces among them: women who, since 1994, have gone on to offer a lifetime of ministry. Some of them have been my friends, wise counsellors, role models.

They are pearls indeed. And the Church of England is made rich by the ministry that they continue to offer.

Georgina is the Anglican Tutor at the Queen's Foundation and a Chaplain to The King. ☺

Walking with Rosie

by Gillian Cooper

This morning on our walk I am looking out for Clair. Not only because her elderly Jack Russell is Rosie's friend, but because I want to ask her who cuts her hair – it always looks nice, and mine is in dire need of a spring cut. We walk together, chatting about dogs and hairdressers and the weather, and I feel a sense of belonging. After eighteen months in this community,

Rosie and I know people, and dogs. I know their names and they know mine. I know who to ask about things, and they share the local gossip. This village has become home.

I have another home too. I am a citizen of the kingdom of God. There is someone else who knows my name, someone who listens to my questions and understands my needs. Someone I will meet face to face when my earthly walk is over. ☺

“God could not be everywhere, and therefore he made mothers.”

Rudyard Kipling (1865-1936), novelist