

What an appropriate scripture reading for today, Mother's Day. Mother's Day has a very special place in the hearts of the majority of people in America.

Hallmark estimates that 150 million Mother's Day cards will be sent this year making Mother's Day the third largest greeting card holiday of the year.

So many of us do not have our mothers on earth with us anymore, but my memories are just as fresh in my mind as if she were here with me today.

There are so many wonderful illustrations out there describing motherhood. I could go on for hours using illustrations that honor mothers and the other important women in our lives. I am sharing some of these illustrations this morning in hopes that they touch your hearts and remind you of the days when you or the little people in your life made a homemade card, a Christmas decoration or when they put their arms around your neck on Mother's Day and just said "I love you mommy".

Someone wrote, "Mother's Day is traditionally the day when children give something back to their mothers for all the spit, they produce to wash dirty faces, (remember getting a spit bath?), and remember all the old gum they held in their hands, all the noses they wiped, & all the bloody knees they 'made well' with their kisses.

"This is the day mothers are rewarded for washing sheets in the middle of the night, driving kids to school when they missed the bus, & enduring all those football & track events in the rain.

"It's a day of appreciation for making your children finish something they said they couldn't do, not believing them when they said, 'I hate you,' & sharing their good times & their bad."

But what are mothers? Well, mothers are teachers. Mothers are disciplinarians. Mothers are cleaning ladies. Some mothers are gardeners & mowers of lawns. Mothers are nurses & doctors & psychologists & counselors & chauffeurs & coaches.

Mothers are developers of personalities, molders of vocabularies, & shapers of attitudes. Mothers are soft voices saying, "I love you." And mothers are a link to God, a child's first impression of God's love. Mothers are all these things & so much more. Mothers are usually the ones who introduce their children to Sunday School and to Jesus.

So it sounds like with all of these jobs she does, mom probably needs a raise, right? Mother's love is priceless, but the work she does costs plenty. If you outlined a job description and set a salary for the countless tasks, services and errands the average mom does for her family, you'd be talking big bucks. But mom gets no paycheck for all of the jobs she performs for the family, for instance,

Mom and Dad were listening to the news on the tv one night when Mom said, "I'm tired, and it's getting late. I think I'll go to bed." She went to the kitchen to make sandwiches for the next day's lunches. Rinsed out the popcorn bowls, took meat out of the freezer for supper the following evening, checked the cereal box levels, filled the sugar container, put spoons and bowls on the table and started the coffee pot for brewing the next morning. She then put some wet clothes in the dryer, put a load of clothes into the washer, ironed a shirt and

secured a loose button. She picked up the game pieces left on the table and put the telephone book back into the drawer. She watered the plants, emptied a wastebasket and hung up a towel to dry.

She yawned and stretched and headed for the bedroom. She stopped by the desk and wrote a note to the teacher, counted out some cash for the field trip, and pulled a textbook out from hiding under the chair.

She signed a birthday card for a friend, addressed and stamped the envelope and wrote a quick note for the grocery store. She put both near her purse.

Mom then washed her face, brushed and flossed her teeth and filed her nails.

Dad called out, "I thought you were going to bed." "I'm on my way," she said. She put some water into the dog's dish and put the cat outside, then made sure the doors were locked. She looked in on each of the kids and turned out their bedside lamps, hung up a shirt, threw some dirty socks into the hamper, and had a brief conversation with the one up still doing homework.

In the bedroom, she set the alarm; laid out clothing for the next day, straightened up the shoe rack. She added three things to her 6 most important things to do list. She said her prayers, and visualized the accomplishment of her goals.

About that time, Dad turned off the tv and announced to no one in particular. "I'm going to bed." And he did...without another thought. If you were counting, you counted almost 40 things that mom did after she said she was going to bed.

There are so many important women and mothers in the Bible, but one that impresses me is the mother of Moses.

The story concerns a baby born a humble Israelite but, surprisingly, adopted as a royal Egyptian. The mother of Moses was Jochebed. She lived in Egypt, where the descendants of Israel were being oppressed. The Pharaoh had decreed that all their baby boys were to be thrown into the Nile, because he feared that they might become too powerful. When Moses, her youngest child, was born, Jochebed hid him for three months until she could hide him no longer.

To save her son's life, she waterproofed a basket and put the child in it. Jochebed placed Moses in a basket and released him in the flow of River Nile. The basket fell in the hands of the Pharaoh's daughter who was bathing in the river. Moved with compassion when she discovered the child, she decided to adopt him. The "sister" of the child (presumed to be Miriam), who had come forward, suggested to find her a Hebrew woman to nurse the child. The Pharaoh's daughter agreed and so Miriam called her mother, who was appointed to take care of him. Thus, Jochebed nursed her son until he was old enough and brought him to the Pharaoh's daughter, who adopted him as her son.

Jochebed did everything she could to preserve the life of her child, but also as the woman who ended up being able to nurse and thus substantially rear her own little boy.

God used three women to save a baby from death...his birth mother, his sister and the Pharaoh's daughter. This child was preserved from the death by the pharaoh as these women defied his repugnant command. But would you expect anything less from a mother.

Almost all of us have fond memories of our mothers and grandmothers, those special aunts and teachers. We are all here today to remember them, and the home where we were raised; ... because if we think of our homes, we think of our mothers. ... Remember the sounds, and sights, and the smells of home, ... Remember the drafty doors and windows, ... even the frost on the inside of the windows. ... Remember the smell of home baking, ... and the taste from licking the spoon, and do you remember the dinners that only your mother can make; ... even if it was only bean soup and corn bread; Only a mother could add that special something to a simple meal to make it extra special; a blessing of love.

On this Mothers Day ... on this Holy Spirit Day ... praise God for that stubbornness which like any good mother, just won't quit. And remember, we too have come this far by faith, because God is God all of God's life ... just like any mother is a mother all of her life. Amen and Amen