

INTERCESSIONS

Mothering Sunday - Lent 4 2003

At this **time of Lent**, Lord grant us the courage to give up distractions, and help us in our daily lives, to follow the example given to us , in Jesus Christ.

On this **Mothering Sunday**, may we be mindful of the example of St. Mary, Mother of Jesus - her grace and virtue, her love and humility.

Lord, hear us.

Lord, Graciously hear us.

On this **Mothering Sunday**, give your Mother Church, the courage to give up her preoccupation with herself, and to give more time to your mission in the world and community.

Give grace and guidance to our Archbishop, Rowan Williams, to our Bishops Geoffrey, David and Manuel, to our clergy Eric and David, and to all their helpers. May they have an increasingly broad vision, for the future of your kingdom.

Bless us who worship in this place. Save us, as a congregation, from being inward looking, and over-occupied with our own little affairs. Help us to take our eyes off ourselves and turn them on those outside. Help us to remember that your church does not exist for itself, but for the sake of others.

Lord, hear us.

Lord, graciously hear us.

On this **Mothering Sunday**, we think and pray most earnestly for our Mother Country - whichever that might be. We pray for our leaders in these frightening times of war. May President Bush and Prime Minister Blair, who profess to follow You, who know more of the intelligence coming out of Iraq, continue to try to convince their own peoples, those of the whole United Nations, and the Arab Alliance, that their act of aggression, was and is honest, honourable and just.

May we and all the peoples of whichever Motherland, be true and upright, loyal and unselfish, loving You and serving one-another.

Oh God, the God of Abraham, we pray for a cessation of this war, and all violence. Where Jew and Moslem and Christian are oppressed by their history and their hatred, make us aware, beyond our feeling of impotence, of Your aching love for *all* Your peoples.

Lord, hear us.

Lord, graciously hear us.

On this **Mothering Sunday**, we pray for all mothers - for mothers to be, in their excitement and expectation; for mothers of babies, toddlers and youngsters, in their concern to bring up their charges, to be responsible adults; (particularly today, with think of two day old Hannah, her mother Katie, and *her* mother Wendy Webb) and for mothers whose children have flown the nest, but for whom a mother's concern is just as ever-present.

We think particularly today, of the mothers of service men and women fighting on both sides in the Iraq war, and of the media personnel who are covering it. Mothers who are devastated by the capture, loss or death of their children, and those who wonder if their children will come home. We pray for the mothers, whose homes have been lost, and who have insufficient water and food for their children. And we pray for the children themselves.

God our Father, be near our children growing up in the perils and confusions of our time. Guard them from the forces of evil at work in our societies, and lead them in the paths of goodness and truth.

Lord, hear us.

Lord, graciously hear us.

On this **Mothering Sunday**, we pray for the courage to give up quarrels, strife and jealousies within our families, our church family, and our community family. As we contemplate the diverse role of a Mother, let us pray for all members of the caring professions, doctors, nurses, paramedics and ancillary staff, social and support workers, teachers and lecturers, marriage guidance counsellors, probation and prison officers, magistrates and judges...

We pray that by their skill and training, they may ease the burden of those in need, and in their care.

**Lord, hear us.
Lord, graciously hear us.**

On this **Mothering Sunday**, let us keep a moment of silence, as we remember our own mothers, whether or not they are still with us. And as mothers *and fathers* ourselves, let us remember *our* children.

Think of the images we see every day, of those involved in any way in war. The service men and women, civilians and starving children, all have or had mothers.

**Lord, hear our prayer.
And let our cry come unto Thee.**

Finally, on this **Mothering Sunday**, we remember those who have died, whether, Jew, Muslim, Christian or who professed no belief. Particularly we remember those service men and women, killed either by opposition forces, or by mistake. We think also of those Iraqi civilians who have been killed. Be with their loved ones, and those who mourn. God give us the courage to give up our fear of death and to rejoice with those who have died in faith.

And remembering the examples of St. Mary, St. Luke and St. Vincent, we commend ourselves and the whole of Your creation to Your unfailing love.

**Merciful Father,
accept these prayers
for the sake of your Son,
our Saviour Jesus Christ.
Amen.**