

## HOMILY HELPS

These homily helps, rather than providing specific points based on the readings of the day, are structured to provide background and considerations for preaching with sensitivity and compassion on Mother's Day. While we should always celebrate the vocation of motherhood and thank God for the gift of life brought forth through mothers, it is also important to acknowledge the challenges of those who find this annual observance painful. Other ministry leaders can also keep these considerations in mind when planning events, activities, or communications in observance of Mother's Day.

### Mother's Day | Second Sunday of May

#### Background

Mother's Day is a wonderful opportunity to highlight the vocation of motherhood and the gift of life entrusted to mothers by God in a very special way. While Mother's Day is not a liturgical or Catholic observance, many parishes still take advantage of this holiday to honor and pray for mothers. It is a fitting day to ask God's special blessing on those who bring forth and nurture human life. (The *Book of Blessings* contains various options.) If expectant mothers are present in the congregation, Mother's Day is also an opportune time to make use of the *Rite for the Blessing of a Child in the Womb*, which offers blessings for the mother and her child.

In our efforts to honor and offer thanksgiving for all mothers, it is also important to remember that Mother's Day can be a difficult holiday for many people, such as women who are struggling with infertility, those who have lost or are estranged from their mothers, and mothers who have lost children through miscarriage, abortion, or in some other way.

#### Considerations

Some considerations are provided for you to bear in mind as you honor mothers while showing sensitivity and compassion to all who find this holiday especially challenging.

- ◆ During your homily, you may want to take a moment to acknowledge that this is a difficult day for many people. Those struggling with feelings of loss, emptiness, or loneliness on this holiday can often feel overlooked. This simple gesture can communicate a sense of understanding and recognition for what they are going through.
- ◆ Invite the congregation to pray for mothers as well as those who find this holiday to be painful: those who have lost a child; those who have lost their mothers; those struggling to conceive a child; and those waiting to welcome a child through adoption, among others.
- ◆ Consider utilizing the provided sample intercessions in the Prayer of the Faithful. Some pray for mothers, while others focus on those who may find Mother's Day difficult. Addressing both is a beautiful way to celebrate motherhood, while also extending compassion and solidarity. It is especially important to acknowledge those for whom Mother's Day is hard if you plan to offer a blessing for mothers following the Prayer of the Faithful or as a solemn blessing at the end of Mass.
- ◆ All women have the capacity to be spiritual mothers.
- ◆ Reaffirm the goodness and gift of the vocation of motherhood. The incredible bond between mother and child is truly a gift from God to be celebrated.
- ◆ Consider highlighting the role the Church plays as our Mother and the role of our Blessed Mother in our lives. The Church and Our Lady can offer maternal comfort to those who are struggling and inspiration to mothers.

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