

“I Will Not Leave You Orphans” – Mother’s Day 2026

Introduction

I have had a great deal to thankful for these past several weeks. There have been some very close moments... moments of gratitude but most especially reverence for God’s presence in my life. Those moments of reverence were moments of **holy attentiveness**. An awareness and certainty that God is present, that life is sacred, that love is intentional.

On the Road to Pentecost

The risen Lord speaks to us today with tenderness and assurance: He makes a bold promise... “I will not leave you orphans.” These words touch the deepest need of our hearts. To be an orphan is to feel **alone, unprotected, forgotten**. Jesus understands this fear, and so He promises **His abiding presence** through the Holy Spirit. Those words take on special meaning as we also celebrate **Mother’s Day**, a day that reminds us how deeply love, presence, and reverence shape our lives.

Love That Is Shown

Jesus describes the measure of true love... “If you love me, you will keep my commandments.” Christian love is much more than sentiment or empty words. It is lived... It is a choice... An act of the will. It is shaped by obedience, humility, and reverence for God. This is something most of us first learned from our mothers. A mother’s love is rarely loud or dramatic. It shows itself in consistency, sacrifice, and faithfulness. In teaching right from wrong. In correcting with patience. In modeling reverence—how to speak, how to pray, how to treat others, how to approach God, and holy things with respect. True love, whether maternal or Christian, forms the heart.

Reverence: The Language of Faith

St. Peter reminds us: “Always be ready to give an explanation for your hope... but do it **with gentleness and reverence**.” Reverence is the awareness that God is present, that life is sacred, that love is not accidental. We live in a culture where reverence has been lost. It is a culture that rushes, interrupts, and trivializes almost everything, most especially the sacred. Reverence calls us to slow down. It teaches us to listen before speaking, to pray before acting, to honor what God is doing—even when we don’t fully understand it. It sees the sacred in

every person, place, and thing. Many of us first learned reverence at home: Watching a mother bow her head in prayer. Being taught to lower our voices in church. Learning to treat others with dignity. Seeing suffering endured with quiet faith. Reverence is taught by **example**. It is the quiet language of faith. The ability to hear God speak in the quiet whisper.

The Motherly Work of the Holy Spirit

In our first reading, the people of Samaria receive the Word with joy and then the apostles come so they may receive the Holy Spirit. The apostles offer the people of Samaria support through their presence. This is reminder that Faith must be nurtured. The Holy Spirit works gently, patiently, reverently—much like a mother raising a child. Teaching, Correcting, Encouraging. Jesus promises that: “The Advocate... will remain with us and will be in us.” God does not force Himself upon us. He dwells within us with reverence, respecting our freedom, inviting our trust.

A Mother’s Reverent Persistence

I am reminded of a story of a man who drifted far from the Church as a young adult. He lost interest in his faith and grew distant from the Church. His mother never argued with him. She never pressured him. Instead, she prayed—quietly and faithfully. Every visit home was met with love, not judgment. Years later, after his mother had died, he cleaned out her belongings. Hidden in a drawer, he found dozens of pictures, holy cards and handwritten prayers, each bearing his name. One picture stood out... It was the picture of the young man when he was a boy... in his cassock and surplice. It occurred to him that: “She never stopped hoping and placing his life reverently into God’s hands. And through her prayers, God never stopped holding him.” That man returned to the Church—not because of arguments, but because of a mother’s **reverent love**.

Honoring Mothers Today

On this Mother’s Day, we honor: Mothers whose love taught us reverence. Mothers who prayed when words failed. Mothers who showed us how to approach God. Mothers who modeled peace, patience, and faith. Those whose motherhood included sacrifice, grief, or silent endurance. Their love reflects the way God loves us—steadily, gently, reverently.

Conclusion - Living as Easter People

Jesus makes us a promise: “Because I live, you will live.” To live as Easter people is to live **aware of God’s presence**, shaped by reverence, formed by love, and guided by the Holy Spirit.

May we never forget: We are not abandoned. We are not orphans. We are held—by God, and very often, through a mother’s reverent love. May we live our faith not loudly, but faithfully. Not casually, but reverently. And may we give thanks today for all of the women in our lives who have taught us—often without words—how to love God well.

Happy Mother’s Day!