

Ask God to bless mothers

Daily Readings

4th Sunday of Easter (May 11):
(R3) John 10:11-18; (R1) Acts 4:8-12;
(R2) 1 John 3:1-2.

In 1141, the German village of Weinsberg was under siege. An invading army had defeated the town. The ruler of Weinsberg sent a message to all his people that they would be surrendering soon. The conquering army would allow all women and children in Weinsberg safe passage out of the village. The women of Weinsberg sent back a message asking that each one be allowed to take her most valued possession with her. Duke Frederick of Swabia, leader of the invading army, agreed to the women's terms. The next morning, as the women lined up to leave the village, each had in her arms her most valuable possession — her husband. The duke's brother, Emperor Konrad, was so touched that he ended the war. The castle in Weinsberg was officially dubbed the Hill of Women's Fidelity.

The sacrificial love of women has perhaps been the chief civilizing influence in society through the ages. When most of us think of sacrificial love — the kind Jesus called his disciples to embody — most of us can picture our mothers.

A young boy named Ben grew up in a poor neighborhood; his mother worked two, sometimes three, jobs to support Ben and his brother. Ben wanted so badly to fit in with the other kids. One year, silk Italian shirts were the popular item at school. Ben begged his mother to buy him one of these shirts. So his mom made him a deal: For one week, Ben would be in charge of the family's finances. She would turn all the money and the bills over to him. Once he paid off the necessities, he could keep any leftover money for himself. Ben quickly learned that there was no money left over. He learned such respect for his mother, he determined to make his mother proud of him. Today, Ben is Dr. Carson, one of America's leading neurosurgeons.

You don't have to grow up struggling with poverty to appreciate the daily sacrifices that most moms make. Sometimes the demands can be almost overwhelming. It is well to meditate on what mothers do for us, for this Sunday is Mother's Day.

In a poll of mothers commissioned by Family Circle magazine, 86 of the women claimed that mothers don't get enough respect — probably true. On the other hand, 92 of the mothers said that motherhood is even more rewarding than they expected. It can only be re-



Father Albert Shamon

A word for Sunday

warding if dad and the children honor mom and seek to do their fair share.

Every parent seeking to be a loving parent will be in a war of wills with a child from time to time — and many times, even though it hurts, you need to be strong. At the same time, you need to go far beyond the call of duty to let your child know that he or she is loved, appreciated, even admired.

It is significant that the Gospel this Sunday is on the Good Shepherd. The good shepherd gives his life for his sheep. The Gospel is trying to teach us that parents must make every sacrifice for their children.

A familiar image in many of the old Hollywood movies is the unfor-

giving father who disowns his child for bringing disgrace upon the family. Shaking a Bible in his hand, he will say something like, "She is no longer a child of mine. She is no longer welcome in this house." It is interesting that it usually is the father who is portrayed as taking this rigid and self-righteous stand. Mothers seem to be constructed with a little more compassion. Our children need to know from us that even though our love must sometimes be tough, they will always be our children. The door must never be closed — just as God's door is ever open for us. Jesus says, "I am the Good Shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, just as the Father knows me and I know the Father. And I lay down my life for the sheep."

So on Mother's Day let us salute the shepherdesses of the home — mothers who give sacrificial love to those within their responsibility. We must honor them and ask God to bless them.

Father Shamon is administrator of St. Isaac Jogues Chapel, Fleming.

Monday, May 12
Acts 11:1-18;
Psalms 42:2-3, 43:3-4;
John 10:1-10

Tuesday, May 13
Acts 11:19-26;
Psalms 87:1-7;
John 10:22-30

Wednesday, May 14
Acts 1:15-17, 20-26;
Psalms 113:1-8;
John 15:9-17

Thursday, May 15
Acts 13:13-25;
Psalms 89:2-3, 21-22, 25, 27;
John 13:16-20

Friday, May 16
Acts 13:26-33;
Psalms 2:6-11;
John 14:1-6

Saturday, May 17
Acts 13:44-52;
Psalms 98:1-4;
John 14:7-14

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