**Mothering Sunday – Thoughts (10 March 2024)**

So, how knows what this Sunday is ? Mothering Sunday.

Anyone received anything nice, maybe breakfast in bed, or doing anything special later today ?

What I recently heard some children in school say about their mothers -

*My Mum is 39, And she’s still alive !!*

*My Dad’s bigger than my Mum, but my Mums the boss !*

*A little boy said - I like my Mum’s coat – it looks like a rug !*

Today is a celebration of our mothers, their care and concern for us, and for their love of us. It’s also a day to recognise and celebrate all those who care for others.

Celebrations of mothers and motherhood have taken place over thousands of years – back to Greek and Roman times.

Mothering Sunday began in the 16th Century – it was an occasion when people returned to their ‘mother church’ for a service. That was normally the church where they had been Baptised or their local parish church.

Anyone who did this was said to have gone “a-mothering’. It later became a day when servants were given the day off to visit their ‘mother church’, usually with their own mothers and family members.

But by the 1920s the custom of keeping Mothering Sunday had largely lapsed in the UK.

But in the early 1900s, Mothers Day had become an important event in North America.

That subsequently led to a widespread revival in the UK through the influence of American and Canadian servicemen based in the UK during World War Two.

Business people in the UK saw the commercial opportunities and took those opportunities such that by the 1950s Mothering Sunday, or Mothers Day as it was increasingly known as, was celebrated across the UK.

‘Mothering’ is not a word we often use today in everyday language.

It can be defined as – Providing the right context for another person to grow, bloom and flourish.

In times of trouble and uncertainty, when people are experiencing difficulties and hardship, mothering involves providing a place of comfort, compassion and refuge to support people and to help them find their inner strength.

In all situations mothering means we have open arms and hearts for other.

Here’s the thing – you don’t have to be a mother, or a female, to do those things – we can all do them.

And mothering applies to us as a Church community – providing comfort, security, a sense of calm, a refuge, positive encouragement, support and importantly love for others. A place of humility and service, with love at its core.

That’s what we are called to do.

And what’s more, we have Jesus as our guide and we know that God is with us.

He is there for us, by our side in good times and bad.

And in a world with so many problems, and people having so many worries, there’s a real need to mothering and there’s a huge need for people to come to know that God is there for us, and to have the gift of hope that faith gives.

We’ve all got a really important role to play in providing that mothering church, serving and supporting each other and our communities with compassion and love, and for helping others to hear and accept the Good News - that wonderful gift of Jesus.