

Happy Mother's Day to all you mothers and thank you for the way in which you show God's love to your children! Women have a special and unique capacity for love. And so today while we celebrate those who gave birth to us and fostered our lives through their sacrifices, it's also important to celebrate all of those who have been like a mother in some way, whose love, whose affection, whose care has shaped and given us life. How will you honor and thank your earthly mother this week?

During the month of May, we also celebrate our mother in Heaven, Mary. We do so in a special way on Wednesday, May 13th, which is the 109th anniversary of Mary's first appearance to Lucia, Francisco and Jacinta in Fatima. She appeared each month until October, asking them to pray for peace, to pray the rosary in particular, and to do penance for sinners. How will you honor and thank your heavenly mother this month? Here are some ideas.

-Last week, our school children and faith formation children crowned statues of Mary at each parish and brought her flowers. If you have a statue or image of Mary at your house, consider doing the same. If you don't have a statue or image of Mary, get one! Or bring some flowers to the shrine in the Church, stopping to say a prayer of thanksgiving for Mary's love and care.

-In the Church, sometimes we fast. But sometimes it's also important to feast! The colors for Mary are blue and white. Make a special dessert with this in mind. There are lots of ways to incorporate our faith even into our food.

-When Mary appeared on May 13th, she promised that she would give the children, and all, a sign. On October 17, 1917, 70,000 people gathered, and were treated to a show as the sun danced in the sky. Have your child/ren create their own dancing sun drawing.

-Pray the Rosary together as a couple/family, or perhaps just a decade. Together, ask Mary to watch over and protect your family. With littler children it can be a bit chaotic—but it will always be a pleasing offering to Mary. I know as a child, I presented many handmade gifts to my parents, not all of which were recognizable or containing great artistic value. But it was the effort, the work and the offering that mattered. When prayer (whether at home, or even at Mass) is a bit chaotic and disordered, that is okay. To prepare, have your child/ren color some pictures of the mysteries of the Rosary that you are going to use, or of Mary herself. There are lots of free ones online.

-Pray/Learn the Memorare together – my favorite Marian prayer.

**Remember, O most gracious Virgin Mary,
that never was it known
that anyone who fled to your protection,
implored your help or sought your intercession, was left unaided.
Inspired with this confidence, I fly to you, O Virgin of virgins, my Mother;
to you do I come, before you I stand, sinful and sorrowful.
O Mother of the Word Incarnate, despise not my petitions,
but in your mercy hear and answer me. Amen.**