

## St Raphael Community Reflection for Mothering Sunday 2020

### **The Gospel Reading: John 19: 25-27**

*Meanwhile, standing near the cross of Jesus were his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene.*

*<sup>26</sup> When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing beside her, he said to his mother, "Woman, here is your son."*

*<sup>27</sup> Then he said to the disciple, "Here is your mother." And from that hour the disciple took her into his own home.*

What a lot can be expressed in a few short sentences. For those of us (most of us) who are now physically distanced from many of our family and friends, the injunction for John to take Mary into his home and care for her has deep resonance.

Despite suffering deeply, we see Jesus here looking beyond himself to those he loves. He sees the distress that they are in, and he recognises that their healing will be in the compassion they show for one another. Mary and John need one another – they have suffered a catastrophe in common with one another – they need to be with someone who knows what it is like.

Although we cannot, mostly, in these difficult days, take one another into our homes, we can treat one another as mother, father, sister, brother, child. We are asked not just to think about ourselves but about others. That calling will look different to each of us, but I do believe it is in answering that calling that we will find our hope, peace and healing. Pray that God will help you to see how you can love your neighbour in these days, and always allow yourself to be helped by others.

The events of Easter were designed to pull together what had become fragmented. In Jesus' cross, heaven is joined to earth, and the people of earth become reconciled not only to God, but also to one another. At Easter, the command to love God and to love one another becomes possible, because it is demonstrated entirely and completely in the sacrifice of Jesus.

Just a postscript to this story... when Jesus rises three days later, he does not, we can safely assume, tell John and Mary they no longer have to care for one another. It is my prayer, and expectation, that this crisis will change us all permanently. We will not look at things in quite the same way. We will, no doubt, appreciate the simple things in life much more. We will also, I expect, have got into a habit of looking out for one another and supporting the vulnerable.

I pray that you will find blessing in this quiet Mothering Sunday, and that you will rest assured in the great love of God your heavenly parent.