

SUNDAY OF THE HOLY MYRRHBEARERS - MAY 8, 2022
A TRIBUTE TO OUR MOTHERS
Mark 15:43-16:8

By Archpriest Peter Olsen
St. Basil's Russian Orthodox Church, Watervliet, NY



Today being the second Sunday after Pascha, we remember the Holy Myrrhbearing Women. Namely they are Mary, the Mother of the Lord, Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Salome, Mary the wife of Cleopas and mother of James, Susanna, and Mary and Martha, the sisters of Lazarus. While the apostles hid in their house behind a locked door after the crucifixion for fear of the Jews, these devoted women boldly followed and remained loyal to Jesus always and at all times. Today in particular we remember how they fearlessly went to the tomb in order to anoint the body of Jesus with sweet smelling spices. It is to them that the Resurrection of the Lord was first proclaimed by an angel sitting on a rock in the tomb, and it was to Mary Magdalene, that the the Lord first made His appearance after the resurrection.

Today we are also fortuitously celebrating Mothers Day. I would like to say a few words about our mothers.

The love of a mother never fails. No matter how high some of us may reach in positions of great influence in commercial, political or professional life, we will never reach the heights of our mother's secret hopes for us. Sadly, some of us may sink into low depths of infamy and degradation, but no matter how low we may fall, we will never be below the reach of her love. The memory of our mother's love will always stir in our hearts. There is no one who is so entirely base, so completely vile, and so utterly low that he or she does not hold in their heart a shrine sacred for the memory of their mother's love. One of the greatest images of love and devotion is that of a "tired and toil-worn mother, with a grave and tender face." It was our mother who loved us before we were born — who carried us for long months close to her heart and in the fullness of time took God's hand in hers and passed through the valleys of shadows to give us life. It was she who cared for us during the helpless years of infancy and the scarcely less dependent years of childhood. As we grew less dependent, she has done the countless, thoughtful, trouble-healing, helpful and encouraging things which somehow only mothers seem to know how to do.

Although we eventually reach the time in life when we are entirely independent of our mother and the ties which dependency has bound us to her are severed, the tie of mother-love can never be broken. When we suffer pain and sorrow, the same pain and sorrow stabs at our mother's heart. If we do evil and life gives us shame, our mother's pride for us also suffers and sears her heart as well. So brothers and sisters, let us conduct ourselves in life so that we will always make our mothers proud of us. Let no man ever make a woman weep or feel cheap, and let no woman walk any path other than one that is full of faith, hope and love. So not only today, but everyday, let us honor our mothers and offer her expressions of our love and gratitude. Let us never take for granted all that our mothers have done and do for us. One of the greatest gifts that God gives us is our mother's love. And if your mother has passed on to eternal life, be assured that her love and care for you has not ceased. You may not see her smile, but she still walks beside you and covers you with her embrace. You may not hear her voice, but you can still hear her in your heart, where she still speaks to you and listens to your stories, and wipes away your tears, just like she did before. The love of a mother and child will never be broken, in life or in death. Thank you, O Lord, for this great, wonderful and precious gift, our dear mothers, and may we always honor and cherish them, now and forever. Amen.