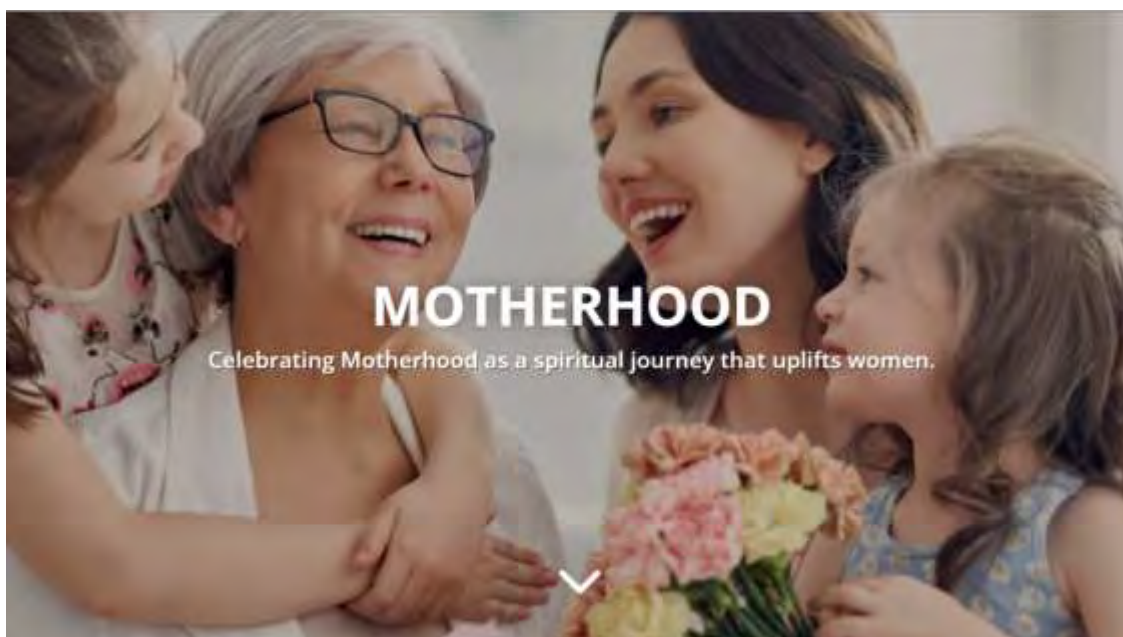


Hyun Jin Moon's Family Peace Association: Motherhood: a spiritual journey like no other!

Howard Self
May 23, 2023



*In this month of May, we featured the theme, “**Celebrating Motherhood as a spiritual journey that uplifts women.**”*

Motherhood brings out the incredible ability in a woman to expand her heart to seemingly impossible lengths that often go unnoticed. Nobody would say motherhood is simple or easy. But most mothers would say it is the most precious experience of their lives. There is much to appreciate about motherhood: it makes women stronger, braver, kinder, wiser, smarter, more patient, more loving, and the list goes on.

Mothers should be proud of who they are because the world would literally end without them. There is nothing more important than bringing new life into this world and raising children with utmost love. That enrapturing love of a mother who willingly gives unconditionally is what allows us to connect to God’s warm embrace for us all. Thank you mothers for all that you do and your inspiring spiritual journey!

*Enjoy these stories of and by everyday moms who found their **motherhood journey deeply enriching and rewarding.***

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by Karilee Aoki

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by Maruko Breland

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Thank you, moms!

My Son and His Jacket

Apr 25, 2021



By Maruko Breland

My two-year-old son has an enemy. It's his jacket. Every time I ask him to put it on before going outside, he fights me, twisting and turning in every way to resist. "No jacket! No jacket!" he yells.

There was a particular day when a lot was going on, so I was trying to get everything ready in the morning for the big day ahead of us. But nothing was going right, and the clock kept reminding me, "You're late!" My stress levels were rising but we were almost ready. The time came for my son to put on - you guessed it - his jacket.

I mustered up the calmest voice I could and said, "Honey, let's put on your jacket." No matter how sweet of a voice I used, he seemed to sense my inner turmoil. It was reflected in his actions - he went berserk. He really fought that day, running in all directions to avoid being captured.

I can be stern at times, but at that moment, my energy had run out. I felt defeated. I sat on the floor next to my son. I looked up at him and with a sigh, quietly said, "I'm having a really hard day."

I wasn't expecting him to understand; I was simply voicing it aloud to let out my frustration. But I noticed the expression on his face changed. He looked at me curiously and then walked away. Then he did something totally unexpected. He came back grasping his jacket, held it out to me, and said, "Mama, jacket?" I was confused, but as he held it out to me, it registered. He was asking me to put his jacket on him.

I stood up and helped him to slip his arms into his jacket sleeves. He didn't fight it at all this time. He let me put on his jacket, and then he really surprised me by doing a happy dance, as if his jacket had suddenly become his favorite thing in the world. He then quickly

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slipped on his boots and cheerfully said, "Mama, let's go!"



I'll never forget that experience. It brings tears to my eyes remembering it even now, many months later, because I know that at that moment, it wasn't that he really wanted to put on his jacket. He still disliked his jacket, as he always had.

But he realized that mom was having a hard day and that he could do something to make it better. Then he made a conscious choice to do just that, even if it meant doing something he didn't want to. I was so moved to see that even at the young age of two, he could make the choice to sacrifice something for the sake of someone else.

Since then, I've witnessed even more of these moments with my son and with other children. It's been inspiring to see that God gave each of us a heart with the ability to love selflessly, even from when we're so very young.



The seeds of Mother’s Day were planted during the Civil War

May 11, 2023 | 0 comments



by *Dennis Jamison*

Mother’s Day in the United States, and in several nations throughout the world, is traditionally celebrated on the second Sunday of May, which primarily involves honoring all mothers and remembering that they freely offer themselves to their children and families each day. The story behind the establishment of Mother’s Day as a national holiday is ingrained in American history, but many Americans are not too familiar with the history behind the holiday. This holiday, as it was established in the U.S., began as one daughter’s effort to complete the unfulfilled dream of her mother who wanted to create a fitting memorial for all mothers.

The seeds of this story were planted during the time of the American Civil War, which was the most devastating war in the history of the United States, primarily because we were at war with ourselves. Around 620,000 boys and men died as a result of the Civil War. This is the greatest number of Americans that have died in any war the country has been involved in throughout its existence. The nation was divided and the war brought sheer destruction – not just with physical structures within the cities and the farmland in the rural areas, but it created deeply ingrained and long-lasting emotional scars that would take decades of healing.

During this war, and afterwards, those who were left to pick up the pieces had to deal with the physical loss of family members, as well as the deep emotional loss of loved ones. The price of ending slavery in this country came at an incredibly great cost. It was during this time that many women began to form women’s friendship clubs for the

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purpose of healing the emotional wounds left open within the devastated nation. Even before the war, Ann Marie Reeves Jarvis was one of those active women who organized a number of "Mothers Day Work Clubs" in her local area of Taylor County, West Virginia, to combat the unsanitary circumstances and poor health conditions that contributed to a high mortality rate among children in the Appalachian area of West Virginia.

Sadly, Mother Jarvis lost eight of her eleven children before they reached the age of seven as they died of diseases like diphtheria, measles, and typhoid fever. With the loss of so many children, Jarvis and her brother who was a doctor, tried to help communities in the area reduce the frequency of such childhood diseases as well as unsanitary conditions. Her brother, Dr. James Reeves, was known for his work to limit the spread of typhoid fever in West Virginia, and he was able to provide valuable health advice to club members. The clubs also helped educate mothers about improving sanitary conditions to cut down the incidence of disease and infant mortality, and raised money to purchase medicine for poorer families.

These social action brigades, which later became known as Mothers Friendship Clubs, also taught mothers the importance of boiling water and demonstrated how to prevent food from spoiling, as well as other antiseptic practices. They also helped to provide nursing care for the sick, and arranged proper medical attention for those who were suffering from tuberculosis. When the Civil War started, Ann Jarvis' Mothers' Friendship Clubs had to adapt, and alter their efforts to meet the changing and conflicting realities of the war. Mother Jarvis insisted the clubs declare their neutrality so that they could provide aid to either the Confederate or the Union soldiers.

During the Civil War, the state of Virginia split apart, just like the nation divided. Landowners in the western portion, who owned very few or no slaves, did not want to separate from the Union as did slave owners who lived in the eastern section of the state. Due to the war, western Virginia seceded from the state of Virginia after the eastern landowners pulled Virginia out of the Union. Then, this area became a crossroads for both Confederate and Union armies that were either advancing into enemy territory or retreating from it, almost serving as a doormat for the movement of the troops. In essence, West Virginia became a microcosm of the Civil War.

Within such an environment, Mother Jarvis gathered four of these clubs together and requested that they pledge to one another that their friendship and goodwill would not become victims of the war that had started to rip apart the nation. She asked the clubs:

"To make a sworn-to agreement between members that friendship and goodwill should obtain in the clubs for the duration and aftermath of the war. That all efforts to divide the churches and lodges should not only be frowned upon but prevented."

It was important that the clubs remained neutral, as it enabled them to provide nursing assistance to soldiers from both sides during the divisive and destructive conflict. Through the leadership of Mother Jarvis, the clubs provided food and clothing, and nursed the wounded soldiers from both Union and Confederate forces. They also helped directly when various diseases would break out in the ranks of either military unit. Mother Jarvis was an exceptional woman who did more than simply survive the death and destruction of the Civil War in West Virginia, and It is estimated that these women's groups saved many lives.

The area around Taylor County near where the Jarvis home was

located, served as a staging area for both Confederate and Union troops and supplies to be shipped in either direction because of the Wheeling-Station Pike railroad. Confederates made their way up into Ohio and Pennsylvania and Union troops used the way as a "backdoor to the South." The local area at one time served as Gen. George B. McClellan's headquarters. Under such extreme conditions, on May 1, 1864, Ann Marie and her husband, Granville, gave birth to a daughter whom they named Anna Jarvis. Ann Jarvis through her mother's love and her unselfish attitude, hard work, and sacrifice would prove to be the inspiration for her daughter when Anna grew up and became the founder of Mother's Day in the U.S.

When the war was over, Ann Jarvis and her community-based Mother's groups proved instrumental in promoting the fragile peace between formerly divided friends and neighbors. They served as a healing element within the polarized community and worked as peacemakers as they encouraged families to work out their differences and resentment brought about by the war. By 1868, Jarvis had conceived of a family day picnic which she called "Mother's Friendship Day" in order to honor all mothers, with a deeper goal of reuniting politically divided families. Her ultimate goal was to create a lasting memorial regarding the value of mothers.

Unfortunately, Mother Jarvis passed away on May 9, 1905, just over two years after her husband passed away. At her mother's gravesite, Anna recalled a prayer that Ann Marie, offered during a lesson on "Mothers in the Bible." Her mother had taught Sunday school in Grafton, West Virginia for seven years, and when Anna was twelve years old, she remembered that her mom's concluding prayer (essentially paraphrased) was: "I hope that someone, sometime will found a memorial mother's day commemorating her for the matchless service she renders to humanity in every field of life."

Anna's brother Claude heard his sister reflecting on their mother and the dream expressed in that prayer, and heard the pledge that Anna Jarvis made that day at the gravesite: "by the grace of God, you shall have that Mother's Day." As a result of years of determined effort by her loving daughter, Anna Jarvis, out of deep respect and genuine love, worked tirelessly after her mother died, to carry on her mother's work to create a Mother's Day memorial. Finally, her determined efforts achieved ultimate success on May 9, 1914, when President Woodrow Wilson issued a proclamation declaring the first national Mother's Day.

Anna Jarvis may have expressed it best when she once explained her purpose in establishing such a day:

"To revive the dormant filial love and gratitude we owe to those who gave us birth. To be a home-tie for the absent, To obliterate family estrangement... To make us better children by getting us closer to the hearts of our good mothers... To brighten the lives of good mothers. To have them know we appreciate them, though we do not show it as often as we ought... Mother's Day is to remind us of our duty before it is too late. This day is intended that we may make new resolutions for a more active thought to our dear mothers. By words, gifts, acts of affection, and in every way possible, give her pleasure, and make her heart glad every day, and constantly keep in memory Mother's Day."

It is definitely hard to repay all that a good and loving mother has given to her children and to other loved ones, but Anna Jarvis worked very hard in attempting to offer her gratitude to her mother, and gave all of us an opportunity to say thank you to our Moms "by words, gifts, acts of affection, and in every way possible..."

Happy Mother's Day to all Moms everywhere!

Dennis Jamison frequently writes for the Canada Free Press. You can find more of his works [here](#).



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The Deep Value in Being Mom

May 22, 2023 | 0 comments



By Karilee Aoki

Recently it was Mother’s Day, and I had a chance to reflect on what it means to be a mother. I had to ask myself,

“What is it that makes the role of a mom so special? And what was God’s thought process and original design in creating mothers and women?”

Women from all around the world may have different facial features, different attire, different customs and cultures, but all mothers are so central and important to every culture and every country in the world. With a little research, I learned that Mother’s Day is widely celebrated in many countries with moms being appreciated in many special ways because the world would simply not go on without them.

If we go all the way back to the beginning and think about the order of God’s



creation, the final masterpiece ever made was a woman. He must have put a lot more thought and detail into the design of the woman to complement every single thing that would be needed for the creation and nurturing of a beautiful family. That includes all the smaller details that women often think about and remember to make sure that everyone is happy and cared for. These and the awe-inspiring ability to bring children into the world are the many beautiful aspects that God specifically gave to women.

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When I think about when and where motherhood first began, I immediately thought of God, as a parent, and His heart to His children. When we first experience parental love as a mother or a father, we recognize that it's something so amazing, eternal and lasting. This is the same impulse of love that God has for all of us. When we experience that "crossing over" from one day not being a parent, then waking up the next day jumping into parenthood, it's quite overwhelming! But it's also the most precious experience of our whole lives. As parents, we can finally understand, even if it's just a little bit, how much love God has for me as His child and the honor we have to participate as co-creators.



I looked back at some old photos and saw some of me when my eldest daughter was born and I first became a mother. I

had to figure out many new things as a young mom, especially how to handle a lot of new emotions and challenges, but honestly, it was very enlightening. I felt like I could finally understand why being a parent is so special and I was able to feel a lot closer to my own mother because I was able to share that same experience with her. I could also feel a new kind of love welling up inside of me for someone so small and helpless, but so precious. It was a life-changing moment for both my husband and I. Like, 'Wow, we're parents! This is amazing, and this is going to be FOREVER.'

People often say that a mother is a child's first experience of love. Yes, this is true. But if we think one step further, a mother really is a child's first experience of *God's* love. God is intangible and invisible. We can't just go over and give Him a hug or a kiss, but we can do that to our parents. They are a special representative of God to their children. So as we experience motherhood, we feel that same impulse that we want to give our children everything. We want to be unconditional, patient, nurturing, protective and encouraging.

With that said, the role of a mother is not always flowers and roses. There are plenty of hard times that are not pretty, but that is part of the journey of parenthood. I remember countless sleepless nights awake with the newborn, or my sick older children, worried if I'm doing a good job or if I'm enough. Yes, a mother's job is hard. But in the challenging moments, we need to keep in mind that there is light at the end of the tunnel! The intense moments of difficulty and stress will not last forever. There is something beautiful waiting on the other side, and this is all part of motherhood. By going through the challenges, we build perseverance and the inner strength that we did not have before, and we become more full of love and wisdom.

As the years went by and I had more children, I had to learn



how to



multitask. How was I supposed to hold a baby, cook and work on the computer at the same time? At first, it felt impossible. But that's when I realized that the point was not that mom does everything. There are roles in the family that every person plays. As a mother, I am empowered to also be a teacher. I started to teach my older kids responsibility, to try and be good role models for their younger siblings and experience what it means to be filial sons and daughters.

As my children get older, the challenges definitely get bigger. It's no longer about wiping tears from falling off a bike. Once they hit 10 years old, they started exercising their intellect, reasoning, and independence. My favorite is a better ability to talk back or argue, usually with very valid points about my specific shortcomings as a parent. Wow, no one told me about this part!

So why did God make motherhood so challenging? Perhaps, for a mother to be a good mom, it's important not to just go through the motions or react to the circumstances at hand, but to consider what is my perspective on all this. Yes, the challenges are hard, but challenges can be a good thing and actually, something to be welcomed. Because that's how we grow. When we go through a challenge, we are pushed to be better, to be the person that God wants us to be and that He knows we can be. Once we go through that difficult period with a good attitude, perseverance, and wisdom from others that have been through it, there's always something beautiful waiting around the corner. God's blessing is waiting right there.



From my 14 years of experience being a mom, one big lesson I've learned is that a mother's cup needs to be full in order for

her to give continuously to her children, husband, extended family, and everyone around her. When you just give and give, you can reach a point when you have nothing left, and feel so empty and worn out inside. More than the dark chocolate, going out to a cafe, or having time alone, (although those are great too!) I've learned that I need to go to God first because He is the source of all my love, fulfillment, and value. A mother's cup needs to be filled with God's love because when we feel God's unending and unconditional love for us, it is then that we can be that source of overflowing love and warmth to those that need it the most.

Motherhood is a very big job, but being a mother to all of my really wonderful kids is also the most rewarding experience of my life. Our big family can barely fit in a selfie, let alone a car, but we are learning to figure it out one day at a time. Family life is so dynamic. The process is not always straightforward or simple, but becoming a mother and a parent has been the best and most effective way for me to grow on my way to my full potential. As moms, it's so important that we take the hard times, learn from the lessons, and then keep growing together with our families and beautiful children. Being a

parent creates unmeasured meaning and value and for me, this is the best part of what makes this thing called life worth it.



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