

Some thoughts on Moms and forgiveness.

Today is Mothers' Day and our meditations will focus on this very important topic – on Moms. First will look what our contemporary culture teaches about Moms and then what Biblical understanding about the calling of Moms is.

We have Mothers' Day here in Australia. And many other countries celebrate it as well. It is kind of important. Moms are kind of important. Everyone kind of knows it. Most of people have experienced how important our Moms are.

How emotional it is to think about your Mom, to remember her. Her love, her self-sacrificial care, her presence when we needed her the most, her hugs and her kisses. There are, indeed, so many reasons to remember and to praise our Moms and to give thanks to God for giving us one.

That's on the one hand. And that is common an experience shared by almost everyone. But, on the other hand, how does the culture in which we all live treat this sacred calling of Moms?

Does our society teach young girls that being a Mom is the highest calling, the most unique calling for every woman? Does our culture prepare young girls to be Moms and how to be great Moms? Do we as a church?

Or, does the culture keep teaching us that the really important things are your career, and making money, and being independent and having fun and living out aloud so that there are things to remember later.

Do we teach our young boys and young men that every girl and every young woman have this unique calling to be a Mom? That they are wonderfully and mysteriously created for this unique mission.

Or does the culture instead teach that women are objects of men's sexual desires, existing to give men pleasure. Look at advertisements! How do they portray women? Think about pornography? What does it teach what women are?

Commodities, objects of desire. Useful only for men's self-gratification. Now with everywhere present Internet and mobile devices in hands of 6 and 7 years old children, they can and do access everything. Our neighbours, 10 and 12 year olds, tried to share pornography with other boys on the street. 12 and 10 year olds...

Do we teach daughters about being a Mom as a sacred calling? About woman's body wonderfully and mysteriously created to bring into the world new human beings who never existed before, about the body that can not only create a new human being, but also feed them with all that they need.

Do we teach about this sacred calling which doesn't stop with birth of a child, but goes on and on until there is one more well raised member of community ready for independent life.

Or does the culture instead teach that women's body is made for sexual pleasures. Go for it, babe! Have fun. Don't worry much about STDs. But, the fact is, the more sex for fun, the higher risks of STDs, the higher risks of barrenness.

And don't worry about consequences! Enjoy your life as much as you can, and if something undesirable happens, there is always a solution. You can always get rid of your problems. Meaning, you can get rid of your unwanted and accidental child.

If suddenly a child is a result of someone's promiscuous lifestyle, you can always poison them, or cut them in pieces and remove the problem. Meaning, to 'remove' a child who one and half years later would run to you to hug you calling you Mom.

Taking life of your own child... Why? So that you don't need to change your plans? So that you don't feel ashamed before your relatives and friends? So that you can advance your career? So that you could continue your humiliating and promiscuous lifestyle caring only for yourself? Is that sensible?

But so many women have done it. And if they realize that they have taken life, life of their own child, they need to hear these words. "If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he [Jesus Christ, the Son of God, our Saviour] is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." (1John 1:8-9)

There is no sin that couldn't be forgiven once we repent and desire God's forgiveness. This is why Lutheran church cherishes private confession and Absolution. That's where you stand in God's presence, confessing your sin and you hear His forgiveness. "I forgive you all your sins. Go in peace, my child!"

Think of careers. Girls, focus on becoming something really important! Don't worry about other stuff like being a Mom. You will always have time for that. Except, that's not true. Our bodies age and as time goes chances to become a Mom shrink smaller and smaller.

There was recently a research done in US. The researcher wanted to prove that women actually don't need to be Moms to live empowered and happy lives. Who could be objects of this research? Of course, powerful and successful women in their forties, who are high achievers and high earners, but - not Moms.

But as the research went on the researcher found something that made her to change the whole focus of the study. She asked these successful and happy and high achieving women, if they could go back in time and change something what

would it be? Their answer was almost unanimous. ‘Most of all I would like to be a Mom’. But they couldn’t anymore. That was too late.

It is almost strange that our culture can celebrate Mothers’ Day and at the same time to despise the calling of Moms, treating it as nothing, exchanging this wonderful gift to selfish promiscuity, pursuing meaning and joy where it can hardly be found.

Sometimes it seems that our culture has aborted its reason, that is has cut in pieces its conscience, that we have made this tremendous progress and have evolved to the level of animals, where only our uncontrolled instincts drive us and we need to embrace them by all means.

How else could we explain that the most precious gift, the calling of Mothers is so despised? And if there still are people who want to promote this calling as something precious and unique – that is called the war on women. Strange times.

Our second questions was - how does God look at the calling of Moms? In the beginning God created man, male and female He created them. In His own Image He created them.

Why did He create them? To be fruitful and multiply. God is the Creator. He is the source of all life. And He has chosen to carry on His work of creation through us. When God formed Adam, He looked at Him and said: “It is not good that the man should be alone.”

Not good? What does this mean? Are we not good if we are single? When the word ‘good’ is used in the first chapter of Genesis, it doesn’t describe moral condition. Instead, it describes functional goodness. Good is something that functions according to God’s design.

So why wasn’t it good for Adam to be alone? Because He could not fulfil the main mission that God had created him for. He couldn’t be fruitful and multiply on his own. No way. He needed a helper.

This is where we get to this often misunderstood term for women – a helper. Helper to whom? Helping to do what? Not a helper who will serve man’s needs, but someone who will help Adam to fulfil his God given mission – to be fruitful and multiply.

You see, we sometimes think about this function of helper and someone lower. Adam, the man, and then... some kind of afterthought, a helper. By no means! This helper is someone who possesses unique qualities to make things happen.

The Triune God calls Himself our helper, both in the Old and in the New Testament. Men and women are so different, even if there are so many things

which we can do equally well. But there is this one unique difference, that defines what women are – Moms, they can give life to new human beings. They and only they can accomplish this mysterious task.

In the creation story the creation of Eve, the first Mom, is the completion of God's creation. Now God's work was completed and everything was very good. That is, God's creation could function.

However today this most highly calling is often considered as nothing. But if you work and earn some money, then you are somebody. Creating a new life, raising up a future generation, not a big deal, but to be a waitress, accountant, businesswomen, police women or firefighter – that's such a huge achievement.

What are values in our culture?! We can't change the culture, which has lost not only wisdom, but also common sense. The culture where twisted desires of our hearts are called our identity. The culture who treat men, women, and children as objects, as commodities – using them for our own self-gratification.

In this kind of world Jesus Christ the Son of God came to be among us, to take our foolishness, our violence, our ignorance, our cruelty and promiscuity, our selfishness upon Himself and to drown then into death.

Into His own death. He took our brokenness, our evil, our rebellion and received in full what we and our sinful lives deserve. Wrath of God and death. Even death on the cross. Why? So that He could forgive us.

So that He can forgive us that we ignore and corrupt His good gifts. So that He could forgive that we misuse and abuse our bodies with promiscuous behaviour. So that He could forgive that we take lives of our own children.

So that He could forgive women who despise the calling of Moms. So that He could forgive men who treat women as sexual toys. So that He could forgive us that we don't even desire to know how to use God's gifts of sex properly?

So that His forgiveness would help us to forgive. Children to forgive parents where they have failed. Parents to forgive children where they don't live up to their expectation and go astray.

So that His forgiveness would help us to forgive one another, where adultery, pornography, unfaithfulness have destroyed our relationships, our trust, our hearts. Jesus came so that His forgiveness to us would enable us to heal our broken lives and brokenness of others.

He came to say – 'I forgive you what you have done, go and sin no more'. He also has revealed to us His wisdom. He wants us to understand His gifts, to appreciate them and to use them for our blessings.

We need to teach our boys and young men, that all girls, that all women are created for the holy calling of Mothers. We need to prepare them to love their wives, the Moms of their children self-sacrificially, helping them to fulfil our God's mission, being fruitful and multiplying.

We need to teach them to be there for their wives, when they need it the most, when they are the most vulnerable, to support them, to shelter them and to provide for them, so that they can focus on and enjoy their unique mission.

We need to teach our young ones that sex is a wonderful gift of God, given to be enjoyed and celebrated within marriage, in safety, faithfulness and mutual care, and that the fruit and fulfilment of it is, yes, children.

We need to teach our girls and young women, that being a Mom is their unique vocation, not the only one, of course, but the highest and the most important one. To give life and to carry this new life in your body until it's ready to see this world.

These are such high responsibilities. But first these are gifts of gracious and loving Creator. Gifts! Only when you have been denied this gift, or have wasted it, only then one can realize that it is not up to us to create a new life. Every time it is God's work, gift and miracle.

We all in one way or another have failed to protect and to promote this sacred calling of Moms. But where there is repentance, there abundantly is also grace and forgiveness. Our Lord Jesus is faithful and He forgives all our sins.

And He sends His own Spirit, our best Helper, to lead us and to guide us so that we can do better. So that despite of what the culture around us think, and do and promote, we as God's beloved children could be the light of this world.

So that we can teach properly about this most wonderful calling of Moms, about God's gift of marriage and sex and how to lead fulfilled and blessed lives wisely.

Blessed Mothers' Day! Amen.