

## “Mothers’ Day: miracle, madness, mystery”.

Mothers’ Day. Yes, that’s today. How do you feel about it? I honestly don’t know how to feel about it. It’s a bag of mixed emotions. On the one hand – awe, adoration and joy, marvelling on that wonderful calling, and on the other – despair, hopelessness and fear, seeing how it is despised in our culture.

I was really struggling to get my mind around what to preach, what to say, as there is so much involved, and it is impossible to do justice to this topic in one sermon. I thought we could meditate upon miracle, madness and mystery.

### **Miracle. Madness. Mystery.**

**Miracle.** When we as Christians ponder spiritual realities, the great spiritual battle that has been raging since the very beginning, where we all participate, whether we are conscious about it or not, there are certain principles that are good to know.

One of them – the greater the gift that our all-wise and generous God the Creator has given us, the more joy and blessings and satisfaction that gift could bring us, the more it will be under the attack by the ancient enemy.

The more the great and cunning serpent and all his minions will try to take it away from us, attempting to destroy the good gift of our God, or at least to damage it, and to rob us of God indented joy and blessings and satisfaction.

One of my professors used to remind us that the greatest, and most miraculous gifts of our God are usually so ordinary, we are so used to them, that we don’t even notice them, we don’t marvel about them, we don’t freeze in awe seeing them.

One of such miracles is marriage, motherhood, ability to create life, a new human being. Remember, in the beginning, there was one main mission given to humanity, we sometimes call it the First Great Commission. Remember what it was?

“Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it and have dominion over it!” We could rephrase it as – take care of God’s creation and continue His work of creating and ordering. But there was a problem.

When this command was first said to Adam, he couldn’t do it. This is why God said that this is not good that the man should be alone. It wasn’t anything immoral, it had to do with functionality. Adam wasn’t good enough in the sense that he couldn’t be fruitful and multiply on his own.

That is why God created a helper for Him. This is not about difference in their status. God Himself is called our helper both in the Old and New Testaments. This is about bringing to the game something that was missing and made it impossible to accomplish the entrusted mission. This is where the first woman comes in.

We can see this wonderful progression in the work of creation. God creates and orders His creation from more basic structures to more and more complex ones. When everything is prepared, He creates Adam, getting His hands dirty in mud and then breathing the breath of life in His nostrils. What an intimate picture!

Finally, God creates woman, and it is quite obvious, from much better material than Adam. Soil versus the side of Adam. God didn't create Eve to do something that Adam could do, but something – that he couldn't.

Man and woman are essentially two fitting and harmoniously complementary pieces of wonderfully created incredibly sophisticated living system, which is able to do what may sound unbelievable – to create new human beings.

Only once Eve is created, God affirms that His creation is very good, for now it is perfectly fit for the Great Commission. Also, according to God's wise design those are women who get to experience the creation of new human beings in the most intimate way. They feel them growing and moving inside.

They witness their first breath of life. They hear their first cries. Being a Mum is as divine and high a calling as there could be. And thus, as it is written, the first woman Eve became the mother of all living.

This is something that needs additional emphasizing. She became the mother of all living. Too often we lose this big picture view, but the Bible takes into account the time factor. God sees not only this moment, but also the future that begins now.

We would do well, if we remembered it when thinking about the calling of Mums. For example, in Genesis, this is how Laban blesses Rebecca: "Our sister, may you become thousands of ten thousands!" They clearly were envisioning the future, where generations and generations would come from her.

This is true for every Mum! It is not just about the nine month and giving birth to a baby. Even that is something remarkable – when a new human being, who didn't exist before, grows in you in just nine months and then enters this world.

Then it begins. Those are extraordinary skills and intuition, patience and love, commitment and devotion, courage and self-sacrificial service that mothers provide. Good on you! Feeding the little ones with their own bodies!

Learning to understand what that little being, who can't talk, needs and wants and what is wrong with them, what hurts, what causes discomfort. Caring for their environment, keeping it clean and safe, teaching to communicate.

Answering all the possible questions, staying up during sleepless nights, or weeks, or months, worrying in hospitals, binding their bruises, healing their hurting hearts, bringing them to Jesus, teaching them God's wisdom.

What a great pleasure it is to see children who are well behaved, polite and a blessing to society. Thank you, Mums! Then steering them into the future, and when they grow up – helping them to do all these things for their families.

It is never about one particular baby. It is about all the many generations that will come after. We don't know who they will be. Caring and loving parents of many. Maybe exceptional musicians, or scientists or artists. Wise and courageous politicians. Perhaps someone who will find cure that saves millions.

Perhaps their great preaching will lead many to eternal life in Jesus. Perhaps faithful and honorable people in their calling, an inspiration for many. This all begins with Mums. It is such a miraculous calling. But...

**Here we come to... madness.** This world is a broken place, any many things don't happen the way they were initially intended. Many women would dream about being Mums, but simply can't. Circumstances in life. Their own bodies...

Even among our friends there are families that would love to be parents, women which would be great Mums, and it just doesn't happen. There is much pain. Often loss and sadness, deep hurt, even despair, deep longings that remain unfulfilled.

Something really significant is missing. And on top of that there is this madness. The ancient enemy has put a target on this miraculous calling. I don't think there has even been some golden age for marriages or the calling of Mums, but these days it seems our society has set its mind to break all the records of madness and foolishness.

Does our society teach girls about the beauty and glory of this miraculous calling? Does it happen in families? Does it happen in Christian schools and families? Do we teach it in our congregations? But if we don't teach God's beautiful design for this miraculous calling of Mums, the adversary will teach his own.

Little girls long for this calling on Mums naturally. You've probably have seen how they want to play with dolls, or how they want to cuddle cars if they don't have dolls, how interested they are when they see a baby.

This wonderful and high calling is built into the very fabric of who women are. But then comes the adversary and spreads his stinking lies. "What do you do? O... you are just a Mum... o, how sad! Being a Mum is nothing!

Listen, girl, man up! be the man! if you want to be someone in this world! There is no place for childish dreams about being a Mum and wife, you need to strive for your career. You need to be competitive. You can do it! You can show them!"

Women are gifted with many talents and many of them are used in their calling as Mums. And of course, most women will engage in other callings as well, they will develop rich skills and knowledge and will serve their communities in many diverse ways, using their various gifts. That is given. Thanks be to God!

But not by despising the calling of Mums. Not sacrificing their most fruitful years trying to make some money, or career, or fighting for the survival in often harsh and competitive business environments, or in companies where personal intrigues poison their days, and their life is sucked out by people who couldn't care less about their well-being or happiness or future.

Do we teach girls how to be Mums? What a precious calling it is? We don't teach about the beautiful callings of Mums or of Fathers at that, we don't, instead the whole world has been swept over by the colorful ideologies summarized in the ever-expanding acronym. And what is that all about?

Two sad things unite that group of letters; one, they stand for ideologies that are lifeless and, second, they all are in opposition to God's wise and beautiful design for our relationships and for our flourishing both as individuals and as society.

Now we are witnessing this push to teach children already in kindergartens that they can choose their gender, and then use medical technologies to mutilate their bodies and thus to lose ability to ever have children on their own.

We live in this culture of madness. Do you think that we are somehow spared from this? Think again! This storm of madness rains heavily upon us. And if you happen to stand in rain, sooner or later you get wet. This is true for us as well.

So many have been hurt, so many hearts have been broken. Sexual temptations. Confusion of who we are. Sex outside marital relationships. Unplanned pregnancies. Abortions. Infertility. Betrayals, unfaithfulness. Failed marriages. Violence, psychological and physical.

Divorce. Pain. Emptiness. Distrust. Hopelessness. Failing as parents. Children failing us. Witnessing how they are deceived and suffer because of this culture, and more... So many Christians suffer from guilt and shame, and are filled with regret.

And when that happens, we tend to run from the only One who could help us. This is where we come to our last point. **Mystery. Mystery of God's grace and patience with us.** Jesus, pure, innocent, sinless... coming into this mad and foolish world.

Leaving His divine glory, His heavenly abode, coming not to destroy and wipe us out, which we would justly deserve. Coming to seek us, coming to call us back to Himself, coming with the most incredible message.

"Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." (Matt 11:28) "Come and let me embrace you! Come and let me restore you! I know what you have done. Come, for I forgive you – your foolishness, your carelessness, your failure to live according to my wisdom.

I forgive you for how you have hurt others, for how you have failed as child, as spouse, as parent, whatever your guilt, whatever you struggle to forgive yourselves, I do forgive you! Come to me and I will give you rest!

If you are ashamed for what others have done to you, for how much you have been humiliated, come to me, for I delight in you, you are good in my eyes, very good, and I will lift you up and I will share with you my glory, and you will be filled with joy!”

Our Triune God not only brings us back into His embrace, He delights and encourages every Mum: “You are amazing, more amazing than you know! We did it together, we created this new human being, the greatest of miracles, we did it! You did it! Let us now bring them to me, to dwell in New Heavens and New Earth!

And I know of your pain, I know of your worries, I know of how miserable you feel when you can’t do everything you want to, how guilty when you have been angry to your children or husband in your tiredness. Come to me and I will give you rest!”

God’s grace and patience are mysteriously deep. As is His wisdom. Our Triune God not only comes to us to call us back to Himself, forgives and welcomes us, He also teaches us His wisdom. How privileged we are to be members of His family!

To you are revealed the secrets of God’s wisdom, He Himself enlightens us with His Word and Spirit, it is to us that He has revealed His good and wise design for our lives and relationships, He teaches us how we can strive to live them out.

May the Holy Spirit awaken us and stir up our curiosity, may He make us thirsty and hungry to listen and to learn this wisdom of our God, so that we could indeed serve as messengers of life and wisdom and joy in this world of madness.

The greater the gift, the more it will be under attack. Marriage, motherhood, the ability to create a new life is one of the greatest gifts we have received. Miraculous gift. It is madness to ignore and despise it.

May our all-wise and gracious Father help us to appreciate it and to enjoy it and to share His wisdom with others.

Amen.