

A perfect Mother's Day commandment

By Elise L. Moore, C.S.

What a perfect commandment for Mother's Day! "Honor thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee." (Exodus 20:12)

As adults we still have opportunities to honor our parents. One way is to express gratitude. Gratitude for their sincere efforts. Gratitude for their guidance and encouragement. Gratitude for their patience and perseverance. Opening our heart to gratitude blesses us as well as them, and can start us down the path of healing any hurtful memories.

Another way is to encourage our mothers and fathers as they might have encouraged us. At different stages of experience fear can creep in. When we were little, perhaps we were afraid of the dark and our mother lovingly helped us overcome that fear. Sometimes mothers need the same loving support. Rather than being afraid for them or justifying their fears, we can help mothers challenge fear and regain their independence and dignity.

A few years ago, it occurred to me that my widowed mother was no longer driving at night. As tactfully as possible, I inquired. The saga began. She had been chased by a car full of teenagers. On another occasion a car had followed her all the way to her house. She had escaped by using her automatic garage door opener. Women did not belong driving on the streets alone at night. The evening news was full of accounts of violence against older folks.

She had stopped going to church on Wednesday nights. Stopped going out to dinner with friends. Stopped going to evening shows all because of an escalating fear.

As she talked, I prayed. Agreeing with fear is never wise. One of the first steps in healing is to overcome fear. Jesus' most frequent instruction to his patients was to fear not. So I prayed how to help her master this fear.

God speaks to each one of us 24 hours a day providing just the right messages to meet our human needs. So my prayer was actually turning thought to our heavenly Father-Mother expectantly listening for the right thought to share with my Mother.

The inspiration that came to me was the words of a hymn very familiar to her. I asked if she knew the “driving” hymn. Silence. She hadn’t a clue what I was talking about. Then I read her this hymn substituting the word “drive” where “walk” appeared. (I’ll let you do the same for the first and last verses.)

“I walk with Love along the way,
And O, it is a holy day;
No more I suffer cruel fear,
I feel God’s presence with me here;
The joy that none can take away
Is mine; I walk with Love today...

Come, walk with Love along the way,
Let childlike trust be yours today;
Uplift your thought, with courage go,
Give of your heart’s rich overflow,
And peace shall crown your joy-filled day (night).
Come, walk with Love along the way.”

**Hymn 139 by Minny M. H. Ayers from the Christian Science Hymnal*

My mother had a healing of fear right then. She began driving at night, going to church, meeting with friends, and singing the “driving” hymn. She shared this thought with other women who were also afraid of driving at night and losing their independence.

This Mother’s Day let us honor our mother by expressing gratitude for her goodness. Let’s not be afraid for her and limit her ability. Instead of justifying fear, let’s pray to hear God’s guidance and help her master fear.

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