

## Women of Faith – The Arms of Thankfulness

Mothering Sunday tells of the thankfulness and pain of love. Jesus' mother Mary knows the cost of true love. Babe in arms, she goes to the temple where Simeon and Anna welcome them, hold the baby and thank God for this promised Son of God.

Anna, a widow, has known pain and devotes her life to prayer. As Anna cradles him, Mary hears the fearful words of Simeon:

*'This child is destined for the falling and rising of many...and a sword will pierce you own soul too.'* Luke 2.35



Over 30 years later, Mary stands helplessly at the foot of the cross watching her son slowly, painfully dying. Despite her silent screams she stays by his side to comfort him. Jesus' love for her overflows even through the physical agony and mental anguish: he turns to her and to the young disciple, John.

*'Woman, here is your son'... and ... 'Here is your mother'* John 27

And so Jesus commits us into each other's arms of thankfulness, as mother and son, father and daughter, to bear the pain of love and loss, to raise each other to become the 'mother' of another. We pray for the motherly work of MU amongst women and mothers across the world, bringing dignity, hope and worth in society.

**Mothering Sunday** (a Sonnet by Revd Malcolm Guite, priest and poet)

At last, in spite of all, a recognition  
For those who loved and laboured for so long,  
Who brought us, through that labour, to fruition,  
To flourish in the place where we belong:  
A thanks to those who stayed and did the raising,  
Who buckled down and did the work of two,  
Whom governments have mocked instead of praising,  
Who hid their heart-break and still struggled through;  
The single mothers forced on to the edge,  
Whose work the world has overlooked, neglected,  
Invisible to wealth and privilege,  
But in whose lives the Kingdom is reflected.  
Now into Christ our mother Church we bring them,  
Who shares with them the birth-pangs of his Kingdom.

