

“The Gift of Motherhood leading to love for the Sanctity of all Human Life and Priestly and Religious Vocations”

1. This Sunday as a nation we give thanks to God for **the gift of our mothers**. Of course I am very grateful to God for the gift of my mother Kathleen as well as the gift of my spiritual mother Mary who has always played a special role in my life as a priest. It's important to look for the good and forgive any weaknesses/sins in our grandmothers, mothers, and godmothers and pray daily for them whether they are still living here on earth or have gone into eternity – especially if they are in Purgatory getting ready for the fullness of Heavenly life.
2. When we think of us receiving the gift of our human life from God through our mother and father, **we should also grow daily in our respect for the sanctity of all human life from the moment of conception to natural death.** All of us as Christian believers must witness to the sanctity of human life to those around us – it's not easy but so necessary. So many in our culture have been deceived by the secular mentality ultimately directed by satan and the other evil angels that human life is not sacred and can be discarded whenever necessary – we saw that this past week when far too many people were freaking out and getting hysterical and totally hateful simply because the Supreme Court is finally considering overturning the horrible Roe decision from 1973 that legalized abortion on demand in the US and has costed over 60 million innocent lives as a result and so many walking wounded of women and men who were involved in it. All the people who justify and defend abortion talk about their choice, their life etc. but never say that baby actually belonged to God and I had no right to snuff it out. Those who have repented of this grave evil, especially in the Sacrament of Confession, know you have to admit you did a great wrong before God's healing grace can work. If one does not repent, then evil takes over and one digs in their heels and tries to fight God himself. **We either conform our life to the Truth or we try to conform the Truth to fit our life –** frightening! **Daily prayer and reparation** is so badly needed for the conversion of those who try to justify abortion and all sins against human life – are we willing to help with that daily - as our Lady asks at Fatima and other times she has appeared in recent times?!

3. **The gift of the ordained priesthood and religious life is also a great fruit of holy motherhood.** When mothers are generous in their life it flows into the of life of their children on both a natural and supernatural level. All the priests I have encountered who are solid and holy have had a great love for both their own mother and for the Blessed Mother. It's where we first learn the meaning of making a gift of our life for others. That is the foundation for all vocations to the priesthood and religious life. And if we keep that in mind, we can get through all the serious challenges that come in this earthly life. I was thinking back on my life as a priest this past week in anticipation of putting this homily together and some amazing things came to mind. I thought back to when I first thought of becoming a priest which was in 2nd grade and then in 4th grade becoming an altar boy. I was thinking of the priests I encountered at the time and God working despite weaknesses and evil, which I knew nothing of as a little boy, and was protected by God in some amazing ways. 3 of the 4 priests I was thinking of when I was in 2nd to 6th grade went off duty at some point. Then when I really received my call to the priesthood later in high school, the priest at the time who was inspiring to me at the time later was removed as a priest for big problems. **Why do I bring this up?** Well some of this is sad/ tragic/ even evil on a human and spiritual level, but the amazing thing is God still got me to be a priest, and a grateful one at that, protecting me all along the way and then putting me in touch with more and more holy priests as time went on – and I think all because I stayed close to the Blessed Virgin Mary under her spiritual mantle by praying the Rosary every day and wearing the Brown Scapular and because of the daily prayers of my mom that I persevere in this holy calling. The same can happen for other young men and women in their own unique situations in life, and hopefully respond to God's invitation to give their lives to him totally as a priest or religious. And remember I as your Pastor am always here to answer questions and help your discern if God is calling you and to where. *Yes, what a gift motherhood is, thank you Mary and my mom; what a gift human life is, let's do more to speak up and protect it; and what a gift the priesthood and religious life is – showing us God and our Catholic Faith has to be number one in our life, and trying to help the Lord and our Blessed Mother in the most noble task of all: the salvation of souls, especially for the hardened sinners in our world.* God bless you.