



Recommendations for Parish Ministries and Families

Honoring All Mothers – May 11, 2025

For Parish Pastoral Leaders

Parish leaders should become familiar with the resources offered on the www.radiatelove.info website. The major themes that flow from the readings this weekend include:

- The first reading from the Acts of the Apostles gives insight into the Church's mission to all peoples, seeking them out as a mother gathers her children: "I have made you a light to the Gentiles, that you may be an instrument of salvation to the ends of the earth." (Acts 13:47)
- The second reading continues and deepens this theme, showing how the sacrificial Lamb of God becomes the shepherd who will "lead them to springs of life-giving water" (Rev 7:17), the waters of Baptism by which we are born unto eternal life.
- In the Gospel, Jesus makes the audacious claim that "the Father and I are one" (Jn 10:30), drawing to himself the image from Psalm 100 of God as the shepherd, and we are "his people, the flock he tends." (Ps 100:3).
- This sequence of readings shows that the Church does not just act as a mother to us, she is truly our mother in the faith—giving birth to us in the waters of Baptism, nourishing us with the Bread of Life, and supporting and guiding us in the great pilgrimage of hope to our eternal home. In the words of St. Cyprian, "No one can have God as Father who does not have the Church as Mother." (See CCC, 181)
- In this light, the actions of our biological and spiritual mothers to care for us take on new meaning. We owe a great debt of gratitude and love to those special women in our lives who brought us into the world, lift us up, care for our needs, and make countless sacrifices for our physical and spiritual wellbeing. May we honor them all today!





Sample ideas for parish programs and activities:

- Review the USCCB's [Mother's Day Action Guide](#) and consider how its recommendations can be incorporated into parish practices this year and in the years to come. The general intercessions listed there may be used along with or in place of those that have been provided in [this month's parish resource packet](#).
- Discuss as a parish team the needs of single and solo mothers in the community, foster mothers, women who are struggling to conceive, godmothers, and spiritual mothers in various settings. How well do the current programs and activities provide pastoral accompaniment to them, and how might they be honored in an ongoing way?
- If your parish does not already have women's groups or a prayer and spirituality group for young mothers, consider forming one or more. Start by identifying potential group leaders and asking about their interest. Some helpful resources can be found online on websites such as [Blessed Is She](#), [ENDOW](#), and [Catholic Mom](#).

For Parish Catechetical Leaders (PCLs) and K-8 Catechists

Catechists and parents should be encouraged to deepen their understanding of the care shown to us by Holy Mother the Church, the precious gift of our Mother Mary in our spiritual lives, and the significance of both to us as we honor our own biological and spiritual mothers today.

- PCLs: when you communicate with the parents and families you serve this month:
 - Share with them the parish or diocese's social media that illustrate ways to honor the mothers in their lives.
 - Encourage them to make time this month to share and discuss the [monthly reflection](#) and ["Learn, Pray, Do" activities](#).





- Catechists: take some time to:
 - Deepen your understanding of the Church as our mother in the faith (see the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, nn. [176 to 184](#) and the explanation [here](#)).
 - Learn about the ways children should honor their mothers (see the CCC, nn. [2214 to 2220](#) and the explanation [here](#)).
 - Appreciate Mary's motherhood with regard to the Church (see the CCC, nn. [963-970](#) and the explanation [here](#)).
- Incorporate a 5 to 10-minute reflection, discussion, or activity into one of the catechetical sessions this month, drawing from the materials and resources in this *Radiate Love* packet. Some options might include:
 - Select a few verses from the Gospel (my sheep hear my voice, Jn 10:27-30) and do a *lectio divina* with the children. Pflaum's [Gospel Weeklies](#) provides age-appropriate content you may find useful.
 - Use the [Saint of the Month](#) (*St. Monica*) as a group conversation starter.
 - Offer motherhood-themed coloring pages (i.e. [here](#) and [here](#)) for the younger kids.

For Parish Youth or Young Adult Ministry Leaders

The recommendations for PCLs and catechists also apply to parish youth and young adult ministry leaders. This month would be a great time to conduct a session on one or more of these topics:

- Prepare a reflection and discussion on the maternal love of God. There are extensive passages in scripture and Church tradition that highlight this image of God. For some references, see the article [The Motherhood of God](#) or this quote from [Blessed Pope John Paul I](#). Keep in mind the fundamental truth that God is neither male nor female in the human way of understanding those categories. (See *Mulieris Dignitatem*, [8](#))





- Elicit a conversation among the young people about the beauty, goodness, and holiness of motherhood. Many young women (and men) these days are skeptical about this, which is why this discussion is an important step toward a theology of motherhood as a reflection of God's own way of loving –sacrificial, service-oriented, life-giving love. For reference, see some recent blog posts ([here](#) and [here](#)) from [FemCatholic](#), as well as this month's [Bulletin Insert](#) and the theological reflections on motherhood from our recent popes (*Mulieris Dignitatem*, [18-19](#), *Letter... on the Collaboration of Men and Women*, [13](#) and *Amoris Laetitia*, 173-175).
- Draw a connection between our human experience of gratitude for being born of a mother—with all the sacrifice that entailed, irrespective of how that primordial relationship in our lives may or may not have been wounded subsequently—and our experience of the Church's maternal care in providing for our spiritual lives. Jesus sharing his own mother Mary with us as our mother too (Jn 19:26-27) is a further manifestation of God's desire to provide for us with a mother's love. For more details, see the readings from the Catechism recommended for catechists in the section above.

For Catholic Couples and Parents

Families and couples are always encouraged to visit the [Families](#) and [Married Couples](#) sections of the *Radiate Love* website. In addition, take some time this month to learn together as a couple and pray as a family:

- USCCB – Visit [For Your Marriage](#) and [Por Tu Matrimonio](#)
 - [Pope Francis Reflects on a Mother's Demanding Role](#)
 - [Pieces of Eternity: On Responding to My Children's Desires with Empathy](#)
 - [Little Bodies of Christ](#)
- Catholic Mom's [Litany of Mommy Saints](#)