



Message for Mother's Day
11 May 2025
His Eminence Frank Cardinal Leo
Metropolitan Archbishop of Toronto

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

May Jesus and Mary be in your souls.

Happy Mother's Day to all the mothers in the Archdiocese of Toronto.

Among the many vocations and calls to faithful witness in the Church, motherhood is among the most exalted. Indeed, the greatest of all the saints, Our Blessed Mother, is distinguished first and foremost by her motherhood. She is the *Theotokos* - Mother of God as well as our spiritual mother. During this Jubilee Year Pope Francis reminds us, "Every vocation, once perceived in the depths of the heart, gives rise to an impulse to love and service, as an expression of hope and charity, rather than a means of self-promotion" (*Pilgrims of Hope: The Gift of Life*).

Motherhood is not merely a role or function - it is a divine vocation. The sacredness of motherhood is an aspect that is often forgotten, and one that is not celebrated enough. Mothers are called not only to nurture and care for their children, but they are also "cooperators" with God's love and "interpreters of that love" (GS 50). In this way the vocation of motherhood is not a call to love in a general and pedestrian manner, but a profound mirroring of the love of God in the way a mother *sacrifices*, nurtures, protects, and teaches her children. The sacrificial dimension of love expressed in the love of a mother is not to be understood as a burden, but as a path to sanctity (cf. CCC 2013); there is a sharing in the *paschal mystery*, a participation not only in the suffering but the glory of Our Lord (cf. Rom 14:7-8; Col. 3:17). It all begins in the home, or the domestic church (cf. LG 11) where hope and selfless love are intertwined. Hope is the virtue that corresponds to the happiness that God has placed in our hearts, the yearning that we have for Him (cf. CCC 1818). Our Holy Father reminds us, "Vocation and hope go together in God's plan for the happiness of each man and woman, all of whom are called by name to give their lives for others" (*Pilgrims of Hope: The Gift of Life*).

Like so many of us, when I think of mothers in general, and my mother in particular, what comes to mind is the many loving and heartfelt ways that they demonstrate and provide affection, guidance, warmth and care. A mother's day is filled with a myriad of selfless gestures, deep concerns, prayer and worry, stress and joy, cooking and cleaning, shopping and driving, loving every step of the way, loving in a life-giving way, loving and not counting the cost. The gift of self, putting the good of her children and family before hers; teaching and disciplining, cherishing and nurturing - fostering the growth and maturity of her beloved ones. This side of Heaven we will never know how much our mother's love, attention, and generosity have shaped us into who we are today; protected from danger and comforted in our sorrows. Mothers have a special place in God's heart and in his saving plan for us. Let us take the time this year to remember with fondness



and gratitude our mothers; let us love them, honour them and bless them, and let us respect them as they grow old and need love, attention, and care from us.

On this Mother's Day I wish to extend my blessing on all mothers. Thank you for everything you do for your families, the Church and the world. Through your daily acts of love, often hidden and humble but profoundly meaningful, you witness to God's love and are a sign of hope in the world. I encourage and pray for you and all mothers who embrace their vocation. May you seek daily to build the foundation of your children's lifelong relationship with God and be beacons of hope in the world. Please know that you are loved and appreciated and that your motherhood is not only important, it is sacred. May the Blessed Mother intercede and inspire you every day as "Catholic Moms", may your love for the Risen Lord increase daily, and may you continue your Pilgrimage of Hope in this life as an inspirational example of God's love whose fullness we will experience in the life to come.

God bless our mothers powerfully and abundantly.