

**John 14:23-29** <sup>23</sup> Jesus replied, "All those who love me will do what I say. My Father will love them, and we will come to them and live with them. <sup>24</sup> Anyone who doesn't love me will not do what I say. And remember, my words are not my own. This message is from the Father who sent me. <sup>25</sup> I am telling you these things now while I am still with you. <sup>26</sup> But when the Father sends the Counselor as my representative -- and by the Counselor I mean the Holy Spirit -- he will teach you everything and will remind you of everything I myself have told you. <sup>27</sup> "I am leaving you with a gift -- peace of mind and heart. And the peace I give isn't like the peace the world gives. So don't be troubled or afraid. <sup>28</sup> Remember what I told you: I am going away, but I will come back to you again. If you really love me, you will be very happy for me, because now I can go to the Father, who is greater than I am. <sup>29</sup> I have told you these things before they happen so that you will believe when they do happen.

**Revelation 21:22 - 22:5** <sup>22</sup> No temple could be seen in the city, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. <sup>23</sup> And the city has no need of sun or moon, for the glory of God illuminates the city, and the Lamb is its light. <sup>24</sup> The nations of the earth will walk in its light, and the rulers of the world will come and bring their glory to it. <sup>25</sup> Its gates never close at the end of day because there is no night. <sup>26</sup> And all the nations will bring their glory and honor into the city. <sup>27</sup> Nothing evil will be allowed to enter -- no one who practices shameful idolatry and dishonesty -- but only those whose names are written in the Lamb's Book of Life. <sup>22:1</sup> And the angel showed me a pure river with the water of life, clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb, <sup>2</sup> coursing down the center of the main street. On each side of the river grew a tree of life, bearing twelve crops of fruit, <sup>1</sup> with a fresh crop each month. The leaves were used for medicine to heal the nations. <sup>3</sup> No longer will anything be cursed. For the throne of God and of the Lamb will be there, and his servants will worship him. <sup>4</sup> And they will see his face, and his name will be written on their foreheads. <sup>5</sup> And there will be no night there -- no need for lamps or sun -- for the Lord God will shine on them. And they will reign forever and ever.

### “The Homemaking God”

Since this is Mother's Day I thought I might give this sermon a different title than what is printed there in the bulletin. Once I really got to sit down and mull the passages it seemed that a good title would be, “God: the Happy Homemaker”. This being because Jesus says there in John that he and the Father will come and make their home with us. They do this by sending to us the Holy Spirit who is God personally present with us. And yet, we just don't speak of the Holy Spirit on his own for the Holy Spirit brings to us the Father and the Son and their loving relationship and includes us in it so that we are at home with them and they with us...God with us...a happy home. This may sound confusing and complicated but what we get with the presence of the Holy Spirit with us is that God includes us in the relationship between Jesus and the Father and this is a comfort. It is the peace that Christ has given to his disciples, his brothers and sisters. With the gift of the Holy Spirit God has made his home with us and given

us a home in God's very self. It is a home in which we learn to trust God's steadfast love and faithfulness.

In the reading from the Book of Revelation John describes a vision he had of God and the Lamb coming and making their home, the temple, among people and he also describes the living water that flows from the middle of the city. Once again we have Father, Son, and Holy Spirit at home among people with the coming of the New Jerusalem. If you remember from last week, I said that the new Jerusalem is the Church and don't think institutional Church as in buildings and programs, but rather think loving fellowship of people like we have here at Claude and which is true of most Christian communities all around the earth. God, the Holy Trinity, has made his home among humans in the midst of small Christian fellowships and from this home flows peace and healing into the world.

But wait a minute! This is Mother's Day and here we are talking about Father and Son. This seems to be more of a Father's Day sermon. What happened to mother in the Christian understanding of God. Can't we have Father, Mother, and Son making the Holy Spirit to be the Holy Mother? After all, in Genesis Chapter one God made humanity male and female so that humanity might procreate and become family and God said that this is in his image. If that's the case shouldn't there be a mother figure in the Trinity?

It may seem that way, but going on what we have in the Bible the mother figure would rather seem to be the creation as a whole who as in Romans chapter eight groans in labour pains while waiting for the day when the New Creation comes forth. Or, as in the Book of Revelation chapter twelve, the Mother figure appears to be the Jewish faith from which Christ and the Christian faith comes forth. Although the Bible does have a few places where God is given motherly qualities, the Bible does not place Woman in the Godhead but rather in the creation. This does not mean that the Biblical faith is patriarchal or misogynist (misogyny is the hatred of women). In fact, if you do a survey of ancient religions that had women gods you will quickly see that they degenerated into fertility religions that involved prostitution. Moreover, if you want to see what Christianity would look like with a mother god read the Da Vinci Code. As it appears there Christianity would simply be a pagan-like religion that used the human reproductive experience as the climax of spiritual experience. Believe it or not that there is no mother god in the Biblical faith has probably served to protect women as much as or more so than the fact that patriarchal and misogynist men have used the Bible to abuse women.

But, enough on that, I will speak tongue in cheek here for a moment. Maybe, I'm not too far off in making the Mother's Day sermon sound like a Father's Day sermon. After all, isn't Mother's Day a celebration of and a giving thanks for and to that person in our lives who rather anonymously and receiving no glory was always there making sure everything was happening according to schedule, who taught us love by spraying Bacteen on our scraped knees so that we screamed and wailed in excruciating pain, who spit shined our faces with a saliva soaked Kleenex, who tucked us in bed at night and taught us to say prayers, who hummed soft songs and cuddled us in the hopes that we would get

sleepy and stay asleep at least for a few hours, who worried for our lives every time we were sick or were out with our friends whom she never seemed to approve of, who lived with the obsessive fear that somehow we would bring shame to the family name, who spends untold hours feeling as if she's inadequate at mothering, and who refrained from knocking us silly every time we attempted to make her think she was inadequate in her mothering so that we could get some toy...and all the while the men folk got all the glory. They got to ride the lawn tractor in the restful silence of a humming engine clutching a beer and when it was all done they just sat by the roadside on their bright shinny lawn tractors saying cheers to everybody who drove by. And then there's the ultimate glory of running the grill. Mother's just miss out on that one completely like its human instinct.

Anyhoo, though we don't speak of a mother figure in the Trinity, the Holy Spirit truly brings to us the mothering side of God. The Holy Spirit is the God we know by personal presence with us who does everything for us that the Father and Son take glory for and the Holy Spirit does it rather anonymously. The Holy Spirit never shows up with the red dress on saying “Worship me. Baby, I'm your God.” No, the Holy Spirit simply shows up in peace, in comfort, and in correction saying, “if you want to know who I am then you must know and understand the Father and the Son and their relationship and what they have done for you because I give you their name and their relationship and I give it to you personally so that you may have faith and trust our steadfast love and faithfulness to you and that you may know you are one of the family.”

Yesterday, in prenatal class I learned that human babies learn that they are part of family and become able to trust their parents by the skin to skin contact and the mouth to breast feeding and the eye to eye staring and the constant presence and care that mother's give them. It is a unique relationship and bond in which a child intimately knows the steadfast love and faithfulness of another and so it is with the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit gives us abiding home in God in life in the same way mothers give babies that faithfulness and love that creates faith and makes for an abiding home in life. So thanks Mom and thanks Holy Spirit. Amen.