

MOTHERS & GOD

(Luke 2:41-52)

Many mothers experience what Mary experienced with Jesus

- The shock of a surprise birth announcement (Matt 1:18-25; Luke 1:26-56)
- The horror of losing her son during a trip (Luke 2:41-49)
- Being dumbfounded by what was said about him (Luke 1:26-35, 39-45; 2:17-18; 25-35, 47-50)
- A treasure chest filled with promise and foreboding (Luke 1:28-33, 46-48; 2:19, 33, 51)
- Embarrassing public comments her son made about his parents and family (Matt 12:38-50; Mark 3:31-35; Luke 8:19-21)
- The premature death of her son [and husband?] (John 19:25-27)

Jesus helps parents with hope and fear, joy and disappointment

QUOTES OF NOTE

My children will soon be young adults. They are breaking, as they must in our culture, the oppressive bond of the parent, to become distinct individuals. I walk by their rooms at night and sometimes feel a catch in my throat. I picture the day when the house will be empty. The small agonies and heartbreaks, the triumphs at school or on a soccer field, the long discussions, the intimate life of our family will change, kept alive by common memories, visits and sporadic conversations. But this too will become less vivid. I dread the time the children leave. This is what it means to be a parent. It hurts. All love hurts....

Love means living for others. Many parents know this sacrifice, not the temporary sacrifice made to assist another, but the daily sacrifice to create life at the expense of our pleasure, career and dreams. There is drudgery and difficulty in this self-denial. It is not easy. But by giving up parts of ourselves for others, by accepting that we must be willing to lose life to create and preserve life, we honor the core of the commandments. The commandments hold out to us the possibility of love. (Chris Hedges, author and war journalist, *Losing Moses On The Freeway*)

How can one learn to live through the ebb-tides of one's existence? How can one learn to take the trough of the wave? It is easier to understand here on the beach, where the breathlessly still ebb-tides reveal another life below the level which mortals usually reach. In this crystalline moment of suspense, one has a sudden revelation of the secret kingdom at the bottom of the sea. Here in the shallow flats one finds, wading through warm ripples, great horse conchs pivoting on a leg; white sand dollars, marble medallions engraved in the mud; and myriads of bright-colored coquina-clams, glistening in the foam, their shells opening and shutting like butterflies' wings. So beautiful is the still hour of the sea's withdrawal, as beautiful as the sea's return when the encroaching waves pound up the beach, pressing to reach those dark rumpled chains of seaweed which mark the last high tide. Perhaps this is the most important thing for me to take back from beach-living: simply the memory that each cycle of the tide is valid; each cycle of the wave is valid; each cycle of a relationship is valid. And my shells? I can sweep them all into my pocket. They are only there to remind me that the sea recedes and returns eternally. (Anne Morrow Lindbergh, *Gift From The Sea*)