Mother's Day
Rolling Meadows - 1964

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IN NOMINE JESU

Genesis 2: 18 And the Lord God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him.

AND GOD CREATED WOMAN!

One cannot come to this day without a sincere prayer of thanksgiving for the blessing of our mothers. For almost all of us they were our first teachers of prayer, of language, and of manners. What they gave to us in faith and love largely gives the color and warmth to this day of love and memory. Nevertheless In an age which is largely given to over-sentimentality and sheer romanticism, ~~however,~~ we do well to examine carefully what the Scriptures say about motherhood. Giving birth to a child does not make a woman a good mother, any more than standing at a marriage altar makes her a good wife. Here, actions speak louder than words. Before she can be the kind of a mother God intended her to be, she must first be the kind of wife God intended her to be. This is the order of creation: first a wife, then a mother. The terse account of our text makes it clear: And the Lord God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him.

Woman was not made to be a idol, set up on a pedestal and adored, ~~or~~ nor is she a piece of property to be used and discarded. She is God's special handiwork - the completion of God's creation. To God she owes her existence, just as does man. From God she has received the dignity of being human, just as man was singled out for that divine favor. To God she is responsible for the gift of life, just as is man. There is a divine purpose in the existence of woman: The Lord God said, It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him. Woman does not live by herself alone, in splendid isolation from the rest of creation, to pursue an unknown purpose. She exists to be a companion, not a competitor. She fulfills her mission in life when she helps rather than hinders, giving rather than demanding, encouraging rather than nagging. She is at her best when she is herself as God intended her to be.

Woman is not man. This fact, rooted in biology and confirmed by any perceptive psychology, can be ignored only by an artificial civilization which causes men to forget their manliness and makes women ashamed of their womanliness.

We cannot improve upon God's creation by making men out of women, the net result of which is often to make women out of men. Man was made by God to be a man, and woman was made to be a woman - a helper fit for man, endowed with similar intelligence, similar powers of communication, and complementary emotions to enrich life with the joys of intimacy and companionship. Man and woman were made for each other by a good and gracious God. It is in God's plan that, attracted by the allure and charm of woman, a man will leave his father and mother and cleave to hi wife, and they become one in that union of body and soul, of mind and personality, which we call marriage. Man was made by God to be attracted to women that he migh love his wife, protect her, and provide for her. Woman was made by God to be attractive to man that she might love her husband and, in the freedom of that love might be a helper to him. This is part of the natural order of creation. Human history demonstrates that society ignores God's natural order only at the price of its own corruption, collapse, and dissolution.

Woman is not man's toy but his helper. That sounds more practical than romantic, and it probably is. Someone has said, Not since the age of chivalry has so much activity revolved around the idea of romantic love as in contemporary life. What has this overemphasis on romanticism, which is basically an escape from real life, had upon the lives of women? Has it given them greater happiness - or greater security? That question can be answered by the fact that the chances of a marriage ending in divorce are six times greater today than they were in 1900.

The lot of a wife and mother is not easy. On the average, women probably work harder and longer than men. At home they have more responsibilities and often carry them out better than men do their fewer household duties. In this age, when woman has also come to be an economic asset away from home, she very often has to combine the role of office or factory-worker, nurse or executive, with that of housewife and mother, working all day away from home and all evening at home to help keep the family going and to keep it together. This is the role to which God has called her. She is a worker fit to take her place alongside man, at her happiest and best when she is helping.

The great God arranged things well when He made woman the mother of man. When all is said and done, this is one of woman's greatest contributions to our world - to be a good mother - not only to bring children into the world, but to use her considerable influence in raising boys to become mature men and girls to become mature women. Motherhood becomes sacred only when woman recognizes her sacred obligation to be a wife to her husband and a mother to her children. A rea mother will be a helper fit for her man, neither satisfied to have her children raised by a nursemaid nor intent upon tying them to her own apron strings for her own selfish enjoyment or satisfaction. Commenting on his own age, with it crumbling morals and disintegrating society, St. Augustine remarked, Give us other mothers, and we shall have another world.

What does it take to be the kind of wife and mother our world needs? Knowledge of the statistics on marriage and divorce has never produced a happy hom Modern woman can discuss the facts of life more freely than she could a generation ago, but mere knowledge of the facts of life can never produce a better moral climate or a happeir life. Modern woman can read columnist after columnist, acquiring a whole storehouse of jargon on female behavior and child care, but no psychology has ever been found which is able to give her the one capacity she needs the most to be a real woman - the ability to give of herself, which is love in its highest form. Such love can only be found at the foot of the Cross!

Woman is not an exquisite China doll, fragile and perfect. She is woman, caught as easily as man - and sometimes more easily - in the web of sinful desire and willful transgression of God's Law that corrupt the human spirit and lead eventually to degradation. As much as any man, every woman is a sinner in need of redemption. In the judgment of a righteous God, gossip is a sin incurring the penalties of His Law just as much as violation of the commandment prohibiting infidelity and impurity. Both are affronts to the truthfulness and holiness of the just God, and both have the same effect of destroying the fabric of human society. There is redemption and hope for woman, as there is for man - in Jesus

Christ, the Savior of all. The fact is that God gave woman the greatest honor of all, making her the agent for His plan to redeem the world from its sin. When the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth His own eternal Son, made of a woman made under the Law, to redeem them that were under the Law. God made Him to be sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.

Keeping faith with Christ, Christian women are doing their part to bring the light and warmth of love to our cold world. While men fled, faithful women had courage enough to follow Christ along the Way of Sorrows and to stand beneath His Cross. That story has been repeated down through the ages. It is true today - where women have shown themselves to be more concerned about the judgment and favor of God than about the judgment and favor of associates in business or of partners waiting at the gulf course. Refusing to be immobilized by their own weaknesses and shortcomings, such women day by day take on new strength from the assurance of forgiveness and the promise of life in Christ, their Savior. They go from strength to strength - woman's strength, empowered by their faith in Christ to be what God intends them to be.

It is not easy for a woman to be strong in our anxious, fearful, and highly competitive world. The answer to her problem will not be found in an attempt to go back to the good old days. One third of the working force in our country are not going to quit their jobs tomorrow. We are not going to revoke women's drivers' licenses and watch a good part of our population grind to a halt. For many women today there is no prospect of return to the exclusive role of housekeeper. We cannot tell our girls to stay at home, learning to bake and reading romantic novels till the right man comes along, when he is having a date with the girl at the office or on the college campus. Women cannot spend their time wishing for changes that will not take place. She must meet the demands of modern life by being herself - fortified by faith in Christ and confident that God as a loving Father watches over those who put their trust in Him.

God created woman to fill a specific roll in life. Woman is at her

greatest and best when she is a helper with a heart for the God who made and redeemed her, with a heart for the man whom she sustains by her help, with a heart for the children who are the fruit of her womb, with a heart for the world that needs heart more than anything else it lacks today. Amen.