



ANGLICAN
MOTHERS UNION
AUSTRALIA

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK FROM MOTHERS UNION AUSTRALIA
- SUNDAY 31 MARCH 2019

Mothering

Mothering Sunday can be a celebration of the human qualities that have been traditionally attributed to women/mothers. When a modern father takes a crying baby from his distraught mother we rejoice that this behaviour is no longer seen as weakness or effeminate. We can rejoice that the Scriptures have drawn images of God as both Father and Mother. And that great theologians and writers have continued to both experience and write of Jesus like a mother, gentle with her children. (St Anselm of Canterbury)

Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it! How often have I desired to gather your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing! Luke 13: 34

Members in Ghana are a motherly presence as they care with the love of Christ for their chicks in need of spiritual and practical help. May God watch over the child-led families in their communities and we thank God for Mothers' Union members modelling a role of love and care.



ANGLICAN
MOTHERS UNION
AUSTRALIA

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK FROM MOTHERS UNION AUSTRALIA
- SUNDAY 7 APRIL 2019

Justice and mercy

Justice is an attribute of God. The prophet Micah puts it in the same bag as kindness and humility. Our Lord Jesus followed a just path between the Scribes and Pharisees and the belittled and religiously marginalised. Justice is also translated righteousness, so when we are in right relationship with God we can be said to be justified. Mercy has also been referred to as loving kindness. The closer we walk with God the more chance we have of seeking to do justice and to love kindness. Beware the wolf that lurks under the name of justice, but which is retribution and revenge.

He has told you, O mortal, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God? Micah 6:8

In the midst of civil strife fuelled by the desire for retribution and revenge, our members in the Democratic Republic of the Congo are seeking to do justice by showing God's mercy and loving kindness and ministering to their communities. Let us pray for God's mercy and justice of their work.



THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK FROM MOTHERS UNION AUSTRALIA

- SUNDAY 14 APRIL 2019

Holy week

The utter intensity of the last days of Jesus's work on earth has been played out throughout Christian history. From the very first days the events imprinted on Our Lord's followers such passion and faith that as the gospels unfold in their various details, we are given an undeniable sense of His Presence, human and divine. From those first days until now remembering, walking with Our Lord and his disciples has brought Christians to faith. If it is important to know that Jesus walks beside us in our daily lives, how much more important is it that we poor creatures walk beside him in triumph, in breaking bread together, in betrayal, trial, torture, and the forgiveness of enemies. Then we too may truly recognise the Son of God.

And the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. Now when the centurion, who stood facing him, saw that in this way he breathed his last, he said, "Truly this man was God's Son!"
Mark 15:38-39

The suffering of Jesus resonates with the women in Papua New Guinea. Mothers' Union members are planning for a large Parenting Programme that will empower individuals to change their communities and their families from abuse to love and forgiveness. We pray with them for younger members.



THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK FROM MOTHERS UNION AUSTRALIA

- SUNDAY 21 APRIL 2019

Abundant life

Like everything in life, Abundance is relative. Consider our perception of 'enough' and sense of fairness, for example. Scrooge has everything at his fingertips but cannot perceive of richness. Bob Cratchit bore his wretched working conditions but found an abundant life in the love of his family. Dicken's characters seem extreme but the point for a Christian – his novel is placed at Christmas, the celebration of God's overwhelming generosity to the human race – is mindfulness of God's good, true gifts around us everyday.

The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly. John 10:10

Grace in Tanzania is a participant in the Mother's Union programme for achieve 'spiritual and

socio-economic transformation'. She speaks of the church savings group as having helped her life, family and church. 'I did have anything to contribute. Now I can. Before, I couldn't help another person.' Abundant life for Grace is seen in terms of service for others. Thanks be to God.



ANGLICAN
MOTHERS UNION
AUSTRALIA

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK FROM MOTHERS UNION AUSTRALIA
SUNDAY 28 APRIL 2019

government

For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.

Early Christians, mediaeval Christians, 21st century Christian all associate these words of the prophet Isaiah with Jesus Christ. Jesus rules our hearts and mind, his love affects our judgement of others. The burden of his government is light and his demands are easy. We mortals pray for peace and justice to all; Thy Kingdom come. But government of church, nation, Mothers' Union, indeed we, all of us, are burdened with the frailty of our human nature and will suffer under this frailty until our life's end.

His authority shall grow continually, and there shall be endless peace for the throne of David and his kingdom. He will establish and uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time onward and forevermore. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this. Isaiah 9:7

We thank you loving God for the work of our members in Guyana, particularly in the hinterland. We pray for their efforts to protect families and vulnerable children through challenging times as they work under the government of Jesus the Prince of Peace.



ANGLICAN
MOTHERS UNION
AUSTRALIA

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK FROM MOTHERS UNION AUSTRALIA
SUNDAY 5 MAY 2019

Christlikeness

1 May the mind of Christ, my Saviour
live in me from day to day,
by his love and pow'r controlling
all I do and say.

2 May the Word of God dwell richly
in my heart from hour to hour,
so that all may see I triumph
only through his pow'r.

3 May the peace of God my Father
rule my life in ev'rything,
that I may be calm to comfort
sick and sorrowing.

4 May the love of Jesus fill me
as the waters fill the sea;
him exalting, self abasing:
this is victory.

5 May I run the race before me,
strong and brave to face the foe,
looking only unto Jesus
as I onward go.

Katie Barclay Wilkinson 1859-1928
(Public Domain) AHB 537; TiS 609

Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness. And being found in human form. Philippians 2:5-7

Loving God, hear our prayers for our members in Kenya as they bear Christ to their neighbours and communities. On the west coast members have embarked of the Eagle Process which they hope and pray will strengthen community engagement.



THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK FROM MOTHERS UNION AUSTRALIA

SUNDAY 12 MAY 2019

Joys and challenges

1. Forth in thy name, O Lord, I go,
My daily labour to pursue;
Thee, only thee, resolved to know,
In all I think, or speak, or do.
2. The task thy wisdom hath assigned,
O let me cheerfully fulfill;
In all my works thy presence find,
And prove thy acceptable will.
3. Preserve me from my calling's snare,
And hide my simple heart above,
Above the thorns of choking care,
The gilded baits of worldly love.
4. Thee may I set at my right hand,
Whose eyes my inmost substance see,
And labour on at thy command,
And offer all my works to thee.
5. Give me to bear thy easy yoke,
And every moment watch and pray,
And still to things eternal look,
And hasten to thy glorious day.
6. For thee delightfully employ
Whate'er thy bounteous grace hath given,
And run my course with even joy,
And closely walk with thee to heaven.

Charles Wesley (Public Domain) AHB 480; TiS 571

The most challenging verse of this hymn of joys and challenges is verse 3. It is omitted in AHB 480 and TiS 571. Charles Wesley's faith made keen by self examination and self awareness are very evident. He has given us a veritable treasure with which to meditate.

My brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of any kind, consider it nothing but joy, because you know that the testing of your faith produces endurance. James 1:2-3

AMARE in Argentina has accepted the challenge of mediating in situations needing conflict resolution. Joys and challenges are involved in supporting and disciplining families. We offer our prayers to God for their work.



THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK FROM MOTHERS UNION AUSTRALIA
SUNDAY 19 MAY 2019

Life-work balance

Perhaps modern times has produced the first society which as whole has felt the need to contemplate Life-Work balance. The weather doesn't stop us doing anything, we work and play in airconditioned comfort, day and night, it makes no difference, except... We are out of tune, unbalanced; we have no natural markers for light, for rain, for a season or a time under heaven. Let us live life accepting the rhythms of rest, work, enjoyment and love of God's created world as told in the Book of Genesis. Rest is Good, our Creator did it. Work well and then walk in the cool of the evening in God's good company.

For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven: Ecclesiastes 3:1-8

Members in Uganda work with the love of Christ shining through their outreach in their communities. We pray that they are able to be refreshed from their labours.



THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK FROM MOTHERS UNION AUSTRALIA
SUNDAY 26 MAY 2019

Peace and Reconciliation

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace:
where there is hatred, let me sow love;
where there is injury, pardon;
where there is doubt, faith;
where there is despair, hope;
where there is darkness, light;
where there is sadness, joy.

O divine Master, grant that I may not so
much seek
to be consoled as to console,
to be understood as to understand,
to be loved as to love.
For it is in giving that we receive,
it is in pardoning that we are pardoned,
and it is in dying that we are born to eternal
life.

St Francis of Assisi (*Public Domain*)

All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting the message of reconciliation to us. 2 Corinthians 5:18-19

Mothers' Union is a grassroots organisation in Angola but it is empowered by being part of Worldwide 'Christian care for Families'. We give thanks to God for this unity which enables an Angolan representative to attend and speak at the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women. As one body we CAN bring Christ's peace to the world.



THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK FROM MOTHERS UNION AUSTRALIA
SUNDAY 2 JUNE 2019

Thy kingdom come

Jesus' prayer shows his deep desire for the love of God to reign in every heart. He wants the King of Creation to guide us and keep us on the path of holiness. We show that we are 'already translated into the kingdom of the Son of his love (Col 1:13) by caring for the prisoners, the sick. If we need more guidance let us turn Jesus' parable.

Hymn Reference: Thou didst leave Thy throne and Thy kingly crown. [Emily E. S. Elliott](#)
[AHB 206 \(Verses 2 &3\)](#)

"Pray then in this way: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Matthew 6:9-10

The vulnerable children whose lives are changed by the work of Mothers' Union in Thailand must certainly know that the kingdom of God has come into their lives. The kingdom finds itself fully realized in the restoration of family life nurtured by the members into whose hearts Jesus has come. Thanks be to God.



THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK FROM MOTHERS UNION AUSTRALIA
SUNDAY 9 JUNE 2019

Gift of the spirit

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
Praise Him, all creatures here below;
Praise Him above, ye heav'nly host;
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost!

Thomas Ken 1637-1711. (*Public Domain*) AHB 573

There is always some reaction to a gift, from the polite to the exultant. Bishop Ken's doxology brings together all we know and love of the Holy Trinity and what we need to do – sing praises. Praise encapsulates the thanks, the wonder, the thrill of the gift. When we read the account of the day of Pentecost in Acts, we can visualize being there. When we read Jesus's promises in John's gospel, we are acutely aware of our need of an Advocate and a Comforter. We sing our praises with all the company of the faithful throughout the ages.

If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!" Luke 11:13

Gloving God, give comfort in the form of your Holy Spirit to the people of Madagascar and to our members who serve them. Strengthen them as 'the impact of climate change is visible and real' (Assistant Bishop Samitiana Jhonson) in the form of cyclones and plagues affecting both humans and their crops.



ANGLICAN
MOTHERS UNION
AUSTRALIA

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK FROM MOTHERS UNION AUSTRALIA
SUNDAY 16 JUNE 2019

Fatherhood

As the abuse of women and children in institutions, homes and churches is made public, we pray that models of fatherhood are defined according to the nature of God presented in the Christian scriptures through his Son, Jesus. The father of the prodigal son runs to greet him who disobeyed and dishonoured him. Hear our prayers, heavenly Father, for your loving kindness to tend us. May the Mothers' Union be strong in guiding fathers and mothers into the way of love.

See what love the Father has given us, that we should be called children of God; and that is what we are. 1 John 3:1a

Members of Mothers' Union in Jamaica have been both mother and father to an elderly lady. From living in a dark and poorly ventilated room from which she was unable to leave, she moved into her own house, funded, built and furnished with the loving, respectful care of the children of God.



THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK FROM MOTHERS UNION AUSTRALIA
SUNDAY 23 JUNE 2019

-

- The marginalised

Where do the margins come from that exclude and denigrate? There has to be insiders for there to be outsiders. The margins are drawn by our understanding of what is acceptable. Perhaps the margins are drawn tighter the more blame is cast, the more marginalised people there seem to be. Certainly the psalmist appears to believe the wicked, and not the poor, are to blame. The rule of thumb here is to give, maintain, rescue and deliver. Our pattern and guide is Jesus Christ, forever leading us to generosity of spirit.

Give justice to the weak and the orphan; maintain the right of the lowly and the destitute. Rescue the weak and the needy; deliver them from the hand of the wicked. Psalm 82:3-4

[SEP] Mothers' Union, in the country with one of the highest rates of inequality in the world, South Africa, is committed to building a more inclusive society. Members are passionate about fighting gender-based violence and restoring relationships broken by gang violence, family trouble or lingering conflict. Our prayers and blessing be upon them all.



THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK FROM MOTHERS UNION AUSTRALIA
SUNDAY 30 JUNE 2019

- Time to rejoice

Nothing available until the new families worldwide arrives