

MOTHERS DAY REFLECTION BY SISTER MARIANA TEVUREGA THE WOMEN MINISTRY
COORDINATOR FOR CARITAS FIJI.

Greetings to All Mothers!

I greet you with the love and courage of Jesus Christ because he is our strength, our hope, and our solid rock.

This year's Mother's Day is being celebrated in the challenging circumstances of the coronavirus, we offer a prayer today for all mothers and we give thanks for the love that they give every day of their lives. We think of those mothers who are no longer with us. We offer a special prayer too for mothers to be and for Godmothers and all who play a maternal role in our lives, whatever faith-based you belong to or whatever ethnicity. During the coronavirus pandemic, a mother's role has been more complicated and difficult.

Mothers around Fiji, especially those in deep crisis, struggling to keep their children healthy and safe—sometimes against long odds. Those of our mothers who have jobs on the frontlines battling COVID-19—health care workers, first responders, essential employees—must balance their concerns for their communities with caring for their own families. Others who have lost their jobs during this pandemic, worry about feeding and educating their children. Then there are those who, in their homes facing conflict and crisis, must cope with COVID-19 amid conditions that make social distancing and other precautions against the virus impossible. My message to you today during Covid 19 "be strong, courageous, and hopeful". Keep hope alive no matter how dark it gets.

I do believe that mothers face additional challenges now more than ever. Their responsibilities have increased especially this time when children are having a long break from school...you are the mother, teacher, and custodian to your children. You monitor their every movement to keep them safe. One thing I want to assure you mothers: IT'S A TOUGH TIME BUT WE WILL GO THROUGH THIS together. Let us keep an eye on our children and educate them on how to stay clean and safe.

We remember women who wish to share in the vocation of motherhood but for whatever reason cannot do so. This one day of the year reminds us not only to say thank you to our mothers but also to examine a little more intently what they have done for us. Of course, we should show our gratitude to our mothers for the rest of the year, and not just on one special day!

Let us look to our Mother Mary— to be the model for all mothers. Some people don't realize that Mother Mary's motherhood came at great cost. She gave birth in a barn. She found out when she was still a teen that Herod was determined to kill all first-born

children. When Jesus was a teenager, he separated himself from the family pilgrimage and stayed back to teach in the temple. Mary and Joseph did not understand why he did that. Can you imagine what Mary felt like when she heard her son being ridiculed for his ministry? She walked with him to Calvary and stood with him at the foot of the cross.

Mary is a compassionate and understanding model for all mothers in their joys and challenges. As Christians, we believe motherhood is a vocation, a call from God, to nurture, form and love their children. I thank God for all of those women who have accepted the vocation of motherhood and who have given themselves so generously to live out that vocation. Motherhood is not, in any respect, an easy vocation, but we believe that with Mary's example and God's help, it is possible.

So much has been happening recently as Covid 19 creeps into our beloved Fiji. The government is advising us to take the necessary precautions to avoid the spread of the virus. There is so much we have to come to terms with within such a short time. And in times like these mothers I encourage you to take heart and do not fear because the Lord, your God is by your side, an ever-present help in times of trouble. To all our dear mothers I am confident to say that you are bold and brave, full of courage and compassion, and so very loving.

My prayer is that may God guide and protect all mothers in these challenging times and help them to continue to trust in Him all the days of their life.

On a personal note to all our amazing mothers out there: Be strong and courageous; do not be frightened or dismayed, for the Lord God is with you wherever you go.

VINAKA. HAPPY MOTHER'S DAY!

By Sr Mariana Tevurega SM

Women Ministry Coordinator for Caritas Fiji.



Sister Mariana on the Left with Sister Sylvette at the Women's ministry with Caritas Fiji in Suva, Fiji.