

## Mothering Sunday Family Parade Communion

### 1. Show Naomi and Ruth film clip:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KVCv14327MY>

- a. Naomi, the older lady had had two sons who had died. Their wives were called Ruth and Orpah – so what relationship were they to Naomi? Daughters-in-law ... and as, as far as Ruth and Orpah were concerned, Naomi was their... Mother-in-law
- b. The older ones here will be aware that relationships between mothers-in law and daughters-in-law can be a little bit – or indeed, very – tense. One way we handle this is by making up jokes.
- c. For example: 2 men are talking about their families and one says to the other ‘Do you know, I haven’t spoken to my mother-in-law for 18 months!’ So the other asks ‘Why’s that?’ and the first replies ‘I don’t like to interrupt her – to stop her once she’s started!’
- d. What we have in the story of Naomi and Ruth is something very different and very beautiful. What we see is the love of a parent and child developing between people who are not related to each other.
- e. What special relationships do some of us enjoy with people who aren’t direct family or blood relations? Does anyone have a ‘Granny’ or ‘Aunt’ – a Grandpa or an Uncle figure who isn’t actually a relative.... Or vice versa – are there adults here with ‘grandchildren’ who aren’t actually their own?... or Godparents / Godchildren... any other examples? Aunts who are ‘Second Mums’?
- f. So let’s celebrate the way love can be shared between people who aren’t actually grandparents, parents and children and let’s pray this prayer:
- g. ‘Thank you, Lord, for the caring that takes place between people who aren’t grandparents, parents and children – between aunts and uncles, nephews and nieces: between cousins: between godparents and god children – and between special friends of different generations. Amen.’

2. Show Hannah and Samuel clip

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GoweoY7KPbk>

- a. Hannah had a real struggle to have a baby. For a long time she didn't think she would ever have one. Then, when she did, she was full of gratitude. She gave thanks to God and dedicated her child to God. She didn't keep her most precious possession to herself. She shared it with God with thanksgiving.
- b. Who or what do we care for? What are our prized possessions – (to adults...) children, grandchildren.... (To children... brothers, sisters, parents.... Pets, toys...) How good are we at sharing them with others? How good are we at thanking God for the joy and pleasure they bring?
- c. Let's seek to learn from and follow Hannah's example by praying this prayer: 'Lord, help me to share what I care for most in the world with you – and to thank you for them and the joy they bring'

### 3. After Mary and Gabriel story

- a. On television just before Christmas were four really good programmes called The Nativity. They told the story of Joseph and Mary falling in love, preparing to get married and then of Jesus being born. How many of you saw it?
- b. What came over very clearly were the difficulties that faced Mary as she prepared to have Jesus. Her situation, as a young mother, was very difficult indeed. People didn't approve of her having a baby as she was. She had to make the difficult journey from Nazareth to Bethlehem when heavily pregnant, just before giving birth. Even when they got to Bethlehem and were desperate for somewhere to stay, people who they were expecting to shelter them didn't let them stay.
- c. So the circumstances of Mary and Joseph becoming parents were very difficult indeed.
- d. Similarly there can be huge difficulties for people expecting to have babies today.
- e. It's nice and warm now, but when it was really cold and freezing before Christmas, do you remember stories on the news about babies being born in houses and cars because people couldn't get through the snow and ice to hospitals?
- f. And what about in places where there have been and are real difficulties at the moment? Japan – the earthquake and tsunami devastated area, really difficult for parents bringing children into the world... really difficult for children and other family members, including the old to be looked after... Libya and other countries where there is fighting going on.
- g. So let's pray for all the people who are trying to bring babies into the world or look after those they love in very difficult circumstances:
- h. Dear Lord, please look after mother's having children, like Mary having Jesus, in very difficult situations. Be with families in Japan. Be with mothers, fathers, children and grandparents trying to look after each other where there is war and danger. Thank you for the love and care which surrounds us. Amen.