

**Mother's Day Mass with Women at Bexar County Jail
May 13, 2019**

One hundred and two years ago – today, May 13 – Mary our Mother appeared to three shepherd children in a town called Fatima in Portugal. The three children were a boy, Francisco, and two girls, Jacinta and Lucia. Mary came to give hope to the world and to call us to deepen our love of God. War had been tearing the world apart and would continue to. Families were torn apart, people were hurting, and there were many who were lost. Our Blessed Mother's feastday is a perfect way to remember Mother's Day, because of what power God gave to mothers, and to women everywhere.

The oldest shepherd child was Lucia. She had the hardest time of all three children, but Our Mother was there to comfort her. I want you dear sisters to hear the words of Our Lady of Fatima, and hear her talking directly to you: "My daughter... Are you suffering a great deal? Don't lose heart. I will never forsake you. My Immaculate Heart will be your refuge and the way that will lead you to God." This is the power of a mother, to comfort her children in their distress. The heart that God has put into women is a heart that knows how to reach out to others. It is a part of the genius of women, and God has blessed the world with all of you.

Today you are here, separated from family and friends. I know that this hurts you and that you long to be out there with those you love. But also, today we are here together, and we are here with our beloved Mother and our loving God. So, may we celebrate Mother's Day in that spirit, a spirit that reminds us: "Don't lose heart!"

I want you to remember your hearts now. The prophet Isaiah called us to always live for God saying: “I rejoice heartily in the Lord, in my God is the joy of my soul.” Rejoice heartily, dear sisters in God. Rejoice from the heart. Use that great gift God gave you and let your hearts expand with love for the Lord, for our Blessed Mother, for your family and friends. The pain does not take away the love, not in the power of God. God helps us to rejoice heartily.

Hear God calling you in the Psalm: “Listen to me, daughter; see and bend your ear.” You are his beloved daughter, and he has given you life so you can experience his love, and share that love with others. He has given you a heart that knows how to magnify love and care for others. Even here in this place you can exercise that great gift. “Hear the word of God and observe it.”

So, on this Mother’s Day, may we ask Our Lady for her great motherly help. Open the eyes of your hearts now. Bring to heart your own mothers. Whatever the relationship with her, or even if there was no relationship with her, bring her to heart. If you yourselves are mothers, bring to heart your children. Let their faces become clear to you, and even if it hurts, remember your love for them. Ask Our Lady to help you let go of any hurts or pains that stand between you and those you love. Let God renew the gift of heart that he has put in each and every one of you, and may you rejoice heartily. Do not lose heart my dear sisters. It is Mother’s Day, and you are daughters of the most high God and of our dearly beloved Mother Mary.

We love you. We are praying for you always. You are not forsaken or forgotten. Happy Mother’s Day, and may God bless you.