

A Mother's Day Litany

Written by Members of the Cakes for the Queen of Heaven Group
Meeting many years ago at First Parish Unitarian Universalist, Cohasset
(Member included Carol Martin, Joan Kovach, and Kay Mixon, among others)

The bond created between a mother and child at birth and sustained throughout a lifetime is at its finest moments nurturing and empowering. Many of us are mothers; each of us had a mother. This litany honors all mothers: the ones who hear this and the ones who are present only in our thought or memory. It was written with gratitude for every act of mothering given and received.

- ❖ For being a care giver, a cook, a carpenter, a curtain hanger, a costume designer, a cosmetologist, and a computer expert
- ❖ For mending overalls and fences and broken hearts
- ❖ For saying "yes" to her church, her community, the schools and her family
- ❖ For saying "yes" with her heart when her head was saying "no"
- ❖ For being strong enough and wise enough to say "no" when it was clearly not the popular response
- ❖ For kissing a forehead, a hurt knee, a bruised ego, and cautiously kissing her adolescent son
- ❖ For being there when a child or a friend cried and crying with them
- ❖ For doing loads of laundry, mountains of ironing, stacks of dishes and pails of diapers
- ❖ For listening to spelling words, book reports, and endless excuses; for eagerly listening to the vents of everyone's day, for the cry in the night, for the door to latch and the phone to ring; for listening and always hearing
- ❖ For cutting the grass, cutting your hair, cutting our dresses and valentines and rarely cutting corners
- ❖ For being present in the sickroom, the boardroom, the bedroom, the classroom and the birthing room, and for always making room
- ❖ For wearing a macaroni necklace, everywhere, all day
- ❖ For always remembering birthdays and anniversaries, but promptly forgetting your angry words
- ❖ For admitting she hated to bake, but willingly volunteering cupcakes for birthday parties, bake sales and school open houses
- ❖ For silently enduring Elvis and Elton, the Beastie boys and the Beatles, heavy metal and rap at any volume
- ❖ For babysitting, sitting through all those school assemblies and programs; for sitting on hard bleachers and cold benches; for sitting out the storms and sometimes on her feelings
- ❖ For working when she didn't have to, to keep her interests alive; for working when she didn't want to, to help her family survive
- ❖ For treating each school play or concert like a Hollywood opening night
- ❖ For giving her daughters choices and her sons a doll
- ❖ For being a mediator, a minister, a mechanic; for marketing and for entering the marketplace
- ❖ For the labor of childbirth, doing manual labor, and for every labor of love

- ❖ For being both our harshest critic and our strongest advocate
- ❖ For balancing the checkbook, a baby on her hip, a career and a household, a full schedule and the affections she showed each of her children
- ❖ For making certain every phone call, each argument and all your days ended with “I love you!”
- ❖ For being a nurse, a nanny, a needle woman, a nurturer, a nutritionist and a nice lady
- ❖ For typing your term papers, helping you with salt and flour maps, science fair projects, and show and tell; for getting through English once when she was a student and again with each of you
- ❖ For being a den mother, a room mother, a gold star mother, a working mother and your mother
- ❖ For learning, as you grew older, the subtle difference between mother/parent and mother/friend
- ❖ For being a short-stop, a short-order cook; for baking short bread and shortening hems, and for never coming up short
- ❖ For baking and basting, bartering and bribing, for buying and beautifying, and providing blessings and belonging
- ❖ For knowing the season for planting gardens and kisses
- ❖ For putting up with spiked hair, dyed hair, and the D.A., Mohawks, mushrooms and mousse; for giving Toni Home Permanents, for trying to learn to French braid; for gently getting out tangles, for crying when you had your first haircut, and for quietly getting through the “bad hair days” – yours and her own
- ❖ For wiping your tears and your bottom
- ❖ For insisting on piano lessons but letting you choose the trumpet or drums, then smiling sweetly through countless hours of “Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star”
- ❖ For teaching, for tailoring, for being tactful, for taxiing, for tutoring, for toilet training and for always trying
- ❖ For accepting wet kisses and warm hugs, our anger, our rejection, and our faults, that you would grow away from her, that you’d forget to clean up your mess, and yet one more piece of art work for the refrigerator
- ❖ For someday mothering her own parents
- ❖ And finally for all the waiting...waiting to use the phone, waiting for the last kid to make it in at night, waiting for the pot to boil and the roast to cook, waiting for everyone to finally make it to dinner on time or at once, waiting in an emergency room, for the doctor to call back or the fever to break, waiting for nine months, waiting for a hug, a burp, a thank you, waiting for the repairman, waiting in checkout lines and registration lines, waiting for the car keys to be returned, waiting for the in-laws to leave or a sister to arrive, waiting for you to finally grow up and make something of yourself, waiting for your return home at the holidays, for waiting and waiting and patiently waiting.