

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

Reflecting on creation, the great Victorian poet Gerard Manley Hopkins, S.J. (1844-1889), expressed his reaction in “God’s Grandeur”:

The world is charged with the grandeur of God.
It will flame out, like shining from shook foil;
It gathers to a greatness, like the ooze of oil
Crushed. Why do men then now not reck his rod?
Generations have trod, have trod, have trod;
And all is seared with trade; Bleared, smeared with toil;
And wears man's smudge and shares man's smell: the soil
Is bare now, nor can foot feel, being shod.

And for all this, nature is never spent;
There lives the dearest freshness deep down things;
And though the last lights off the black West went
Oh, morning, at the brown brink eastward, springs —
Because the Holy Ghost over the bent
World broods with warm breast and with ah! bright wings.

The octet (the first eight lines) of the sonnet presents a rather gloomy picture of reality. The sestet (the second six lines) provides something of a real antidote to the darkness. That antidote is the presence of the Holy Spirit protecting the world with its “warm breast” and “bright wings,” a picture of the caring mother bird.

Father Hopkins’s sonnet, it strikes me, is a fitting way to connect Mother’s Day and Pentecost. The Holy Spirit hovers, as it were, guarding us and inspiring us with the kind of care and concern that one can only associate with a loving mother. If we find our mothers caring and loving, then we have experienced just the merest of God’s loving care for us. Just as we look to our mothers when we are young for the loving concern that we all need, we should look to God’s Spirit for the guidance that we need to live our lives each day.

For our benefit, maybe Mother’s Day and the Solemnity of Pentecost should always coincide!

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I owe Cal-Riley Creel a double apology. Cal-Riley, who has been very generous with his time and talent, is Holy Name’s Altar Server of the Year. We did not receive proper information about the annual banquet, so Cal-Riley missed that event. I was supposed to present him with his award at the six o’clock evening Mass on May 4, but I forgot that little responsibility. Cal-Riley, as a

result, has not received the recognition that he richly deserves because of his generosity. He will receive the certificate at the six o'clock Mass this Sunday evening.

In our Lord,
Donald A. Hawkins, S.J.
Pastor