

**2019-03-31 ... 6.30pm Mothering Sunday Memorial and Thanksgiving**

**Revd Canon Judy Hunt**

**Exodus 2: 1 – 10; John 19: 25b – 27**

**Introduction ...**

**'It's at times like this when you know  
who your friends really are'...**

That's often said by someone who is going through a tough time – for whatever reason ... and it may be that you have said it fairly recently ... when the person you have come here to remember ... died or perhaps when they were very ill and you needed support:

**It's at times like this when you know  
who your friends really are.**

And those friends may, or may not, be family members.

Looking at our 2 Bible readings – we see a mixture:

**In Exodus, chapter 2:** the Israelite or Hebrew mother of the baby – desperate to keep him alive – she relied on her daughter ... but also on a very unlikely source of help – the daughter of the Egyptian ruler.

Then in **John's Gospel chapter 19:** when Jesus is dying on the cross ... he wants to make sure that his mother is cared for ... and he asked a friend, a disciple ... not any of his brothers or sisters ... perhaps there had been a breakdown in relationship at that point between Mary and her other children ...

**It's at times like that when Jesus knew  
who his friends really were – and who  
he could trust with the care of his mother.**

**Today's name ...**

I looked for a card to give to my mother today. In one way, it was easy to choose – she loves flowers and so any card with flowers on the front would be appreciated. But the words on the front were a different matter. They all had **'Mother's Day'** whereas I wanted the 'proper name' of **Mothering Sunday**.

Why? Because **Mothering Sunday** reminds us that care can be given by friends as well as family ... and that God's care for us includes the kind of care traditionally associated with Mothers as well as the kind of care traditionally associated with Fathers.

And it's also a reminder that the Family of the Church is there to care for all ... all people, all ages ... whatever their own family situation ... and often God gives care to us through other members of our 'blood' family, or the church family ... or friends.

**Conclusion ...**

So today, as we've gathered to remember those who have died ... and we've done so on Mothering Sunday:

Some are remembering Mothers ...

**PTO**

Some are Mothers – or Fathers – remembering their children ...

Some are other relatives or friends ...

All of us are invited to live as members of God's Family, all are invited to live as friends of Jesus ... and in that way we'll know, we'll continue to know – in a positive way – **who our friends really are** ... and we'll be privileged and grateful to count Jesus as one of them.

Amen.