

CELEBRATING MOTHER'S DAY

Uniteens

OVERVIEW

Both Mother's Day and Father's Day are wonderful opportunities for teens to share their experiences with each other about parents and family life—since these relationships are so central to their everyday lives. These holidays also provide the backdrop for teens to contemplate the nature of God, as they explore the concepts of the divine feminine and the divine masculine, or God as divine mother and father, and how those qualities express within them.

The *Chicken Soup for the Soul* series offers a number of good stories and personal essays on parent-child relationships. The Uniteens will read “A Mom’s Life” from the original *Chicken Soup for the Soul* and afterwards, will discuss the “messages” that they get from their mothers, both positive and challenging. In small groups, teens will be invited to write a “poem” recording a series of “mom messages” from their own mothers, including encouraging phrases along with the more “nagging” ones. They will then find a creative way to present their poems to each other.

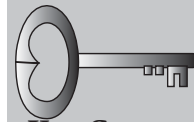
WELCOMING MOTHER'S DAY

Beginning Experience: Group Collage

Invite Uniteens to create a collage as a group showing the desired qualities of their “ideal mom.”

Gather the opening circle.

Opening Prayer: Discuss how the Native Americans see the earth as our “mother,” the source of all living things. Mother's Day is a good opportunity to honor our mother earth. Pray by reading the speech from Chief Seattle on p. 10, *Earth Prayers* or invite a teen to read. After praying, ask, “How is the earth like a mother?”



Key Concepts

The nature of God contains both feminine and masculine aspects, and so do we.

Taking the time to explore and understand our relationship with our mothers helps us to appreciate them more.



Materials

- Poster board
- Magazines for collage
- Scissors
- Glue sticks
- Markers



Earth Prayers
Speech from Chief Seattle,
p. 10

Joysongs 
“The Earth Is Our Mother,” p. 27, *Circle of Song*

“She’s Got the Whole World in Her Hands,” adaptation from #314, *Wings of Song*



Book
Chicken Soup for the Soul
“A Mom’s Life” p. 105



Mother’s Day

Joysongs: Choose one or more from the song selections.

Love Offering: “Mother/Father God, we acknowledge your power and presence in all things, in all people. We affirm that your loving presence within us is a constant reminder of the divine connection we have with each other and all living things. We give these offerings with an open heart, knowing that as we give, we receive. We thank you for the knowledge of this Truth, in the name and through the nature of Jesus Christ, our Wayshower. Amen.”

Opening Sharing: Invite teens to view their group collage and contemplate: How does God express in them as the “ideal mother” or the divine feminine?

Give them an example of a divine feminine quality if they need one, such as nurturing or loving. Then, invite them to go around the circle, say their names, and one of the “Mother God” qualities that they see in *themselves*. For example, “I am Travis and I am loving,” or “I am Colleen and I believe in myself.” They are welcome to repeat words that have already been spoken.

EXPLORING MOTHER’S DAY

Invite a teen to read: “A Mom’s Life,” p. 105, *Chicken Soup for the Soul*. Encourage the volunteer to dramatize the reading, speaking the phrases as if they were being spoken by a “real mother.”

After reading, ask:

- What might have been some of the things that were happening in this “story,” as the mother was speaking these phrases?
- The title of this piece is “A Mom’s Life.” According to this writing, what do we know about a “mom’s life?”
- What is the life of her child like, do you think?
- Did any of these phrases or “messages” sound familiar?
- What are some of your mother’s favorite things to say to you?
- What does she say to encourage you?
- How do you feel when she encourages you?

Meditation: Invite teens to find a comfortable place to sit on the floor. Take a deep breath in and then slowly let it out, breathing in a rhythm that is comfortable for you. Allow the floor or the chair to support you and simply relax your body. Invite any stray thoughts or concerns to float away gently from you. They are no longer needed here.

And now as you take in a breath, gently move to the place of God within. This place does not rest in a specific area of your body, but rather is within your consciousness. It is a place of divine presence, a place where you are one with God.

As we rest in this divine awareness, I invite you to think about all of the gifts that you are thankful for today, and especially from your mother or mother substitute. Let us also remember how blessed we are by our divine parent, our Father / Mother God who is always with us—loving us, protecting us and guiding us every step of the way.

Let us open our hearts to this for a few moments in the Silence. *Allow 1-3 minutes in the Silence or however long your group is comfortable.*

Thank you, Mother / Father God for this opportunity to appreciate who we are and how we are loved. In the name and through the nature of our friend, Jesus the Christ. Amen.”

EXPRESSING MOTHER’S DAY

You may choose to offer one or more of the following creative activities.

Option 1: Mom Messages

Invitation: Form teens into small groups of three and invite them to work together to write a similar piece as “A Mom’s Life,” using the messages and phrases that they often hear from their own mothers. Remind them to include the encouraging and positive phrases their mothers speak, along with the more challenging ones. After their “poem” is written, invite them to find a creative way to present it to the bigger group, using all of their small group members.

Option 2: Web of Life Drawings

Invitation: In Chief Seattle’s speech about the web of life, he talks about our interconnectedness with all things—how we are all interdependent upon all living things for our lives.

Invite teens to: “Draw the web of *your* life. Show where you are on the web. Show the people or things that are important to you on your web... and how you are connected. Include those from earlier years as well as present. Since this is Mother’s Day, be sure to include your mother and/ or other significant nurturing persons in your life.

What are you receiving and what are you giving to your mother and others within this web of life? Find a way to show the gifts that are given and received by drawing them or writing words about them on your web. When this is complete, share it with another person.”



Materials

- Writing paper
- Pens



Materials

- Paper
- Pens



Materials

- Writing paper
- Pens
- Drawing paper
- Markers or colored pencils

Option 3: A Letter of Appreciation

Invitation: Invite Uniteens to write a letter of appreciation to their mothers, thanking them for the qualities of the divine Mother they see in them. Or, they may want to create a card with a picture on the front of it that expresses one of those important qualities that their mother expresses.

SHARING MOTHER'S DAY

Invite teens to gather in a closing circle and share one thing they are thankful for about their mothers. Sing another joysong and end with *The Prayer for Protection*.

The light of God surrounds me
The love of God enfolds me,
The power of God protects me,
The presence of God watches over me.
Wherever I am, God is.
And all is well. (optional)