

Scriptures:**Acts 9:36-43**

The Death of Tabitha (Dorcas) shakes the village of Joppa. She was the maker of beautiful clothes, a person who was always kind to those in need. These early Christian believers know that the resurrection of Christ ensures her life with the Creator, but their grief is still so deep. One of the threads that has held their community together has unraveled. They call for Peter to come, reaching with hope for a miracle. The words, "Tabitha, get up," are now enshrined as we remember her being raised from the dead.

The grief of this community over the death of one of their daughters resonates with the grief of indigenous families and communities whose daughters have been murdered or who have gone missing. They also reach with hope for a miracle. They stitch together red threads to mark their tears, and empty red dresses hang from trees and houses to remind the community of those who are missing. Like Dorcas, they have become makers of dresses. Empty dresses like empty tombs awaiting resurrection.

Revelation 7: 9-17

In John's vision, we glimpse the glory of the throne room of the Creator. A multitude of people from every tribe are dressed in white and are worshiping Christ. An elder asked: "Who are these, robed in white, and where have they come from?" John said to him, "Sir you are the one who knows."

The elder replied "These are they who have come out of the great ordeal; they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. For this reason, they are before the throne of God and they worship him day and night within his temple. They are sheltered. They hunger no more. They thirst no more. For the Lamb at the center of throne will be their shepherd and he will guide them to springs of the water of life, and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes."

I envision the girls and women who wear red dresses entering the spirit world and stepping into the crystal water which flows from the throne of the lamb. They step out of the water in dresses now white and stand before the One who has set them free. The Great Spirit performs the wiping of tears ceremony for each of them. And they cry no more.

Sermon Notes:

On Mother's Day we honor all women who are life bearers and nurturers in our communities. We remember women who have loved and mentored us. We also remember women who disappointed us and even abandoned us. We realize that they were wounded and scarred. We recognize the grief of a mother who loses her child. Lost and missing. Or lost to death. It is the deepest grief. We remember the women who first asked for a Mother's Day, devoted to prayer to end war. Mothers were tired of sending their sons and daughters into violence and death. Mothers still pray at their children's cradles and at their children's graves. They pray for the Redeemer to come.

May 5 was chosen for MMIW Awareness Day because it is the birthday of Hannah Harris, a Cheyenne woman who went missing in 2013. It does not go unnoticed by me that this happens in the season of Spring, and for those of us who are Christians, it is Eastertide, the time to celebrate the promise of new life and resurrection. It is a season for planting seeds and watering them. May our actions to raise awareness lead to just actions and change. Change in our systems of justice. Changes in our legislation. Changes in our Response to violence. Changes in our Hearts.

History of Mother's Day:

The modern holiday was first celebrated in 1907, when Anna Jarvis held the first Mother's Day service of worship at Andrews Methodist Episcopal Church in Grafton, West Virginia.^{[1][11]} Andrew's Methodist Church now holds the International Mother's Day Shrine.^[1] Her campaign to make Mother's Day a recognized holiday in the United States began in 1905, the year her mother, Ann Reeves Jarvis, died. Ann Jarvis had been a peace activist who cared for wounded soldiers on both sides of the American Civil War, and created Mother's Day Work Clubs to address public health issues. She and another peace activist and suffragette Julia Ward Howe had been urging for the creation of a "Mother's Day For Peace" where mothers would ask that their husbands and sons were no longer killed in wars. 40 years before it became an official holiday, Ward Howe had made her Mother's Day Proclamation in 1870, which called upon mothers of all nationalities to band together to promote the "amicable settlement of international questions, the great and general interests of peace."^[12] Anna Jarvis wanted to honor this and to set aside a day to honor all mothers because she believed a mother is "the person who has done more for you than anyone in the world".



Wikipedia

Pray for Peace on Mother's Day

Pray for the end of violence.

Pray for the end of the exploitation of women and girls.

Pray for the end of human trafficking.

Pray for the end of all wars.