



Deep loss, Mothering Sunday online service will hear this weekend.

Mothering Sunday brings great joy for some but for others it touches on deep loss or unfulfilled longings, the Church of England's Mothering Sunday online service will hear this weekend.

The Bishop of London will pray for those experiencing sadness, as well as for those for whom Mothering Sunday brings joy, in the pre-recorded service broadcast from the Old Deanery of St Paul's Cathedral.

She will lead prayers for families suffering economic or emotional distress and for those who despair for their children in places of danger and deprivation.

The service will hear reflections from the Church of England's Deputy Director for Racial Justice, Rev Dr Sharon Prentis, and Rev Amy-Elizabeth Sheridan, Vicar of St Stephen and St Hilda, Audenshaw, Manchester.

There will also be hymns sung by St Martin's Voices, based at St Martin-in-the Fields, in London.

In her opening remarks, Bishop Sarah says: "This is a day of great joy and gratitude for some. For others, it touches on deep loss and unfulfilled longings.

"Some live equally fruitful lives without ever becoming parents. Most who do have children experience periods of sharp anxiety about our parenting skills.

"Many adults have complicated relationships with one parent or both. And there are people who have no biological children who play vital, nurturing roles in the lives of the young people life sets in their path.

"Today we want to rejoice in the gift of motherhood, but we are hugely aware of the sensitivities on which we may tread."

She adds that God loves, nurtures and 'holds all of us', whatever our circumstances, relationships or shape of our household.

God is always with us, in our joys, our longings, our grief and our questioning, she says.

In her reflection, Rev Dr Prentis speaks about the 'bigger and more expansive' picture of how the essential qualities of mothering reflect the love of God,

"God protects and nurtures which are the essential qualities of what mothering is all about," she says.

Rev Sheridan says: "Families come in different shapes and sizes and there is one thing that is always constant – and that is love.

"Love is the foundation which grounds and secures us that holds us tight in the depths of sufferings and celebrates with us in the heights of joy.

“Mothering Sunday for me celebrates the gift of love from He who is love.”

A [service for Mothering Sunday](#), on the Fourth Sunday in Lent, with music by Andrew Earis and St Martin's Voices, will be broadcast at 09:00 on Sunday March 10 on the Church of England's Facebook and YouTube channels.

The Church of England has streamed a national online service from parishes across the Church of England every Sunday on Facebook, YouTube and the Church of England website at 9am for four years, with thousands joining together online to worship.

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