



On your marks

The passage from 2 Corinthians 1:3-7 is a very apt one for Mothering Sunday, which is, as we all know, a time of very strong emotions for many: those who are grateful for their mother or for their children, those who want to be mothers and can't have children, those who have lost their mother or their child, or who had a less than perfect relationship with their mother or with their child, or those who are mothers and don't want to be.

Mothering Sunday is a time to celebrate the comfort we receive from our own mothers, from God our perfect parent and from the mother church. But it is also a day to acknowledge the pain associated with family life: the suffering we all go through at the hands of our parents, children, church family or simply by dint of being alive in a painful world.

Here is a very easy simple way of dramatising the reading for an all age service. It shows the way the cross shaped posture can be a crucifixion or a hug reaching out to everyone: suffering and comfort come together.

You might want to introduce it by talking briefly about hugs, who likes getting a hug, who is good at giving hugs, and asking when do mums give hugs? When you hurt yourself, to say they love you, at bedtime, when you're setting off for work or school or on a long journey... God is the perfect parent, better than even the best mum or dad in the world. I wonder how he hugs us?

Get set

You will need a team of five actors and a narrator. Nobody needs to learn lines, but the actions, though simple, should be rehearsed so that they flow smoothly. Try to make a clear difference between the open hug and the crucifixion posture by having the head very clearly up or down and the arms curved forwards (for the hug) or flung back (for the crucifixion). The actor playing God should stand in the centre in a neutral posture until indicated. It might be appropriate to have God played by a woman.

Go!

1 Script

The reading today is from 2 Corinthians 1:3-7.

Praise God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! The Father is a merciful God who always gives comfort.

God holds out his arms in an open hug, head up

He comforts us when we are in trouble...



Actor A steps out from audience with head down and shoulders slumped, and steps into God's hug

So that we can share that same comfort with others in trouble.

*A turns round to face audience in front of God, head up and arms out in the same hug as God's.
Actor B steps out from audience, slumped and head down as A used to be, and walks into A's hug*

We share in the terrible sufferings of Christ...

A and B take up crucifixion posture side by side in front of God

But also in the wonderful comfort he gives.

God's hands rest on A and B as if hugging them together. A and B's open arms change into the open arms of a hug and heads raised. C and D come out downcast from audience and step into A and B's hugs

We suffer in the hope that you will be comforted and saved. And because we are comforted, you will also be comforted, as you patiently endure suffering like ours.

Hold the hug posture

You never disappoint us.

You suffered as much as we did, and we know that you will be comforted as we were.

A B C and D all face audience with heads up and arms out in an open hug

2 This might be an appropriate time to share the peace.

3 Prayers could be focused around giving and receiving comfort: for those suffering in the world, in the church overseas and at home, those suffering in hospital or schools and workplaces locally or nationally.