

Today is a special day, so special in fact that some of you might have received cards to mark it.  
'Rejoicing with you on Laetare Sunday!'  
'Have a Refreshing, Refreshment Sunday'.  
Retro card 'Happy Mid-Lent'.  
Congratulating you for your endeavours so far and encouraging you to continue to the end.

This the 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Lent has a very different feel to the rest of the season, it is about remembering that discipline and sacrifice is not about woe and gloom but rather about rejoicing and celebration.

Excitement building, overflowing like Epistle Reading

Excuse me then for a moment if I indulge in such overflowing.

Card said 'Revving up for Barhain' go on admit it that was what was on the card you received today, wasn't it?

Today special F1

Children don't share excitement – boring.  
Ironing, washing boring.  
Still did it, now it is different things  
Advice.

As we journey through Lent we should be learning to trust more on God, which means in turn that we should be willing to take God's advice more, to follow God's will more, to consult God firstly and weigh everything else in the light of that, not the other way around. If we stand still and take stock we know what God has done and will continue to do for us. We know that the self sacrificing of the season is for our good and to help us grow into a better relationship with God, but it is good to actually acknowledge that, to take time to rejoice in that overwhelming love of God that surrounds us each and every day.

Being a mother isn't easy, advice isn't always taken even when asked for.

Being God isn't easy, for a lot of the time God is taken for granted, even by those of us that say we believe, but God never stops loving us, never stops caring for us, never stops wanting the best for us, never stops worrying about us and never turns away from us even when we disagree.

Mother Church, Bride of Christ Revelation.  
Tells us what to do Lent. Don't always like it.

Just like God, my mother is patiently waiting to mingle her tears of joy and sadness with mine as she holds me in her arms and heart.

Okay I admit it I know what the cards you sent and received said, they said 'Happy Mothering Sunday', didn't they? Today is the day to say thank you to our Mother's even when they shout at us and get us to do things we would rather not do. Today is a day to rejoice that we are loved by such special people. Today is the day to say thank you to God and the church, even though it too sometimes shouts at us, reminds us that we aren't doing the things we ought to be doing and are doing things we ought not to be doing. Today is a day to rejoice that God cares and loves us and always will because we are God's children. Today is a day to give thanks for the times when we receive refreshment and to rejoice that through that refreshment we can grow in love and understanding. And of course it is a time of give thanks for and return some love to our earthly mothers.

Laetare, Refreshment, Mothering Sunday, is the oasis in the dessert that is Lent, time to drink deeply and remember the love and support that surrounds us so that tomorrow as we head back to the barrenness of Lent we are recharged for the rest of Lent. Knowing that the overflowing sorrow that will pierce our hearts as we approach Golgotha and acknowledge that it was we ourselves that meant Christ suffered so, will be superseded by an overflowing joy on Easter morn.