



Don't forget to honor the mothers in your life this month . . .

Dear Friend:

Greetings from all your friends at Focus on the Family! It's my hope that you and your family are healthy and safe. As this letter is being drafted, our nation has come to a standstill amidst concerns about the coronavirus. This is truly an unprecedented time in America's history, but our team at Focus is praying that, by the time you read this, our country and the world at large will have made significant progress in slowing the virus and our national and global economy can begin recovering.

Meanwhile, I hope you were able to connect in meaningful ways with your loved ones during the shutdowns caused by the coronavirus outbreak, and that you are looking forward to celebrating our mothers this month. Indeed, with Mother's Day approaching, perhaps you're making plans to honor the mothers and grandmothers in your life. Although my own mom passed away when I was a child, Mother's Day offers an opportunity for me to reflect on her life and the lasting impact she had on me. I'm also grateful to be married to someone who is a wonderful, godly mother to our sons!

Among all those who will read this letter, I realize each individual will have a unique story and a wide range of impressions and feelings related to motherhood. Maybe you were raised by a loving, supportive mother and you still enjoy a close relationship with her today. Maybe you have a courageous grandmother who stepped up to care for you when your biological mother couldn't. Maybe you were adopted or have adopted your own children and, as a result, you have a special appreciation for that beautiful bond.

I'm aware, however, that many people have complex or even negative experiences with motherhood. There are a multitude of possible reasons for this, but the pain is very real. My heart aches for anyone who has endured more sorrow than joy related to motherhood.

I'm here to say, however, that we serve a redemptive and merciful God who brings healing to life's deepest wounds. He is able to transform our relationships – but even when that may not be possible this side of Heaven, He is more than willing to comfort and encourage us in the midst of any grief or regret we may suffer.

Our team here at Focus is committed to placing a caring arm around moms no matter what they may be going through. We want to help women embrace their divine calling as mothers, offer tangible help and practical advice to those struggling in this role, and come alongside those who may be working through significant pain related to turbulent backgrounds with their moms, mistakes they've made with their own kids, or crises their children may be walking through.

In all these situations and more, there is help, healing, and sustaining grace available for mothers who lean on Christ and look to Him for direction and wisdom.

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The incredible testimony that follows is a moving example of how God has blessed and provided for one woman who embraced motherhood at an unexpected and pivotal juncture in her life:

I know that times can be tough and that circumstances might not be the right ones. Like many others, I was a teen who found myself in a room with a doctor who said, “You are pregnant, but you have choices.” I didn’t know if I was going to be a single mother; I didn’t know if I was going to get kicked out of my home; I didn’t know what was next. But I did know that my baby had a purpose. She is now 13 years old! Our life has not been easy, but it is blessed. I now have five children, and if God sees me fit to have more, I will welcome them with open arms. I am not the perfect mother, and we do not have luxuries. Our house is loud and messy, but the smiles, the hugs, the kisses, and the little voices saying “I love you” give me the best feeling – one I can’t explain. The children have hopes and dreams about becoming the best baseball players, the best business owners, the best dirt bike racers, and the best gymnast. The baby doesn’t speak yet, but I am sure that God has a plan for her, too. I pray that my children will be followers of Christ and that they will bring millions to Jesus. My life did not end at 19 when I decided to walk the unknown journey of motherhood; my life started and my walk with Jesus got better. Thank you for what you do, thank you for the recordings of family topics, thank you for broadcasting the good news of hope through any situation. God continue to bless you. –Diana, California

What a powerful picture of the Lord’s care and tenderness for mothers and their children. I especially love the joy Diana obviously takes in the everyday moments with her kids. She points us to the wonderful purpose that exists as we engage in what may feel like humdrum, routine days.

To be sure, motherhood can feel mundane at times, but the Bible casts a beautiful, eternity-facing vision for this sacred role.

Within the pages of Scripture, we read about mothers who lived with faith and boldness and, in doing so, contributed to God’s grand and sovereign plan for His people. For example, we see a courageous Levite woman who hid her baby from a murderous Pharaoh and then placed him in a basket in the river to save his life (Exodus 2). Think of Hannah, who pleaded to the Lord for a child and then dedicated that son to God’s service (1 Samuel 1). Or consider Elizabeth, who continued to serve God faithfully despite years of childlessness – and then gratefully rejoiced when the Lord gave her a son (Luke 1). And there’s Mary, a young girl of great faith who humbly accepted the seemingly impossible assignment she was given, despite knowing it might cost her fiancé and her reputation (Luke 1).

These women, of course, were the mothers of Moses, Samuel, John the Baptist, and Jesus. God used the obedience of these men’s mothers to carry out His divine purposes and change the course of history – and while these famous moms may seem larger than life to us, it’s important to bear in mind that each one lived a life that was full of everyday, apparently commonplace moments. They cooked, cleaned, faced typical tensions in their marriages, interacted with their neighbors, and undoubtedly experienced days when they were down and discouraged. Yet, through all these things, God honored their trust in Him and saw fit to use them mightily to advance His will.

Today’s mothers have a critical role to play in furthering God’s kingdom as well.

There’s no question that moms have a lifelong influence on their kids, which creates a “domino effect” in the lives of those their kids interact with and even in future generations. From the earliest age, a

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child sees his mother as nurturer, caregiver, and comforter. As he grows, his mother guides and directs his behavior, models the kind of character traits she wants to see in him, and teaches him about the world around him. And, in troubling times like these, moms can help soothe their kids' fears and point them to the eternal hope we have in Christ.

After all, in hard times *and* during seasons of ease, don't we want to raise children who place their trust in Jesus and then live out their faith boldly so that others can come to a saving knowledge of our Savior?

I want to remind all you moms out there that whether you're single or married, whether you work inside or outside the home, whether you are the product of a broken home or a stable family, God wants to use you for *good* in the lives of your children – not to mention all those who will, in turn, be impacted by your kids. He has uniquely equipped you to raise each child He gives you, and He will never leave you or forsake you.

With that in mind, Focus has developed a wealth of content geared specifically toward moms. Our website features broadcasts, articles, books, videos, and Q&As that have been prepared to guide and uplift mothers. And, I'm pleased to report that we've heard from countless women over the years who have shared about the powerful and life-changing impact Focus has had on them as they've raised their kids. We're thankful God has seen fit to multiply our efforts in the lives of so many moms and their families.

The following account that we received from Sue in Minnesota highlights the way our resources have benefitted mothers facing very difficult situations:

I am a wife and mother of four children. Life wasn't so bad – I was blessed to stay home with my children when they were born up until when the youngest started kindergarten. When Zac was born, he was sick for the first two-and-a-half years of his life until the birth of our final baby, Ella. Her newborn screening showed she had cystic fibrosis, and we quickly realized Zac did too. During those difficult days, I often wouldn't express my pain and frustration; instead, listening to Focus on the Family became my alone time. It was God's way of speaking to me. It opened me up and I found myself freely praying out loud and singing and worshipping in the house and the car. Focus on the Family broke down many of the tough walls I had built up over the years. You are a mighty, mighty vessel for the Lord! Zac was diagnosed with adenocarcinoma last year. My 9-year-old boy was battling two terminal diseases. When we told Zac, his reply was, "Well, that sure is a curve ball!" (He is just a bit of a baseball fan.) Zac wears a shirt that says, "Life throws curve balls left and right, but God gave me a bat and He teaches me how to swing." All four of my kids enjoy singing along with me to Christian songs and listening to your programs with me. It has really opened up some doors to cover topics that can be hard to initiate. Life is tough – but God's got us always in His hands. He answers prayers and sends us messages through your programming. I dream of a day I can financially support you more. Again, thank you for all you do. Keep up the good work.

Zac has indeed been thrown some tough curve balls in his young life, but his unflappable spirit and unshakeable faith are an inspiration. Despite the challenges of illness and adverse diagnoses, Zac is living, breathing proof that we all have a role to play in proclaiming God's goodness and faithfulness. And Sue's unconditional love for her children and her reliance upon the Lord embody the high and beautiful calling of mothers who are entrusted with the care of their precious kids.

So, as we prepare to celebrate Mother's Day, I hope you're encouraged to know that we remain wholeheartedly committed to nurturing and supporting mothers in their indispensable role. But we

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cannot do it without your help. Will you share a generous gift today that will help mothers plant seeds of faith and hope in their children?

Your donation will allow us to continue affirming, equipping, and strengthening moms. From counseling resources to online articles to daily broadcasts, podcasts and more, your generous support will allow Focus on the Family to provide practical, biblical help for mothers and others. Mother's Day is the perfect time to honor your mom and the women in your life by giving to provide them with critical resources.

Deepest thanks for your interest in our family-building efforts. It is only by God's gracious hand and the prayerful involvement of friends like you that the Lord equips us to move forward with our vital mission. May He be with you and your loved ones in a special way throughout the days and weeks ahead. Happy Mother's Day!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in teal ink, appearing to read "JDaly", with a stylized, cursive script.

Jim Daly
President

P.S. Will you give today to help us come alongside a mom in need of encouragement and biblically centered advice? Your gift will be sown gratefully into our labors to help families thrive in Christ.

FAMILY FOCUS[®]

FOR OUR PARTNERS IN FAMILY MINISTRY

MAY 2020



Celebrating moms!

Supporting mothers and all parents with life-changing resources.

This Mother's Day, we celebrate the ones who knew and loved us first. But the resources you help provide through Focus on the Family not only support moms, but also dads, stepparents, grandparents, foster parents and anyone who loves and cares for children.

Together, we are providing resources to come alongside mothers and others to help them raise children who are bold in faith. Here's what one mom shared,

"Focus on the Family has walked with us on every step of our 22-year marriage journey. When our three kids came along, the support came again in the voices from Adventures in Odyssey, parenting conferences, and other resources to strengthen our children's walk with the Lord. Focus became a trusted voice for our

family when deciding which books to read and what movies to watch and was a silent partner as we raised our little ones. Soon our journey took a leap of faith as we began to foster children. Many of these children have special needs, and the journey has not been easy. After 10 years, and the adoption of seven children, Focus is still there. You have prayed with us many times at points of crisis or decision-making. You have

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by Jim Daly

God Made Mothers and
Fathers Wonderfully Different

ALIVE 2020
Date Moved!

Free Resources
for Your Family





Daly Focus

By Jim Daly, President

A mom's heart . . .

A mother's heart is a special thing. I know because I've had a front row seat to its compassion and love at work — including in my wife and my own mother.

I've seen my wife Jean's heart melt time and time again by our boys—whether they looked up through tears from a skinned knee or offered her a bear hug after a tough day. My own mother put aside her pain and suffering to give me comfort in her final days on this earth.

I know you agree that mothers are pretty special.

“Her children rise up and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praises her.”

—Proverbs 31:28 ESV

A mother's heart cannot help but respond to her children and that's why I'm so grateful to be part of a ministry that is equipping moms to respond to their children with wisdom and love.

Your support provides parenting resources for every age and stage in life. From our daily broadcasts to our print and online materials to our counseling resources, you are equipping moms and all parents to raise godly children who become successful citizens.

Already, you have helped more than 770,000 moms and dads build stronger, healthier, and more God-honoring families. Thank you for going right to the heart of the matter . . . a mom's heart!

Jim

“Celebrating moms!” Continued from page 1

pointed us toward resources such as “Trust-Based Parenting” and “Empowered to Connect,” shared stories similar to our own, and have been a faithful advocate for adoption in the Christian community. The journey continues and struggles remain, but as Paul tells us in Romans 5, we are to rejoice in our suffering, as suffering produces endurance. We have seen Focus on the Family as a ministry that has held our hand, cried with us, and continues to guide us as we enter each new phase of life. Thank you Focus on the Family for standing tall in a culture that easily gives up when things are tough. The Lord has used you to be a committed voice of encouragement and triumph.”

—Nicole, ON.

Your gifts help provide biblical resources that come alongside mothers and parents like Nicole to help plant seeds of faith and hope in their children.

RESOURCES FOR MOMS AND PARENTS

From daily broadcasts and podcasts with practical, scriptural parenting advice to efforts like our *Plugged In*® reviews, age appropriate magazines like *Brio*® and *Adventures in Odyssey*® audio dramas and *Raising Highly Capable Kids*™ curriculum, your contributions give moms and all parents tools to thrive.

Visit our website, **FocusOnTheFamily.com**, to learn about the online articles, *Plugged In* reviews, print books, magazines, counseling resources and many other materials available to moms and others.

Thank you for your ongoing support that helps our ministry empower moms and all parents to raise children who are bold in their faith. ■

He Said, She Said On *Parenting Together*

God made mothers and fathers wonderfully different

With Dr. Greg and Erin Smalley



Dr. Greg and Erin Smalley share some parenting tips.

GREG: God made men and women different, so it's not surprising that their parenting roles would be unique as well. Sons and daughters alike yearn for love from their father and mother. However, they also have unique longings that each parent must fill.

ERIN: Raising a child of the opposite gender can be tricky, but not impossible. You must be willing to appropriately leave your comfort zone to connect with your child. For example, it is important for me to step out and get in the dirt to play with my son. When a mother reaches out to her son to connect with him on his level, his father should also be teaching his son that he should treat his mother and other women differently than he treats other boys.

GREG: My girls need to know they are deeply, deeply loved, valued and pursued by me. Girls want to know that they are lovely, beautiful and worth their fathers attention. Many bad relationships could be prevented if fathers had given their daughters the love and attention they long for before they went looking for it in other places. Meanwhile our sons need to know that their father is pleased with them and that their dad believes they have what it takes to succeed in this life.

ERIN: For the child of the same gender, modeling behavior, faith and values is essential. Use your unique strengths for the children.



FREE Resources for Your Family!

All of us here at Focus on the Family continue to pray for your family and for our nation during this COVID-19 crisis. We want to help your family thrive, even as you deal with being quarantined together, working from home, searching for critical supplies and other challenges. So, our staff has put together some free resources for you and your family in the face of the pandemic.

Focus@Home

If your family needs some wholesome, curated content, we've put some exciting entertainment options together for you! Focus on the Family has launched a free streaming platform for families called Focus@Home. The platform features some of Focus' most popular content, including the animated video series “Adventures in Odyssey” and “McGee and Me,” and video series and feature films such as “Last Chance Detectives,” “Every Boy Needs a Hero” and “Mully.” To access the free content, simply visit **FocusOnTheFamily.com/Streaming**.

“Thrive at Home” Page

This web page, which is easily accessible right on the Focus on the Family homepage, offers some of our most relevant and helpful resources on marriage, parenting, caring for the vulnerable and sharing your faith. You'll even find family devotions! It's a comprehensive resources list to help your family thrive at home during the coronavirus pandemic.

Adventures in Odyssey Club Free Trial

Try the *Adventures in Odyssey* Club 4-week FREE trial. Get over 900 episodes at your fingertips, audio dramas and more at no cost to you. Go to aioclub.org to sign up.

Prayer and help in your crisis

If you are feeling anxious or have a need, call us at 1-800-A-FAMILY for prayer, recommendations or to set up a consultation with a counselor. We are here for you.

Keep an eye on culture

Go to PluggedIn.com for movie, music and game reviews. Make sure you know what is filling your child's time at home. *Plugged In* will help you navigate pop culture with a biblical worldview.

Focus on the Family daily broadcast

Tune in to our daily broadcast to learn the latest on how the coronavirus may be impacting your family. Learn from experts on how to keep your marriage and family moving forward and be encouraged by testimonies and relevant experiences. You can also download the app to listen any time. Get the latest schedule for broadcasts at **FocusOnTheFamily.com/Showtitle/Broadcast**.

Resources at your fingertips!

Whatever your family needs, go to FocusOnTheFamily.com to find resources that can help you and your family during this challenging time. You can watch podcasts on marriage and family, look up online articles on every topic from helping your children deal with a crisis to tips on financial stress and touch base on all our many resources. If you want some specific help, you can download articles and suggestions for keeping your kids entertained, dealing with crisis, homeschooling and more at **FocusOnTheFamily.com/ResourceLists**.

LIFE UPDATE

Important! Alive 2020 date moved!

The LIFE UPDATE column features testimonies and the latest news on how your support is rescuing babies from abortion and saving moms from the pain and regret of abortion.

As you know by now, our leadership team took the early concerns of the COVID-19 outbreak seriously and moved our ALIVE 2020 event from May to September. While we trust the Lord completely and know that He is in control, we also want to be prudent in our precautions to protect families.

This simultaneous celebration of life featuring live ultrasounds in five different cities—Southern California, Dallas, Chicago, Atlanta and South Florida — is still



on track, just pushed back a little. God has everything in control and will use this event to reveal life to moms considering abortion so that they can choose life.

Please join us in praying for this event, as well as all the families dealing with the coronavirus. We'll keep you informed as the date and details are worked out. For now, please pray and keep an eye on this **FocusOnTheFamily.com/Alive**.



Parenting Corner with Danny Huerta

Help your kids give mom a great Mother's Day!

Danny Huerta is Focus on the Family's vice president of the Parenting and Youth department.

Here are some ideas from Focus on the Family online articles to help you give the mother in your life a great Mother's Day!

A VIDEO MESSAGE. Record a special message from the kids and send it to the mom you love with just a few words about why she is special. She'll love showing it off to others from her phone!

SURPRISE NOTES. Help the kids create Mother's Day notes and place them in

unexpected places, like her coffee mug that she'll see first thing in the morning. Unroll the toilet paper and help the kids write encouraging words for mom to find.

ACTS OF LOVE. A coupon book is a great way to get the kids involved in a Mother's Day gift—coupons for free hugs and kisses, clean rooms, a walk, back and shoulder rub, movie night, help in the years, etc. ■

Equip moms with parenting resources!

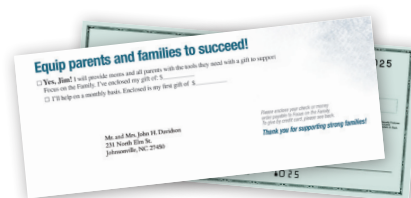
Mother's Day is the perfect time to help moms by providing resources to help raise children boldly in faith.

Your gift today will provide biblical resources that come alongside mothers to help plant seeds of faith and hope in their children. Here's just one example,

"I struggled with how to raise a child. I prayed and prayed. I was flipping radio channels and Focus on the Family was on. I cried because I knew God had answered my prayer. He was telling me that I could raise a godly child and here's how it's done. Over the next years I would be encouraged by the broadcasts, books and resources. My daughter is now a beautiful young woman who loves the Lord. Thank you for being a beacon of hope." —Kymberlee, California

From counseling resources to online articles to daily broadcasts, podcasts and more, your generous support will allow Focus on the Family to provide practical, biblical help for mothers and others. Please use the enclosed reply form and envelope to return your generous gift. ■

Please be sure to include this form along with your gift.



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FOCUS ON THE FAMILY

Empower parents every month!

When you join our *Friends of Focus on the Family* program as a loyal monthly supporter, you'll help empower mothers and all parents every month.

As a *Friends of Focus on the Family* member, you'll receive monthly updates that report on how you are helping us make an eternal impact with practical results for families, as well as special offers and resources. Call 888-862-6767 today.

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