

Quest, Sunday 14h March 2021, Mothering Sunday

Look at the pictures below; how do you think each of these people will behave? What characteristics (e.g. brave, kind, cross, strong) might they have?

How can you work this out?



I guess you tried to work this out for some of them from what job they do. But what about the first two, (or the school children), where we don't know what their job is?

Can we work out how someone will behave from how they dress? Do we behave differently if we wear school uniform or party clothes?

Before you think this is a lesson in the psychology of dress, read the words from St. Paul's letter to the Colossians, below:

## Colossians 3: 12-17

*Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.*

*Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful. Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts. And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.*

Here, St. Paul is essentially telling us how to behave, but he is describing it as though we are putting on clothes. I think this is a brilliant comparison as it suggests we can choose what to put on/how to behave - which of course is true! We are not little robots, programmed to behave in a certain way, but we can choose to be kind or unkind, helpful or unhelpful etc.

And then, of course, how we behave tells other people about us; if we go to church they can guess we are Christians. But could they work this out if they didn't know we go to church?

What has this got to do with Mothering Sunday? Let's broaden that out to a "Whole Family" Sunday. St. Paul is addressing a "Whole Church Family", but his words could apply to any family - to get on and work well together we need to "bear with each other and forgive one another", to be gentle and patient and to love one another.

We've seen a lot of our families over the last 12 months - perhaps more than we would have liked to! (Be honest - have there been times when you've disagreed with your Mum or Dad, or perhaps your sister or brother?)

Now it's time to join the school 'family' again - which may seem difficult after so long at home. But whatever 'family' group we are in, those words of St. Paul ring true.

### Things to do:

1. Design an outfit you could wear to remind yourself of the qualities Paul says we should put on. Or, if you hate drawing, write a list of the desired qualities for the ideal Christian. Or what about the ideal child? Or the ideal Mum?
2. It can be hard and exhausting being a Mum so what can you do to show her you care? It could be as simple as saying thank you for a meal she has made.
3. Make a list of all the qualities we should clothe ourselves with that St. Paul lists. There are 7 in the first paragraph and you might be able to find another 2 or 3 in the second paragraph. Rate them 1 (least important) to 10 (most important). And finally, ask God to help you:

*"Parent God,*

*help us to put on kindness, patience and gentleness each morning as we put on our clothes.*

*Help us to be loving and full of thanks throughout each day.*

*Thank you for our mothers, and for all the people who care for us.*

*Amen."*



