

Roses in May for Horses....and Moms

April showers bring May flowers....

And a special Saturday and Sunday.

The first Saturday of every May is the annual running of the Kentucky Derby. The pageantry, beauty and history of the great American horse race has long captured my interest, as the best 3-year-old racing horses from around the world meet in the Blue Grass state for the “Run for the Roses.” Women wear extravagant hats, sun dresses and heels, men dress in suits. Hundreds of thousands of sun-soaked fans in a little less formal attire fill the infield. Mint juleps are the drink of choice.

The winning horse is draped with a blanket of roses after claiming victory in what is often called the most exciting two minutes in sports.

Honoring such an athletic, graceful creature with a nature’s most beautiful flower seems entirely appropriate for the occasion, especially when a filly wins the race, which has happened just three times in 138 previous races.

At the risk of making perhaps the worst segue in the history of the written word – and unintentionally comparing horses, no matter how graceful and athletic, to our mothers — there’s another event on the second Sunday in May that is worthy of roses as an offering of gratitude and recognition of excellence.



(Image via Flickr, T.Kiya)

Mother’s Day.

The Book of Genesis tells us that from the very beginning, God created “male and female.” From the first woman, Eve, to our blessed Mother Mary, mothers have played the most important role in the continuing existence of the human race as well as the formation of children from the womb to the grave. Motherhood never stops.

Once a mom, always a mom. If my mother has told me once, she's told me a thousand times that no matter how old I get, I will always be her baby...her son.

Perhaps the best role model of what it means to be a mother came from a woman who never had children of her own. Blessed Theresa of Calcutta (Mother Theresa) changed the lives of so many poor children that she cared for, literally saving them starvation, disease and death in the slums of Calcutta. She nurtured children with compassion and love that only a mother could have her children.

But we don't need the Bible or historical figures to show us how important mothers are to our families and our society. We see living examples every day in our communities, in our lives. Every child deserves to have a mother and father - however, our mothers play a unique role in raising us, guiding us, providing unconditional love and giving their very lives in service to our needs.

I wouldn't be much of who I am today without my mother's influence in my life. I'm sure many of you feel the same way. I also see how influential my wife is as a mother to our children and how important her presence is in their human and spiritual development.

So, whether it's roses, some other flower of choice or something completely outside the flower family, make sure to thank your mom this Mother's Day by giving her some token of your appreciation for choosing life and living out the vocation of motherhood as commissioned by God.

So allow me to be the first to offer an early Happy Mother's Day to all you moms out there!

Want to win flowers to be delivered to a mom in your life this Mother's Day? Click here to learn more and enter the Catholic Review's "Make a Mom Smile" Facebook contest! Contest runs until noon on May 8, 2013.