
Youth Sunday Sermon – Kate McDonough

A sermon by Kate McDonough
Youth Sunday – The Seventh Sunday of Easter, Year B

I've been looking through the Bible lately. There's this verse I've heard a bunch of times at weddings, and when people read it, it's almost always to their husband or wife. But as I read it to myself, I couldn't think of anyone other than my mother. I'm sure you know the verse already, but here it is, anyway:

Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. Love never fails.

I was born near midnight in October eighteen years ago. My mother said I was an easy child, but I do not believe her. There is nothing easy about a baby.

My mother was there when I took my first steps. She probably cried. She probably still sees me as that little baby.

My mother was there when I learned how to do "civilized" things, like use a toilet or keep my food in my mouth.

My mother loved me even when I woke her up in the middle of the night. My mother cleaned the floor when I got sick on it. My mother changed my diapers, dressed me, bathed me, fed me, raised me, taught me how to be someone who was somewhat tolerable...

My mother covered me in blankets the first time she took me to Walmart because she didn't want her baby to get sick or be touched by the outside world.

My mother did not teach me that everything could be beautiful; she convinced me.

My mom was there when I broke my collarbone in Pre-K, and she realized that she could not always protect her baby from being broken.

My mom took me to church when I was younger.

My mom RAISED me in the church and taught me that God don't like ugly.

My mom introduced me to God. She always prayed to Him about me, because I was HER baby, her FIRST baby, and, "Oh, God, what did [she] do to deserve such a good kid?"

My mom was there when I graduated pre-school and she cried on the phone when I won the spelling bee in fifth grade. And when I went on to middle school, my mom was the first one to pray for me.

When I came home in seventh grade and told my mom I had no friends, she prayed for me. She prayed all the time. When I told her I hated the people I was surrounded by, she prayed for me, again. When I told her my best friend Sebastien was moving away and that there was no one in that whole school that I tolerated, she had a mini-stroke, and then she prayed.

When I got confirmed in ninth grade, I think my mom cried. But I don't remember. I'm sure SHE does.

I'm sure she remembers when I got mad at the world and wouldn't talk to her nicely—wouldn't talk to anyone

nicely—and how I always took it out on her.

I'm sure she remembers the, "Mom, I don't want to talk to you. I just want you to buy me things and give me a house to live in and leave me alone."

"Mom, I don't want to go to church."

"Mom, you're so annoying."

I remember when I chose to go to a magnet school to get away from all the people that I found insufferable in middle school.

I remember my mom blowing the principal's email up because it was COVID times and this was high school and it just couldn't be like middle school again, it had to be the best for me, and if not the best, then better.

I remember her praying a lot.

You might be happy to hear that high school was better. It was harder. I wouldn't do it again. Ever. But it was so much better.

And my mother was there for all of it.

And I thank God for her all the time. I said my mother prayed a lot, but I prayed, too, you know. I prayed for Him to send me a friend. Maybe two, if He felt so inclined. I have more than two friends, now. But as I look back on it, there's someone he gave me—real early on—that was more important than all of them. And that was my mother. My biggest fan, my biggest supporter.

I wanted to say thank you, mom, and I also wanted to say stop crying, because Lillie will make fun of you if you don't.

I'm not looking at her, but I know she's right over there.

This Mother's Day, I wanted to share with you guys this story of love in hopes that it might inspire you to show love to someone else. It does not have to be your baby, or your lover, or your friend. It could be anyone.

Because it does not take having a great mother to know what love is, and it does not take having a child to know how to give it.

If you are looking for love today, remember that Jesus will always be there to give it to you. And that's who we all need. Someone who cares about us deeply.

I hope that you may all know Jesus' love, and furthermore, I hope that one day you all may give the love of a mother.

Amen.