

## A MOTHER DEFINED BY A CROWN

The choice of which Mass to attend on Sunday was decided for me by a niece who planned an excursion, for the both of us, to see the movie Ironman. In order to arrive on time and manage to eat lunch prior to going to the Cinema, I realized that life would be less rushed if I attended the nine o'clock Mass.

I arrived to find the church filled with young families. Across the aisle from where I was seated, I noticed a young woman wearing a tall yellow construction paper crown, crafted, obviously by the six year old girl who sat next to her. The child touched and admired the handiwork with her fingers. The peaks of the crown were irregular, jagged, but definitely large enough to stand out above the crowd. The regal hat was stapled at the back to fit properly on top of Mom's flowing curls.

I caught Dad, holding a small boy, shoot a wink at Mama with a head nod that said, "Looking good!" Mama smiled, sat up with a straight back and neck that emphasized her royal status and waited for Mass to begin. Of all the mothers attending church that Sunday morning, she was clearly identified by her child's award as Mother of the Day!

At Gospel time, the Deacon, a personable man, who frequently moves down the aisle as he shares his homily, stepped down the altar steps, said nothing, but walked directly to the Queen of the Day. He extended his hand, asked her to follow him, and accompanied her to the front of the church where he asked all of us to wish her, as the representative Mother of all mothers in church, a Happy Mother's Day! We not only rang out our wishes but added a full round of applause to the absolute joy of the child who clung to her Father laughing in glee!

Mom, who looked slightly embarrassed, hid it proudly and well. Obviously she must have promised her daughter that she would wear the crown all day. As she returned to her seat, she gave her daughter and son a warm kiss. She and Dad gave each other a secret smile. Every mother at Mass felt proud and honored by this small gesture of love that became a silent homily to all mothers.

On the way home from the movies, I saw gatherings in back yards where the holiday was being celebrated, houses surrounded by multiple cars belonging to visitors. My niece and I also were given the surprise of two lovely pink carnations from the owner of the Chinese restaurant where we dined.

Though neither my niece nor I are mothers, the flowers reminded us of our own Mamas who taught us how to be the child whose love designs a crown for Mommy on Mother's Day, an honor to be worn at her Feast for everyone to see.

