

Tending To Our Flowers

As I've mentioned before, I belong to a Christian moms' group called MOPs (Mothers Of Preschoolers), and I enjoy our monthly meetings immensely. Every month, we receive a handout with a little essay that contains advice or words of wisdom from one mom to the rest of us. I found this month's article beautiful and thought-provoking, and things like this help motivate me and give me strength to get through some of those really tough days of being a mom. Hope you like it!

Tending to Our Flowers

by Katherine Craddock

So it is with all of our children – their glory is like the flowers of the field. For each generation, God has prepared an entire garden of flowers. Some, like tiny crocuses, tulips, and hyacinths, bloom early in their lives. Their soft beauty, strong resilience, and beautiful fragrance give us a reminder of hope and resurrection – then sweetly melt away.



Other children burst forth with wild, exuberant colors in their elementary and teen years. Some will blossom and bear fruit later, in the middle of their lives. Other cut flowers will fill our homes with color and fragrance and life until they are suddenly gone.

There are loud, attractive summer sun flowers like echinacea, Russian sage, daisies, and black-eyed Susans. There are thorny briars that burst into rose blooms, and quieter shade plants like hosta and hydrangea who bring beauty and peace to the darkness.



And last of all, there are the plants that have been patiently and steadily growing all along, looking like nothing much. Entire seasons of life can pass before these flowers find their voice. But when they do, the asters and sedums, chrysanthemums and lilies remind us of the beauty that was and is to come.



Who can say which has more beauty or value, the crocus or the rose? Each, when lovingly tended, is unique in its own strength and has no need to be compared.

So whether your daughter walks at 9 months or 19 months; whether your wild son behaves as early as Preschool or not until after college, be encouraged that every child – “gifted”, “disabled”, or “normal”, will bloom with great beauty in the Gardeners’ time.

“All men are like grass, and all their glory is like the flowers of the field.” – Isaiah 40:6

Many MOPs Are SAHMs

I’m not going to pretend to know the latest texting lingo. I know ASAP and TTYL and even oic, but that’s about the extent

of my in-house texting-acronym dictionary. Not that I care too much – it doesn't even make me feel old or out of it because texting itself is amusing to me; not when texters are behind the wheel though, that's just scary. I saw that graphic UK public service video with the girl who was texting and crashed her car. Awful stuff, I DO NOT recommend you watch that; it was incredibly disturbing. But anyway, I **do** know the acronyms I need to know for my chosen profession as a SAHM = **Stay At Home Mom**. And last night, I officially became a member of MOPs = **Mothers Of Preschoolers**.

It was really different and very nice – after dinner I left the house **alone** for a change. Poor hubby got left with all 4 kids and a messy room to get cleaned. I didn't feel guilty; I knew he could handle anything without getting so frustrated he would melt down for the rest of the night, which is more than I could promise for myself. And after all, I had been waiting for my turn to go out ever since Hubby was in his last community theater production and I got stuck home with kids during his rehearsals. But that was a year ago, and in the meantime, there was just never anyplace to go that would have not been more fun with my entire family.

So last night, Hubby fared well; the room was cleaned (sort-of), but the most important thing is that no one was stressed out, and 2/4 kids were actually *asleep* when I got home – BONUS! As for the MOPs meeting itself; it was different than I was expecting...

I was expecting a few women from our church who I know have young children, but when I showed up, the parking lot was full. I went in, feeling a bit intimidated since everyone else seemed to be with a friend or two. And there were about 60 women, dwarfing my prediction of 5 or 10. Not only that, but there was a sign-up table, where I learned that you were supposed to sign up ahead of time in order to be assigned to a group. Oops – guess who hadn't signed up? So I crashed a group, but I knew at least a few of the other women from

church, so it wasn't really like crashing. Our poor friend Jeremy, the teaching pastor at the church, was there to make a church-related announcement, and I've never seen a man look so out of place. He stood before 60 women in a room *oozing* with femininity – an endless sea of scrap-booking supplies, flowers, chocolate, and scented candles... And he looked like there was *anywhere* in the world he'd rather be; it was hilarious. He gave his spiel, left in a quite a hurry, and then we snacked, chatted about our families, and made our scrap-booked our place mats which will be at our tables every month during our meetings. Overall, a very fun evening, and we even got to take home some cute little fall trinkets. I found out that childcare is available, so next month Hubby can have a break too while the kids play. I learned that many MOPs are also SAHMs like me, so we have kind of a girly little community. And that reminds me; I was really amused when the coordinator asked, "Does anyone have any special announcements? We have gifts for any of our members who are expecting or adopting." I guess in a room full of dozens of women in their child-bearing years who already have young children, asking if any are expecting doesn't really come from left field. So of course, not one, not two, but *three* women came up to share their blessed news. Then we also heard from two who had recently had babies and brought them to the meeting – talk about a dose of baby-itis! But for now it's fun to talk about our kids and our lives – I'm the only one in our group with more than 3 children; which surprises me – I thought large families were making a comeback? But for any other moms out there who want to join a fun Christian-based peer group, check out [this link](#) for a MOPs group near you!