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Dear <Salutation>

<1st February 2021>

As I write this letter, I am hopeful we can all look forward to sharing a brighter year together, and I'd like to thank you for keeping Mothers' Union strong and connected throughout 2020, and as we continue to navigate our way through the storm. Within my letter, you will find more ways we can keep our communities thriving and connected today.

Each year, Mothering Sunday gives us the opportunity to thank God for the women who have had the greatest impact on our lives, and to celebrate motherhood for the unconditional love and great sacrifice it can mean.

For others, however, Mothering Sunday can bring mixed emotions, and it can take real tenacity, strength and trust in the Holy Spirit to give love and to feel loved.

For 10-year-old Rosa and her grandmother Wendy, Mothering Sunday has often brought tears of sorrow. Rosa's mother, and Wendy's daughter, Mallow, had spent years battling alcoholism. They tried everything they could to help Mallow, but on 3rd January 2019, she sadly passed away. By the grace of God, Rosa had two wonderful and supportive grandparents who were able to give her a safe and loving home.

This Mothering Sunday, you can give a gift of strength for children like Rosa and mothers and grandmothers like Wendy.

Uniting in Seven Days of Prayer

This year, Mothering Sunday on 14th March is the seventh day after International Women's Day on 8th March. Join us in seven days of prayer, reflection and action. Although apart, we can come together in prayer and empower women all around the world.



If you would like to, you can also dedicate your gift in memory of a loved one.

Wendy often worries about the gap in her and Rosa's age, and about what will happen to Rosa when she is older and less able to look after her. The community they live in is friendly, but there is very little opportunity for Rosa to share her story and her feelings honestly. When Mallow died, Rosa received cards from school, writing about her mum as a bright lovely person, but no one mentioned the addiction. Only her teacher really supported her emotionally and helped her talk about her feelings.

So, it was a huge help for Wendy when she found our Mothers' Union AFIA (Away From It All) holidays and breaks. She and Rosa could come along, rest and find some peace. AFIA also gave them the opportunity to meet other people who had struggles in their lives too, and together they could talk openly, honestly and in safety. Wendy says:

"Here we made bonds quickly and nobody has to pretend anything. Everyone knows by looking at each other that we are all just happy to be here. Isn't it lovely to just stop struggling and help each other, we don't often have that chance. We so appreciate being here."

Rosa's father is from Eritrea, but he is not involved in Rosa's life. For Wendy, it is important that Rosa meets other children who, like her, have a mixed heritage, and through AFIA, they have been able to make friends with families with a similar background.

Rosa loves meeting other families *"where children are like me"* she says.

Your gift this Mothering Sunday can give someone like Wendy the wider support group she needs to help in her mothering role. Enclosed with my letter, you will find our Gifts Catalogue where you can choose a gift like an AFIA experience day, along with many other gifts of togetherness.

Today, Wendy and Rosa are continuing on their lifelong journey, but now they are no longer alone. Wendy is even keeping a diary for Rosa, and so far, she has completed 12 volumes of what she calls their "Grateful Day" books. Rosa will have many questions to ask as she grows, but with your support, she will always have AFIA days to help her find answers and comfort.

Please help us share more gifts of togetherness this Mothering Sunday. Your kindness will bring peace to mothers' hearts, joy to children and kinship across whole communities.

I join my prayers with yours, and I thank you for your support.

Sheran Harper

Sheran Harper

Worldwide President, Mothers' Union

P.S. You can find an inspiring range of gifts of togetherness in the catalogue enclosed. Dedicate a gift to a loved one, and if you would like to, you can also dedicate your gift in memory of a special person in your life.

Thank you.

Registration charity number: 240531



Jackeline is 27, but by the age of nine, she had lost both her parents. With no role model, but a determination to stay in school, she learnt to brew alcohol to sell, since there was so much drinking and alcoholism in her community in Uganda. Today she attends a local parenting workshop, where she learns the skills to meet the needs of her own children.

"My dream for my children is to have a brighter future."

– Jackeline

You can give a gift of togetherness using the catalogue enclosed or by visiting www.makeamothersday.org

