

Congress passed a resolution and President Woodrow Wilson proclaimed Mother's Day as an official national holiday).

**We Have Teenagers...** I'll pray for you. :) Seriously, many teens worship their Moms. Include them by letting each teen add to "The Letter." Give them the importance of building Mother's Day into their value system.

**We Have College Students...** Surprise Mom by flying the kids home. Or, arrange to go there. Give students a heads up one week out so they can get a card in the mail. Call the day before and remind them to give Mom a call.

**Our Children Are Grown...** Hopefully, by now they understand the significance of Mother's Day. Include them in "The Dinner." Encourage them to write their own "Letter." Give them a copy of this article.

**Our Children Have Children...** "The Dinner" is getting bigger! If you are in town, get together. If your grandchildren are out of town, Mother's Day brings great weather nearly everywhere. Pack your bags and go. Respect the traditions your children want to set up. This article may help them too. Remember: Anything with forethought. Forethought is the key to showing that you really care.

Last minute loses.

#### APPLICATION

Why not share this article with other men and agree to implement it together? Learn from each other and share ideas. After Mother's Day, get together and talk about how things turned out. End with a time of prayer for the mothers in your life, asking for God's blessing during the next year.

## A Man's Guide to Mother's Day

Patrick Morley

How can you make this Mother's Day special for the Moms in your life—your wife, mother, mother-in-law, married daughters, daughters-in-law, grandmothers, and granddaughters?

If you're like me, you've probably never done much advance planning for Mother's Day. Yet motherhood is one of the highest callings any woman can have. What an opportunity to change the world for Christ! In this article I want us to stretch our thinking to make this the best Mother's Day ever!

#### FORETHOUGHT: THE KEY INGREDIENT

In a moment we'll talk about a lot of specific ideas you can put in motion. But first, there's one key ingredient that supersedes all others in making a big impression on Mother's Day: forethought. The first principle of Mother's Day is: Anything counts if it's not last minute.

For years I've been a last-minute guy. I'm one of those guys who work the picked over Hallmark card racks on Saturday night after dark. I'm one of those guys at the grocery store florist department on Sunday morning to find the best of the "Is this all that's left?" corsages. I think, Oh, that would be a good idea, when I see the Mother's Day chocolates in the check out line. (Boy am I grateful for those impulse purchase displays).

So what's wrong with that? "Last minute" says "not that important." She will probably never say that—maybe never even think it exactly that way. But "last minute" says, "I didn't care enough to give any forethought."

On the other hand, when we think ahead it shows up in the details. Forethought gives your imagination time to work. "Little things" are what make Moms feel honored. They appreciate something "planned in advance."

#### "THE LETTER"

Idea: Each year write one of your Moms a special letter. Start with your wife. Next year write your own Mom if she's living. A few weeks out, take a sheet of paper and write across the top, "Why I Love and Appreciate \_\_\_\_\_." Every day or two write down something you especially love or appreciate. Your goal will be to write a two page letter one week before Mother's Day with specific stories that illustrate each quality you mention. For example, if you

wrote, "I really appreciate your kindness" you would also want to tell her why. Maybe you would write, "It touches my heart to see the way you treated those children with such tenderness when we visited the hospital the other day."

#### “THE DINNER”

Idea: Invite all family members to a special Mother's Day dinner or brunch. Let the restaurant cook! If that won't work, then you and the children cook. If you don't have a big family, consider getting other families involved. Consider a cook out with an afternoon of games.

#### “THE PURCHASES”

You have several items you must buy, and several to consider. The must buy items—a card and flowers or a corsage. Consider these items the minimums. If you are feeling financially expansive, go for a gift. Even a small gift like chocolates can be a big hit. There are some other ideas below:

#### AA 30 DAY PLANNING CALENDAR AND CHECKLIST:

Don't just react to Mother's Day. Make it happen. Here's a schedule to use and adapt. Make it the foundation for your own Mother's Day traditions.

#### -30 DAYS...

- Start collecting thoughts for “The Letter”
- Prepare invitation list (children, relatives, others) to invite to “The Dinner” that focuses on your wife first, then the other Moms
- Order any online or catalog gifts or gift certificates
- Order Mother's Day Giveaway books for your church from [www.maninthemirror.org](http://www.maninthemirror.org)
- Give a copy of this article to all the men in your church  
If you are a pastor or worship leader, incorporate ideas from this article into your annual traditions
- Other \_\_\_\_\_
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

#### -21 DAYS...

- Make a dinner or brunch reservation at her favorite place
- Invite guests to your Mother's Day dinner or brunch so they have plenty of time to mark their calendars—also shows forethought!
- Make sure to make progress on “The Letter”
- Other \_\_\_\_\_
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

#### -14 DAYS...

- Purchase Mother's Day cards
- Make a list of everyone to call or visit on Mother's Day
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

#### -7 DAYS...

- Sit down with your accumulated notes and write “The Letter”
- Order flowers and corsages
- Purchase chocolate, gifts, or local gift certificates
- Prepare homemade gift certificates (for chores, dinner out, girls night out)

#### -5 DAYS...

- Mail all out of town cards and “The Letter”
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

#### -1 DAY...

- Have flowers delivered “The Day Before” to prove forethought!
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

#### THE BIG DAY

- Start with a card to your wife (with a long, mushy note)
- Give “The Letter” if to your wife
- Kind words in private
- Give her a corsage to wear to church, if applicable
- Honor all the women in your church with a ceremony, a special prayer, and the presentation of a book from the Mother's Day Giveaway
- Go to your Mother's Day Brunch or Dinner
- Present gifts or gift certificates (purchased or homemade)
- Kind words in public
- Make phone calls to out of town Moms
- Visit local Moms

#### IMMEDIATE FAMILY SITUATIONS

**We Have No Kids...** Focus on your own Mothers and Grandmothers. Orchestrate “The Dinner.” Be servants.

**We Are Expecting...** Dad-to-be, this is your big chance. You can start well by “making” a “Pre-Delivery Mom” card. In fact, make two—one for a boy and one for a girl. Tell her to keep whichever one turns out to be right.

**We Have Young Children...** A woman's self esteem is usually at its lowest point when she has young children. It's hard to stay pretty, to keep a clean house, or to get everything done. Earn points by giving this Mom homemade gift certificates like, “Good for one deep house cleaning” or “Good for one night out while I baby sit.” Have the kids draw Mother's Day cards. Teach them to honor Mom each year on her special day. Assign your kids to look on google.com and print the history of Mother's Day. (America's first Mother's Day was May 10, 1908, a church service to honor the mother of Anna Jarvis of West Virginia, a spinster who really missed her deceased Mom. In 1914,