

# Mother's Day

## How Did Mother's Day Begin?

In Britain in the 16th century, Christians would go back to their 'mother' church. This might have been the main church in their town, the church they had been baptised in, or the cathedral.

Often, children left home at ten years old, and got jobs in domestic service. Girls became maids in big houses and boys worked in the stables looking after the horses. They lived in the same place where they worked and were not allowed to go home very often.

## Visiting Mother

On Mothering Sunday, children were allowed to go home and see their mother.

As they walked home, they would pick wild flowers along the paths and give these to their mothers.

## Refreshment Sunday

Mother's Day in Australia is always on the second Sunday of May.

In Britain though, Mother's Day is at the end of Lent. This day was also called Refreshment Sunday. This was because during Lent, people did not eat food that was not good for you. On Refreshment Sunday, the rules about Lent were not as strict and people could eat a wider range of foods.

## Did You Know...?

In Britain, simnel cake is a traditional Mother's Day cake. It is decorated with 11 balls of marzipan. These represent the 12 disciples, but one of them, Judas, handed Jesus over to the soldiers, so Judas is left off the simnel cake!

Mother's Day is a great chance to thank all the amazing women in our lives for all they do. It could be our grandma, nana, auntie, guardian, sister, carer or mum.



# Questions

1. People from which religion would go back to their mother church in the 16<sup>th</sup> century?

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2. How old would children be when starting domestic service?

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3. What job would a girl do in domestic service, and what might a boy do?

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4. What were they allowed to do on Mothering Sunday?

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5. What did the children give their mothers?

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6. What other name did this day have?

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7. What sort of foods did people not eat during Lent?

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8. There are eleven marzipan balls on a simnel cake. Who do these balls represent?

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9. Who could you thank on Mother's Day?

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# Answers

1. People from which religion would go back to their mother church in the 16<sup>th</sup> century?  
**Christians would go back to their mother church in the 16th century.**
2. How old would children be when starting domestic service?  
**Children going into domestic service would be ten years old.**
3. What job would a girl do in domestic service, and what might a boy do?  
**A girl would be a maid and boys would look after the horses in the stables.**
4. What were they allowed to do on Mothering Sunday?  
**On Mothering Sunday they were allowed to go home to see their mothers.**
5. What did the children give their mothers?  
**The children gave their mothers wild flowers.**
6. What other name did this day have?  
**Another name for this day was Refreshment Sunday.**
7. What sort of foods did people not eat during Lent?  
**During Lent, people did not eat foods that were not good for them.**
8. There are eleven marzipan balls on a simnel cake. Who do these balls represent?  
**The marzipan balls represent the disciples.**
9. Who could you thank on Mother's Day?  
**Answers will vary.**

# Mother's Day

## How Did Mother's Day Begin?

On this day, in 16th century Britain, Christians would return to their 'mother' church. This was the main church in the town, the church they had been baptised in or the cathedral.

## Visiting Mother

At that time in Britain, it was common for children to leave home, usually as young as ten years old, and get a job in domestic service. This would mean they lived at the place where they worked and were not allowed home very often.

Mothering Sunday was a rare day off when all children were allowed to go home to visit their mothers.

As they walked home, they would pick wild flowers along the paths and give these to their mothers. This led to the tradition of giving mothers flowers on Mother's Day.

## Fascinating Fact

For girls, working in domestic service meant being a servant or maid for a wealthy family.

Boys would work in the stables, tending the horses.

## Refreshment Sunday and Lent

In the UK, Mother's Day always falls on the fourth Sunday of Lent. This day used to be known as Refreshment Sunday. This was because Lent was a time of fasting when people did not eat food that was considered bad for you. However, on Refreshment Sunday the rules about Lent were not as strict and people were allowed to eat more tempting foods.

Mother's Day in Australia, however, is always on the second Sunday of May.

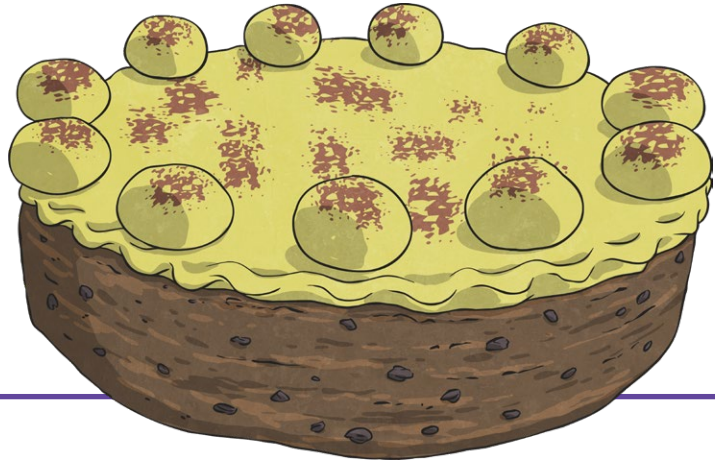


### Traditional Food

Simnel cake is a fruit cake with two layers of almond paste and 11 balls of marzipan. The marzipan balls represent the twelve disciples. However, because Judas gave Jesus away to the Roman soldiers, he is not represented on the simnel cake.

The word simnel comes from the Latin word 'simila' which is a word for the fine wheat flour used to make the cake (semolina comes from the same Latin root).

Mother's Day is a good opportunity to thank all the amazing women in our lives, for all they do, whether it be our grandma, nana, auntie, guardian, sister, carer or mum.



# Questions

1. Give two examples of the 'mother' church.

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2. Describe what domestic service meant.

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3. Where did the tradition of giving flowers to mothers on this day come from?

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4. When did Refreshment Sunday occur?

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5. Do you think people looked forward to Refreshment Sunday? Explain your thoughts.

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6. Why are there eleven balls of marzipan on a simnel cake, rather than twelve?

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7. Identify three other people who can share Mother's Day.

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8. Why do you think these other people can share Mother's Day?

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# Answers

1. Give two examples of the 'mother' church.  
**Accept any two: Examples of the 'mother' church are the main church in the town, the church they had been baptised in, or the cathedral.**
2. Describe what domestic service meant.  
**Domestic service was a job that children as young as ten years old, would go into to work. For girls, this meant becoming a maid or servant and boys would work in the stables. The children had to live where they worked.**
3. Where did the tradition of giving flowers to mothers on this day come from?  
**The tradition for giving flowers to mothers on this day came from the time when children were allowed home to visit their mothers and they walked along the paths. They would pick wild flowers on their way and give them to their mothers when they got home.**
4. When did Refreshment Sunday occur?  
**Refreshment Sunday occurred on the fourth Sunday of Lent.**
5. Do you think people looked forward to Refreshment Sunday? Explain your thoughts.  
**On that day people were allowed to eat more tempting foods, so I think they did look forward to Refreshment Sunday.**
6. Why are there eleven balls of marzipan on a simnel cake, rather than twelve?  
**There are eleven balls of marzipan on a simnel cake because they represent the disciples. Because Judas betrayed Jesus, he is left off the cake, so there are eleven rather than twelve.**
7. Identify three other people who can share Mother's Day.  
**Three other people that can share Mother's Day are grandma, nana, auntie, guardian, sister or carer. (Accept any three).**
8. Why do you think these other people can share Mother's Day?  
**Answers may vary. These people can share Mother's Day because they could be mothers too. These people can share Mother's Day because they look after people too.**



# Mother's Day

## How Did Mother's Day Begin?

Traditionally on this day, in 16th century Britain, Christians would return to their 'mother' church. This was the main church in the town, the church they had been baptised in, or the cathedral.

## Visiting Mother

Historically, children in Britain would leave home, often as young as ten years old, and work in domestic service. This would need them to live and work at their place of employment, often working 14 to 16 hours a day, and were not allowed home very often.

Mothering Sunday was one of the few days off that servants and maids had, and it was to allow them to go home to visit their mothers.

As the children walked home, they would pick wild flowers along the way, and give these to their mothers. This led to the tradition of giving mothers flowers on Mother's Day.

## Fascinating Fact

Girls working in domestic service became a servant or maid for a wealthy family.

Boys would become stable hands.

## Biblical Origins

In the UK, Mothering Sunday always falls on the fourth Sunday of Lent. This day was also known as Refreshment Sunday. This was because Lent was a time of fasting, when people refrained from eating certain foods, though on Refreshment Sunday the rules about Lent were relaxed a little, and people could eat more tempting foods.

In the Bible, there is mention of food being shared during the time we now call Lent. This refers to the story of Jesus feeding a crowd of 5000 people, with five loaves and two fish belonging to a young boy.

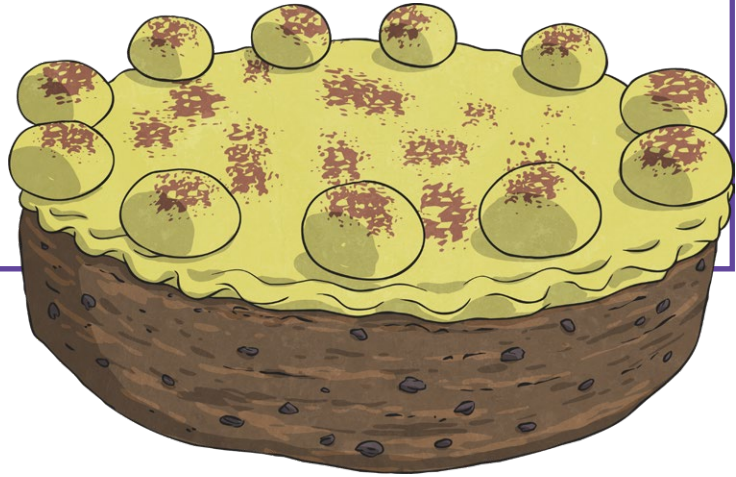




### Traditional Food

Simnel cake is a fruit cake with two layers of almond paste and 11 balls of marzipan, which represent the disciples, despite there having been 12 disciples in total. There is one less marzipan ball due to Judas the disciple having betrayed Jesus.

The word simnel comes from the Latin word 'simila' which refers to the fine wheat flour used to make the cake.



Nowadays, Mother's Day is a good opportunity to thank all the amazing women in our lives, for all they do, whether it be our grandma, nana, auntie, guardian, sister, carer or mum.

Mother's Day in Australia is always on the second Sunday of May – the same day as Canada and the USA. Most Arab countries hold Mother's Day on 21<sup>st</sup> March each year.

# Questions

1. Explain what the 'mother' church was.

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2. Describe how life would change for a child going into domestic service.

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3. What is the third paragraph about?

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4. Explain in your own words, what a 'tradition' is and give an example.

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5. Describe the meaning of Refreshment Sunday.

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6. Why are there eleven marzipan balls on a simnel cake?

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7. Could Mother's Day be described as a celebration? Explain your thoughts.

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8. Think of a better sub-heading than 'Biblical Origins'.

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9. What other word could be used in the next to last paragraph instead of 'opportunity'?

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# Answers

1. Explain what the 'mother' church was.  
**The 'mother' church was the main church in the town, the church someone was baptised or the cathedral.**
2. Describe how life would change for a child going into domestic service.  
**Domestic service was a job that children as young as ten years old, would go into to work. For girls, this meant becoming a maid or servant and boys would work in the stables. The children had to live where they worked.**
3. What is the third paragraph about?  
**The paragraph in italics is explaining that children were not given much time off, and Mother's Day was one of the few days they were allowed to go home.**
4. Explain in your own words, what a 'tradition' is and give an example.  
**Answers will vary.**
5. Describe the meaning of Refreshment Sunday.  
**Refreshment Sunday was the fourth Sunday of Lent. People were allowed to eat foods that usually during Lent, they did not eat.**
6. Why are there eleven marzipan balls on a simnel cake?  
**There are eleven balls of marzipan on the simnel cake to represent the disciples of Jesus. There are not twelve because Judas betrayed Jesus, so he is not included on the cake.**
7. Could Mother's Day be described as a celebration? Explain your thoughts.  
**Answers will vary.**
8. Think of a better sub-heading than 'Biblical Origins'.  
**Answers will vary.**
9. What other word could be used in the next to last paragraph instead of 'opportunity'?  
**Another word which could have been used instead of 'opportunity' could be chance/time.**