



The best Mother's Day gift I've ever been given was a special Mother's Day "staff" that our three children made for me. They had decorated an empty wrapping paper roll with colorful ribbons and strips of foam and topped with one of their prized jewels. They were smiling and giggling as they handed it to me, telling me they would have to do whatever I asked when I used this special staff. Then they waited eagerly to see what I would do – would I use my powers for "good" or for "evil"?

I started small, decreeing that they should bring me a chair, a comfy blanket, and my slippers. Next I tested the waters by tapping them on the shoulders with the staff and telling them to clean up their toys and clear the table of dishes. They happily complied with these requests. How delighted they were when my next decree was that we should all have a cookie at breakfast!

What struck me most about this simple gift was the complete confidence my children had that I would use these special powers for their good. They knew I wouldn't harm them. They trusted how much I loved them and were eager to do what I asked. I was blessed to experience this same overwhelming and unconditional love from my own mother (and father!). Whether you have experienced this kind of love from your mother or instead from a grandmother, an aunt, a godmother, a stepmother, or a mother figure in your life, we are all recipients of this powerful love from God.

"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you" (Jeremiah 29:11). What is God doing in your life with his powerful "staff" of unconditional love for you? On this Mother's Day, may we all take a moment to cherish the blessing of God's love in our life and in the love we share with each other as mothers, grandmothers, spouses, stepchildren, sons, and daughters.

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