



HOUSTON VISITING CHRISTIAN SCIENCE NURSE SERVICE, INC.

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Mother

Mary Baker Eddy defines “MOTHER” in her textbook’s Glossary as “God; divine and eternal Principle; Life, Truth, and Love” (*Science and Health* 592:16–17). In other words, our true and eternal Mother is divine, not human. My grandmother was very clear on this spiritual point.

People would call Gram at all hours of the day and night, asking her to pray for them. Being a *Journal*-listed Christian Science practitioner, she responded by listening both to the person’s state of thought and to God’s wisdom. Then she’d tenderly assure each caller of their spiritual identity, using simple metaphors to convey God’s love for them.

When a call came in the middle of the night, often she’d stay awake praying, until she felt certain all was well. On those nights of little sleep, mornings were not Gram’s favorite time of day, and I learned to respect her breakfast silence. She never complained about “inconvenient” or “untimely” calls. Lots of times when the phone rang, she would calmly rise from the table in the middle of a family meal—which, perhaps, she had spent hours preparing—to answer the phone in another room.



If she were able to return to the kitchen before we finished eating, Gram usually had a distant, thoughtful look and would rarely take part in the swirl of workaday talk. At those times, I knew she was praying. Pop and I, sensing Gram needed quiet, would put our plates on the counter and go back outside to finish farm chores, leaving her to eat lunch or dinner alone. Then she’d wash the dishes and head back to her study place on the family sofa, surrounded by her C.S. books, legal pad, and pencil. Gram’s solemn commitment to healing led her to devote hours to studying deeply to learn more about God.

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She would jot down her spiritual insights, pause to listen for divine inspiration, then write again, hour after hour—until the next call came.

Gram loved God and loved to help her patients feel His presence. She was meek, kind, patient, selfless, and loving. Her demonstration of Christian Science was always practical and compassionate. And she healed her cases quickly.

When my best friend noticed a quarter-sized hard growth on my arm and said something about it that scared me, I turned to Gram. She calmly remarked that cancer was simply cells in chaos and asked me if mentally I felt in chaos, which I confessed I did. Looking me in the eye, she asked: "Can you promise me not look at or touch your arm?"

"I promise, Gram." Instantly, I felt calm. All fear vanished, and I realized that my thought no longer felt chaotic. I don't know when the growth disappeared because I never looked at it until one day I accidentally glanced at my arm and smiled to see it had completely healed.

In a family of colorful and dominant personalities, Gram was the most influential and pivotal presence, though she never engaged in debate or proselytizing. She just lived Love. She embodied Mrs. Eddy's definition of Mother.

One evening I answered the front door. A gentleman asked for Pop. He said he had marked several of our Black Walnut trees in the woods along the creek and wanted to pay Pop on the spot for permission to extract them. Years later, Gram shared with me that our family had been unable to meet the mortgage payment coming due at that time. She had turned to God in prayer, had humbly and fervently acknowledged Him as the only source of supply, and had seen through the lie of lack. Was it miraculous that the precise need was met at the exact right time from a most unlikely source? No. It was divinely natural. Our need had not been unknown to God.

Someone else I know who reflects God's motherhood is our *Journal*-listed Christian Science nurse, Susie Petersen. Her gentle, caring touch mothers each person who calls upon her. She administers practical care with overflowing motherly love.

Each in their own way and in their own age, Gram and Susie have shown me the tender yet powerful motherliness of God's love. But the woman who most closely modeled divine motherhood was our beloved Leader, Mary Baker Eddy. In reply to a student who had asked her, "Tell me what you are, that is, tell us what you are to the world," Mrs. Eddy responded: "As Mary Baker Eddy, I am the weakest of mortals, but as the Discoverer and Founder of Christian Science, I am the bone and sinew of the world" (*Mary Baker Eddy: Christian Healer, Amplified Version*, p. 184).

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