

## **A MOTHER'S PLACE**

*Her children rise up and call her blessed (Proverbs 31:28):*

I first encountered tenderness and softness in her arms  
and comforting security from life's impending harms.  
Of course, I don't remember now the wonders of those days,  
as helpless, weak and vulnerable, contented there I lay.

And as I grew through infancy and learned to stand and walk,  
I realised the thrill of making sounds, of speech, of talk.  
And there she was beside me coaching, chatting, daring me  
to formulate expressive and creative imagery.

She demonstrated qualities just by the way she lived  
of love, compassion, faithfulness and willingness to give;  
of sacrifice, devotion, and of patience without end;  
of how to shoulder bravely and make suffering my friend.

She taught me how the Saviour had been crucified for all  
and rose again in heavenly power to break sin's deadly thrall.  
She helped me read the Bible and to memorise God's Word;  
To keep my eyes on Jesus with clear vision, never blurred.

But she didn't give me lessons in those mysteries of life,  
of how to treat a woman or romanticise a wife.  
of dealing with the spiteful, the resentful, the unfair,  
of how to cope with bitterness, injustice and despair.

For when I was a child of eight she fell to cancer's curse;  
from home to hospital she went; from hospital to hearse.  
A decade then of teenage years starved of a mother's care;  
a drought of hugs and kisses and her aching, earnest prayer.

I wonder what I might have been had she stayed by my side,  
what mellowness of spirit might have then been amplified?  
I'm deeply, deeply grateful for the Holy Spirit's grace;  
but even so, no other one can take a mother's place.

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