

A MOTHER'S WORK

Mt. Rushmore is 6,200 feet high. On the perpendicular side of that mountain, Gutzon Borglum carved the likeness of George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Abraham Lincoln, and Theodore Roosevelt. This, as you know, is one of the most famous art projects in the world. Those faces, on the scale of living men, would stand fifteen feet taller than the Great Pyramid of Cheops, and can be seen from sixty miles away. Geologists estimate that the forces of nature will not erode away these faces for five hundred thousand years.

Borglum began the monumental project in 1925 and it was not yet completed when he died on March 6, 1941. The final drill and blast were done by his son Lincoln Borglum on Oct. 31, 1941. It was a lifetime labour of love. He didn't do it for money for he was only paid the modest sum of about \$10,000 per year. The colossal project was achieved without proper tools, without adequate power, without funds, and without any trained assistant.

But now let us compare the work of this great sculptor with the work of a mother. The sculpture works with inanimate materials like granite and clay. Mothers work with living souls and an eternal spirits. The mothers of these great men have done more for the world than the man who attempted to immortalize their faces in stone.

There is an old joke about the doctor who took a class in carpentry. The teacher warned that he would have to be more careful with wood than people because boards don't heal if you cut them in the wrong place. The humour of the story is in its absurdity. People are obviously far more important than boards. The point of the parable is that the work of a mother is profoundly significant. The things we see are temporal. Human art will ultimately pass away. The work of a mother will last for all eternity.

The famous faces on Mt. Rushmore have been admired by millions. The first great viewing occurred on July 4, 1930. A crowd of 2,500, including President Herbert Hoover, gathered to see the face of George Washington. Rifles fired and planes zoomed overhead as a huge flag was slowly removed. Spectators gasped at the magnificent face of the Father of our Country. We know, of course, that the mother who gave birth to Washington did far more for our country than the man who chiselled his face on a mountain.

The likeness of President Jefferson was unveiled on Aug. 23, 1936. Another great flag was pulled aside as a plane dropped tiny parachutes. These parachutes carried tiny souvenir chips of granite from the historic mountain. The work of his mother, of course, was what made Jefferson worthy of our admiration.

Lincoln's likeness on Mt. Rushmore was dedicated Sept. 17, 1937. This was the 150th anniversary of the adoption of the Constitution. Had Lincoln been present he would, no doubt, have repeated this famous tribute: "All that I am, or ever hope to be, I owe to my angel mother". Who performed the greater service for mankind? Was it the sculpture or the mother? The answer is so obvious that it needs no response!

Borglum died before his work was completed. This too is like the work of a mother. Most mothers die while their children are still living. God, however, can raise up others to complete the task that they began. It is humbling to realize that our children can be admired long after we have gone to our grave.

Sydney Harris has observed that simply having children does not make you a mother, any more than having a piano makes you a musician. There is a special work associated with the honor of motherhood. She does not work with brush and canvas, hammer and chisel, or pen and ink. She works with living souls to fashion them into the likeness of Christ.

In this regard, Mary the mother of Jesus, considered herself the most blessed woman in the world. She said: "**My soul doth magnify the Lord, And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour. For he hath regarded the low estate of his handmaiden: for, behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed**" (Luke 1:46-48).

What Mary did with Jesus makes the work of Leonardo Da Vinci seem utterly insignificant.