

(Reply ID 6ufb)

Dear Father John, and Toni;

Only one "reply ID" is given for both your comments, so... thank you both for your kind comments on the post about my mom. You each made me feel... seen. As I wrote in that post, I've never really mourned my mom (nor my dad, who died not long after), but somehow, your words do help.

* Father John: As always, you have a way of soothing the soul of even someone who doubts souls exist. 😊 Your insights and perspectives help me look at things a little bit differently, less angrily, and your unrelenting compassion ^{and} empathy do much to counteract my new default setting of cynicism, which is relieving. You're 100% right about parents making the cold, hard world a warmer, softer place. I needed that, and I miss my parents a lot. When you talk about my mom, it almost feels like you knew her. Were you secretly buddies? Yes, she was a blessing to many, especially to me, and she was for sure a laugher, too. But me... you say my wit and quick laugh? Nah, not so much anymore. That used to be me. Maybe again, someday. I hope. But thank you for all you say and do. Even polite lies. 😊

* Toni: What can I say? Your thoughts — and your thoughtfulness in sharing them with me — truly meant a lot. Choked me up a little, even. I hope I'm not out of line to comment on what you wrote about your son, who you said shows no love or respect for you. Obviously, I know NOTHING about your relationship or even how old he is, but I'd like to tell you something about my mom and me. Believe it or not, a lot of people would probably say the same thing about me that you said about your son: They'd say I have, or had, no love or respect for my mom. If you saw only some of our worst moments, you might think that, too. We did argue; we did yell. I said way too many things I regretted, and Mom said her share, too. Thankfully, we both believed in real communication and apologies and forgiveness, and we both got over our anger very fast... no doubt I got those traits from her, myself. But, if we hadn't both been that way, things may have looked & felt a lot different between us. I don't believe I ever would've loved my mom less, but it could've seemed that way if we weren't both so quick to forgive and forget. And, at the risk of oversharing, when I was 14, my mom felt things were so bad between us that she decided to see a professional to help her understand and cope. At the same time, she loved me so much she tried to keep those facts from me and take the burden entirely on herself, to spare me any stigma or shame or self-blame. Today, it's kind of hard to believe that even happened, but it did. Yet she never stopped loving me or believing I loved her, no matter how bad I acted. And the truth was, I ALWAYS loved my mom, more than I could ever express. But love didn't always equal outward signs of respect, and there's no doubt I took everything about her for granted many times — all she did, her love for me, and even her knowing I loved her ^{when I wasn't doing a great job of showing it.} ~~even when I wasn't doing a great job of showing it.~~ Taking someone for granted can look a lot like lack of love, but it isn't always. I think sometimes it's the strongest love that makes it possible to take someone for granted... does that make sense? Thank you for your words to me, and I hope things improve between you and your ^{son} ~~son~~. Take care, Toni.

--Dymitri