



Are the plans made and the Cards bought? Don't worry - You still have a bit of time!



But do you know where the tradition comes from?

In Ireland and the UK, Mothering Sunday or Mother's Day is always on the fourth Sunday of Lent. In the USA and other countries, it is celebrated on the second Sunday in May. Whenever you honour the matriarch of your family, the origins and customs of her special day are fascinating. The earliest Mother's Day celebrations can be traced back to the spring festivities of ancient Greece, in honour of Rhea, the Mother of the Gods. In Rome, the most significant Mother's Day festival was dedicated to the worship of Cybele, another mother goddess. Ceremonies in her honour began some 250 years before Christ was born. This Roman religious celebration, known as Hilaria, lasted for three days - from March 15 to 18.

As Christianity spread throughout Europe, mother's day celebrations were held on the fourth Sunday in Lent - ***Laetare Sunday*** or mid-Lent Sunday - and they were adapted to honour the Virgin Mary and also the "Mother Church." Custom began to dictate that a person visit the church of his/her baptism on this day and people attended the mother church of their parish, laden with offerings.

Eventually, the custom of making donations to one's Mother Church expanded to include honouring one's own mother; young people, such as servants and apprentices, were given the day off to visit their mothers and take gifts of food, which sometimes included a special "mothering cake." Often, this would be a very rich fruit-laden concoction called a **Simnel cake**. They would also bring her bouquets of spring flowers which were blessed in church first. And, it was customary for sons and daughters to take on the mother's chores.

**So what ever you are planning on the day -
Don't forget!!**