

**By Alisa McBride**

(Based on a true story)

*Mother, so tender and kind and true, I love you*  
(*Children's Songbook*, 208).

Maddie watched as Mom ladled raspberry jam into canning jars. Sunlight streamed through the kitchen window, making the dark red fruit sparkle like rubies in the glass jars.

Mom's face was also red. She looked tired and hot.

Maddie thought about some of the important jobs her friends' moms had.



One was an accountant. Another was an engineer. Maddie wondered why her mom didn't have a job like those. She couldn't help thinking that if she did, Maddie's family would have more money. Maybe Maddie could even have some new clothes for school.

"That's done for another year," Mom said as she placed a lid on the last jar.

"Why do you do all that work?" Maddie asked. "We could buy jam at the store."

Mom swiped a hand over her forehead and sank into a kitchen chair.



"What's your favorite kind of jam?" she asked.

Maddie didn't have to think about it. "Raspberry."

"And Dad's?"

"Raspberry." Maddie was beginning to understand.

"I make raspberry jam because you and your brother and your dad like it so much," Mom said. "It makes me feel happy when I see you pulling out a jar of my jam and knowing that I made it just for you."

Maddie thought about how Mom helped her whenever Maddie got stuck on a math problem. And how Mom was always interested to hear about how the school day went.

Maddie wrapped her arms around her mother's waist. "Thanks, Mom."

Mom returned the hug. "For what?"

"For doing the things you do," Maddie said. "Being a mom is the most important job in the world." ♦

## Mother's Day Parfait

1 quart low-fat vanilla yogurt, granola, 2 pints fresh berries (raspberries, blueberries, strawberries), 2 teaspoons grated orange rind, 1/4 cup coconut flakes, 2 tablespoons sugar, clear glasses or cups

1. Wash your hands with soap and water.
2. Have an adult help you finely grate the orange rind. Mix it with the coconut flakes and sugar.
3. Put a little bit of granola in the bottom of a cup.
4. Add some yogurt, some berries, and a sprinkle of the coconut mixture.
5. Add one more layer of each ingredient.