

Fathers' Day 16 June 2024

Hymn: Mercy Chant <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qOH3RGTYhU>

Today we pause to give thanks for the fathers in our lives. For those who are biological fathers, adoptive fathers, uncles and mentors, spiritual fathers...Happy Father's Day!



Opening Prayer:

Let us praise those fathers who have striven to balance the demands of work, marriage, and children with an honest awareness of both joy and sacrifice.

Let us praise those fathers who, lacking a good model for a father, have worked to become a worthy and virtuous father.

Let us praise those fathers who, by their own account, were not always there for their children, but who continue to offer those children, now grown, their love and support. As well, let us pray for those fathers who have been wounded by words and actions of their children.

Let us praise those fathers who, despite marital discord, have remained in their children's lives.

Let us praise those fathers whose children are adopted, and whose love and support has nurtured a thriving life.

Let us praise those fathers who, as stepfathers, freely choose the obligation of fatherhood and earned their stepchildren's love and respect.

Let us praise those fathers who have lost a child to death, and continue to hold the child in their heart

Let us praise those men who have no children but cherish the next generation as if they were their own.

Let us praise those men who have "fathered" us in their role as mentors and guides.

Let us praise those men who are about to become fathers; may they openly delight in their children.

And let us praise those fathers who have died but live on in our memory and whose love continues to nurture us.

Kirk Loadman adapted by Debra Mooney

Readings:

"There you saw how the Lord your God carried you, as a father carries his son, all the way you went until you reached this place."
Deuteronomy 1:31

"The faith we have received is always found through a relationship with someone. There is a great urgency, in this historical moment, for meaningful relationships - spiritual fatherhood...one of those relationships that we need to rediscover with renewed effort. Many young people have the inability to make big life decisions and are afraid to decide, to choose, to take a risk....There are many good lay men and women with valuable experiences to share. Christian faith ... is an existential journey that passes through our relationships. Our experience of faith thus always arises from somebody's witness."

Pointing to St. Joseph as a model for fatherhood, Pope Francis reflected that Joseph had a remarkable "ability to know how to listen to God speaking to his heart. I am convinced that the fatherly relationship that Joseph had with Jesus influenced his life so much that Jesus' future preaching is filled with images and references taken precisely from paternal imagery.... Jesus says that God is Father and this statement cannot leave us indifferent, especially when we think about his personal human experience of fatherhood. This means that Joseph was such a good father that Jesus found in this man's love and paternity the most beautiful reference he could give to God."



Joseph: a bright witness in dark times

Closing Prayer:

Saint Joseph, you who loved Jesus with fatherly love,
be close to the many children who have no family
and who long for a dad and mom.

Support the couples who are unable to have children,
help them to discover, through this suffering, a greater plan.

Make sure that no one lacks a home, a bond,
a person to take care of him or her
and heal the selfishness of those who close themselves off from life,
that they may open their hearts to love.
