

PRAYING for OUR FATHERS LIVING and DECEASED

**The father of a just man will exult with glee;
he who begets a wise son will have joy in him.**

- Proverbs 23: 24



**Let us pause and remember that we live and move and have our being in God.
It is God Who created us, Who redeemed us and Who continually walks with us
breathing life into us and inspiring us to holiness. Amen.**

**God of our fathers, Whose almighty hand
Leads forth in beauty all the starry band
Of shining worlds in splendor through the skies
Our grateful songs before Thy throne arise.**

**Thy love divine hath led us in the past,
In this free land by Thee our lot is cast,
Be Thou our Ruler, Guardian, Guide and Stay,
Thy Word our law, Thy paths our chosen way.**

**From war's alarms, from deadly pestilence,
Be Thy strong arm our ever sure defense;
Thy true religion in our hearts increase,
Thy bounteous goodness nourish us in peace.**

**Refresh Thy people on their toilsome way,
Lead us from night to never ending day;
Fill all our lives with love and grace divine,
And glory, laud, and praise be ever Thine.**

Psalm 103

As a father has compassion on his children, so the LORD has compassion on the faithful.

For He knows how we are formed, remembers that we are dust.

Our days are like the grass; like flowers of the field we blossom.

The wind sweeps over us and we are gone; our place knows us no more.

But the LORD'S kindness is forever, toward the faithful from age to age. He favors the children's children

of those who keep His covenant, who take care to fulfill its precepts.

The LORD'S throne is established in heaven; God's royal power rules over all.

Bless the LORD, all you angels, mighty in strength and attentive, obedient to every command.

Bless the LORD, all you hosts, ministers who do God's will.

Bless the LORD, all creatures, everywhere in God's domain.

Bless the LORD, my soul!

Luke 11: 5-13

Jesus said to them, "Suppose one of you has a friend to whom he goes at midnight and says, 'Friend, lend me three loaves of bread, for a friend of mine has arrived at my house from a journey and I have nothing to offer him,' and he says in reply from within, 'Do not bother me; the door has already been locked and my children and I are already in bed. I cannot get up to give you anything.'

I tell you, if he does not get up to give him the loaves because of their friendship, he will get up to give him whatever he needs because of his persistence.

"And I tell you, ask and you will receive; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you.

For everyone who asks, receives; and the one who seeks, finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened.

What father among you would hand his son a snake when he asks for a fish? Or hand him a scorpion when he asks for an egg?

If you then, who are wicked, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the Father in heaven give the holy Spirit to those who ask Him?"

Honoring Those Who First Loved Us

- J. David Hoke

Honor your father and your mother, so that you may live long in the land the LORD your God is giving you. Exodus 20:12

The love of a parent is the closest thing we will find in this life to the love of God. It is a love that is rich and deep and almost impossible to describe. Apart from God, our parents are the ones who first loved us.

We all come into the world at a very early age in life. We are so helpless that if someone did not hold us and keep us warm and feed us, we would not survive. We are so totally dependent on our parents that we literally could not live without them. And because of their love and care, we are here today.

We hear in our day a lot about children's rights, but what about parent's rights? God is saying something about parent's rights here. He is saying that those individuals who brought us into this world, who nurtured us, who educated us, who cared for us deserve our respect and honor. So, how can we honor those who first loved us?

As adults, we are not commanded to obey our parents any longer; we are never released from the command to honor them. We must honor them by caring for them. I mean this in the broadest sense of the word. We must care for them and attempt to meet their needs both emotionally and physically. We must make sure their basic needs are met. They need love, affirmation, encouragement, and may one day need shelter, food, and physical assistance. We must never, ever push them out of our lives.

The cycle of love is not complete until we honor those parents who raised us. When we are born, we are totally dependent upon them. They must provide for all of our needs. As we grow we become increasingly more independent. Finally we arrive at adulthood and leave the nest in order to make our own. Then our parents, who were young and vibrant when they brought us to birth, experience the security of middle age and finally the vulnerability of old age. In that final stage, they become dependent on us, the children they have raised. It is then that the cycle is complete. It is a beautiful thing.

We must all grapple with what it means to honor our father and mother. You must allow God to speak to your heart concerning this matter. Perhaps you need to call them more often in order to tell them that you love them. Perhaps you need to show that respect in different ways. Let God lead you. Be sensitive to His Spirit.

Honoring your father and your mother not only is a focus on the family, it is a focus on the future. Those who would depreciate the value of the family only depreciate their own value. This becomes extremely vivid when we consider the state of our contemporary society. We live in an era when all human life has been devalued. Abortion has devalued pre-born human life. Infanticide, which is becoming increasingly accepted, is devaluing the human life of infants. And euthanasia, the killing of the aged, will become an increasingly accepted practice.

Prayers of Intercession

That in honoring our fathers whether living or deceased, we recall the love of our heavenly Father for this, we pray:

That all who share in a “fatherly” role in raising children will be blessed by God with wisdom, courage, fortitude and strength. we pray:

For all who have abandoned or denied their responsibilities as father that they may realize their loss and work to re-establish relationships with their families, we pray:

For all spiritual Fathers that God will give them the grace to lead their parishioners to the Lord, we pray:

For those who will soon become fathers that they will embrace this vocation with love and joy and fully accept the responsibility that it entails, we pray:

That You, O merciful God, will bless our fathers, foster fathers, step fathers, living or deceased, for the sacrifices and love given for us, we pray:

A Prayer for Fathers

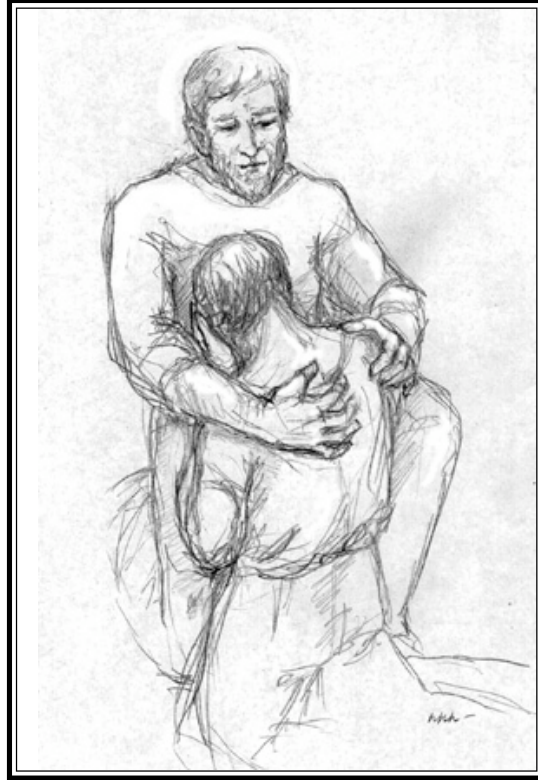
Most gracious Heavenly Father,

We thank you for our earthly fathers, those to whom You have entrusted the responsibility to provide loving protection of their families and guidance of their children. We thank You, also, for our priests and bishops, whose spiritual fatherhood is so vital to the faith of Your people.

May our earthly fathers imitate the manly courage of Abraham, Jesse and Joseph, and all the holy fathers of the past in providing wise counsel to the children You have given to their care. Give them valiant faith in the face of confusion and conflict, hope in time of trouble and sorrow, and steadfast love for you, for their families, and for all your people throughout the world.

Assist all fathers of families, all spiritual fathers, and all Christian men, that through Your grace they may steadily grow in holiness and in knowledge and understanding of Your truth. May they generously impart this knowledge to those who rely on them.

We ask your blessing on all those to whom You have entrusted fatherhood. May Your Holy Spirit constantly inspire them with justice and mercy, wisdom and strength, fidelity and self-giving love. May they receive Your grace abundantly in this earthly life, and may they look forward to eternal joy in Your presence in the life to come. Amen.



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**Saint Joseph,
foster father of Jesus and head of the Holy Family,
protect all fathers**

**Saint John Baptist de La Salle
And all you holy Brothers who have gone before us,
Help us to see in our own fathers whether living or deceased,
the image of the loving God.**

Live Jesus in our hearts. Forever!