

Our Fathers: Divine and Human

In our prayerful reflection on the scriptures for this Sunday in Ordinary Time we hear Jesus say: “*So do not be afraid;*” because nothing happens to any of us without our heavenly Father’s knowledge. God the Father even knows the number of hairs on our heads—some of with more and some of us with less!!! The great value of hearing Jesus’ words today is that they assure us of the Divine familial relationship: “*Everyone who acknowledges me before others I will acknowledge before my heavenly Father.*” (Matthew 10:32)

Today we have another image that encourages us to know God as a loving father in relationship to a beloved child. As we reflect on our relationships with our earthly fathers, many of us will appreciate how Dad has loved us, allayed our fears, and protected us. For others, Father’s Day may be a painful reminder of the physical or emotional absence of a father. However, if we recall the divine parental relationship, no matter our earthly circumstance, we are assured, and can be confident, that we are loved by Father God. Our heavenly Father know us personally and sent his Son to tell us that we are worth more to him than any other creature. In fact, God our Father:

- Takes from his divinity and gives us his only son;
- His Son takes all that the Father gives him and gives it to us;
- And the Spirit of the Father and Son, the fullness of familial love, pours out this love upon us.

The relationship of God, Father, Son, and Spirit, is one of giving. Having been created in God’s image and likeness, we come from a family of love where that love is expressed in self-giving. As part of a divine family of love, our human parental relationships mirror self-giving.

On this Father’s Day, I asked an expert, a father, a man who dearly loves his 5 children, 20 grandchildren and 3 great-grandchildren, how from his experience he would describe the father-child relationship. He said:

- I always wanted to protect my kids.
- I pray for them.
- I want to be involved with them
- I am very proud of them.
- I find joy in their successes.
- I enjoy playing around with the grandkids.

Today as we celebrate our fathers—Divine and human—let us respond to God’s love by doing what God does, emptying, pouring out, giving of ourselves for others who are also members of God’s Family.

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