

FROM THE PASTOR'S



**Twelfth Sunday in Ordinary Time
June 21, 2009 B**

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PRAYERS AND CONCERN

As most of you know by now, last Friday afternoon I fainted due to a severe loss of blood probably caused by a reaction to a medicine I take when I experience a gout attack. With the help of wonderful medical personnel, your prayers, and the concern of good friends and neighbors, I am on the mend.

When I fainted at home, my good friends, Nick and Alba, who also do some housekeeping for me, were present. If they had not been present to call 911, I might not be alive today. So my gratitude level is very high at this time. As I recuperate, I am also taking time to reflect on what messages and lessons God wants me to take from this event. Thank you again for your prayers, cards, good wishes and concern.

Happy Father's Day!

Today, we remember and give thanks for our dads, living and deceased.

If you had or have a positive relationship with your dad, that is a great blessing not only for your family relationships but also for your relationship with God, our heavenly Father. It has been said that our image of God is very much connected to our relationship with our earthly father. For example, my father, like many dads, was demanding. Hence, it is easy for me to image God as a demanding father. If our earthly father was emotionally distant, we may find it hard to experience God as loving and emotionally close to us. But through the workings of grace, we may be able to experience God as a loving Father even though our relationship with our earthly father was very broken and wounded.

A father's letter to his son going off to college

If your son was about to go off to college, what words of wisdom would you offer him? It is a good question for you dads (and moms) to ponder. To get you thinking about this question, I will now share with you a letter one father wrote to his son. This letter was written fifteen+ years ago. Unfortunately, I do not

have the end of it. But I have enough of it to get parents thinking about the things they might say to a child about to leave for college. Now for the letter.

My dear son,

Yesterday you left for college. Eighteen years fled by, too full to take time out to summarize my hopes for you. I had a father-son speech planned for your departure. But then a hug and hidden tear seemed more correct.

Now that you are gone, there are only words to send you. Till today, we have lived our morals in the family and rarely capsule them. I'd like to try to share my values, those unsaid principles that I hold true and dear. They are the last gift from me as a parent and my first gift to you as a young adult and friend.

Don't let hunger for possessions capture you. Happiness does not lie in ownership of houses and cars and appliances, not in consumption of fine foods and entertainment. Most people waste their lives finding out that possessions do not bring happiness.

Materialism is an ever-seeking, never caring dead-end street. Joy is the promise, but the reality is a double curse: one can never amass enough and one must always worry about protecting what one has acquired.

Materialism is subtle and pervasive in our culture. Advertising hammers away at all of us to buy, buy, buy. Television game shows titillate us with the drama of instant and spectacular acquisition. Modern economic theory is based on the premise that all individuals act from greed. Guard yourself! I think greed is the modern sin. Your salvation depends on how well you address this temptation.

Trust your emotions. Give vent to your feelings. May you fire with rage, burn with passion, delight in discovery and dance with exuberance. Rationality was meant to serve and guide our feelings. Too often it has been used to denigrate and suppress them.

You may have heard that strong men are in control of their feelings, that it is unmasculine to show

emotions. On the contrary, it is inhuman not to. Your feelings are what make you real. The heresy that thoughts and feelings should be separated from one another is the tragedy of modern science. From that dangerous separation comes the sterile technologies that spew pollution, nuclear war, abortion and other rational “mistakes.” A science with gut feelings would never tolerate such absurdities.

Finally, show reverence for everything alive: plants and insects, fish and birds, but especially other human beings. You and I are not wise enough to know when life begins or when it ends, or which life forms are most precious. Be humble in your ignorance. Treat all life with respect, all living creatures as brothers.

Be gentle. Be kind. It was no accident that coined the word gentle-man. To be gentle is to be manly.

Consideration for others will not come easy. Required is a certain willingness to fly in the face of a “me first” culture and sometimes put the good of others ahead of your own. Mother-love and patriotism are obvious examples of a love that gladly transcends selfishness.

Empathy will help you consider the good of others as truly your own. Someday I pray you may feel with the poet, “Any man’s death diminishes me, because I am involved in mankind.”

BLESSING PRAYER FOR FATHER’S DAY

*Blessed are You, Lord and Father of All Life,
who has given to us the gift of the father of our family.
Today, we honor him,
and we thank You for the numerous good things
that are ours because of him.
His love for us has been a sign of Your divine affection
and sharing in Your holy love.
His continuous concern for our needs and welfare
is a mirror of Your holy providence.
And so, as we honor him,
we praise You, Father of All Peoples.
Bless him this day
with your strength and holy power
that he may continue to be a sign of You, our God,
and a priestly parent to our family.
May we who have the honor of bearing his
family name do so with great pride.
May we, the members of his family,
assist him in his holy duties as a parent,
with our respect, our obedience, our deep affection.
Bless him, Lord, with happiness and good health,
with peace and with good fortune,
so that he who has shared of his very life
may live forever with You,
his God and heavenly Father.
This blessing and all graces, we pray,
descend upon the father of our family,
in the name of the Father, and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit.*

Amen.

Happy Father’s Day,

