
Father's Day

**An article from the *Cathedral Times*
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I am excited about my first Father's Day!

I am counting on breakfast in bed, continuous sports on television, changing fewer diapers than normal, and maybe an afternoon nap. How can I forget about the gifts? Socks, undershirts, and hopefully some golf equipment.

After six weeks of being a father, I realize that Father's Day is hard earned. These little infants require constant care and attention, and it doesn't seem to bother them that it is 2 a.m. and you have a sermon to preach in the morning! My colleagues tell me that the care, attention and lack of sleep continue into the teenage and college years. Wow! My life has changed!

The day after Bradford was born, my dear friend, along with his wife and newborn son, came to visit us in the hospital. Margaret Ann and I were exhausted from the first 36 hours of parenthood; after experiencing an Old Testament ritual, Bradford was also exhausted and a little fussy.

In the midst of Bradford's crying, I thought my friend might offer some parental insight on how to calm the baby. Instead, he offered words that have stayed with me the past few weeks. He said, "It really makes you appreciate your parents, doesn't it? You will have a different perspective of their love and sacrifice."

I have thought about those words almost every day these past six weeks. Fatherhood has given me an experience of loving someone unconditionally (even at 2 a.m.). It has also revealed the depth of the unconditional love that has been shown to me by my parents.

Yes, there were conflicts, fights, spankings and groundings, with moments of anger and disappointment along the way. That is a part of every family; scripture even portrays it as part of the holy family. But, what is lasting, transforming, and has changed my life, is my parent's unconditional love!

On this Father's Day, I give thanks for the gift of being a father. I give thanks for my father, for the sacrifice and unconditional love he has bestowed upon me. I pray that we all give thanks for our fathers (or father figures), who have shown us love and sacrifice, and revealed to us a glimpse of God's unconditional love.

On this Father's Day, may that love shape who we are and how we live.

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