

Father's Day – 4 September 2022

"I ask for you the grace to be ever closer to your children, allow them to grow, but be close, close! They need you, your presence, your closeness, your love. May you be for them as St Joseph was guardians of their growth in age, wisdom, and grace. May you guard them on their journey be educators and walk with them. Thank you for all you do for your children: thank you."— Pope Francis, 2020.

Acknowledgement of Country

As we come to celebrate Father's Day, I acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we live, work, and pray. I pay my respects to past, present, and emerging as we journey together in the spirit of reconciliation and healing.

Introduction

Father's Day began initially in the United States, between 1908 and 1910 (depending on your source). A woman, Mrs Dodd wished to honour her father, who had raised her and her five siblings (brothers) as a single parent. The concept gained momentum across the world and in Australia, Father's Day began in 1935, and though not officially recognised. The first Sunday in September was officially designated as Father's Day in 1958. In 2022 we take the time on Father's Day to remember the men who provide positive role models in the lives of our children.

Scripture – Gospel reading from the Book of Wisdom 9:13-18 (GNT)

¹³ Who can ever learn the will of God? ¹⁴ Human reason is not adequate for the task, and our philosophies tend to mislead us, ¹⁵ because our mortal bodies weigh our souls down. The body is a temporary structure made of earth, a burden to the active mind. ¹⁶ All we can do is make guesses about things on earth; we must struggle to learn about things that are close to us. Who, then, can ever hope to understand heavenly things? ¹⁷ No one has ever learned your will, unless you first gave him Wisdom, and sent your holy spirit down to him. ¹⁸ In this way people on earth have been set on the right path, have learned what pleases you, and have been kept safe by Wisdom.

The Gospel of the Lord

Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ

Reflection

The above reading invites me to remember the numerous positive male role models I have had in my life, and how they helped one continue to help me when I "make guesses about things on Earth!" For some this person is a biological father, for others an uncle, stepfather, grandfather, brother, or friend. The label on the person is not necessarily where the importance lies. I have been incredibly blessed with positive male role models in my life, all offering something different that has helped shape the person I am today. The gifts of the spirit that dwell in each of them has found their way to me through their words, actions, and love. Some of these men have now left this Earth, yet I still feel a strong connection to their presence through what Catholics identify with as the 'Communion of Saints' (not that my role models were or are saints, by any means!). They were people. People who came together, some through blood relationships, some through marriage or friendships. Some funny, some wise, and some just plain loveable. What they all had in common, is the same thing I have come to know about Joseph, the Earthly Father of Jesus. That is that they all gave of themselves fully to their relationships with the children in their lives. They were authentic and vulnerable and open to love. This Father's Day I hope you too can find the time to be with those role models who offer safety, care, and authentic loving relationships to yourselves and to your children.

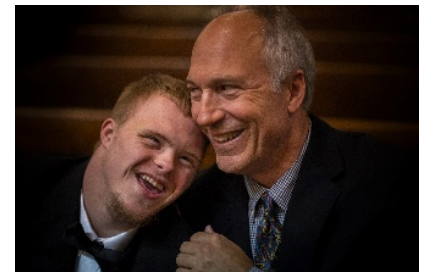


Photo by [Nathan Anderson on Unsplash](#)

Prayer (adapted from prayerscapes.com)

O Lord,

I ask that you walk beside all men who care for children. Come place your loving hand upon their shoulder and protect them as they guide our children to come to know the world and you. Watch over their hearts and minds and speak into their lives with your words of hope and truth.

Amen.

Call to action

- Reach out to a male role model who is important in the life of your children and express your gratitude through a call or visit.
- Show your children pictures of the men who have helped you in your life and let your children know why these people were so important.
- Listen to the song [The Man in the Picture](#) and reflect about what it means as your role as a parent in your child's life.
- Share a good 'dad' joke!
- Enjoy Father's Day with those who make a difference to the lives of your family.

