

## Homily Eleventh Sunday OT (Father's Day)

### A CALENDAR OF THE WAY WE SEE DAD

- 4 years old: my Dad can do anything
  - 7 years old: my Dad knows a lot, a whole lot
  - 9 years old: my dad doesn't know quite everything
  - 12 years old: Oh well, naturally Dad does not know that either
  - 14 years old: my Dad is so out of step with reality
  - 20 years old: my Dad is so hopelessly old-fashioned
  - 25 years old: Dad knows a little about it, but not much
  - 30 years old: I may ask what Dad thinks about it
  - 35 years old: Before we decide, let's get Dad's opinion
  - 45 years old: I wonder what Dad will think about this
  - 55 years old: my Dad knows something about literally everything
  - 61 years old: I wish I could talk it over with Dad just once more.
- (unknown)

As someone who has been blessed with a good father, these thoughts will very well touch a note of sentiment. I have been very blessed in my life to have a father who prayed for and with me and played with me when I was younger: even in his last years we went places together because I was one of very few people whose driving he trusted. Dad protected me by placing limits and rules upon me as I grew up. I did not realize, until very much later, just how significant those rules really were in my life. I was allowed to live my life to the fullest, because he trusted me and I in turn trusted his guidance. Dad's life had a pattern I have been trying to model my life after. He always said there was a way to live, he called it the "Walsh way".

Dad spent considerable time working around the church and later, taking communion and visiting the sick in hospital and at home. It is through doing this that he understood the mission of the

Church as revealed by Jesus' teachings; he also lived out the mission God had given him through fatherhood. Now, let me ask you fathers here today: What was the model of Jesus' ministry? Do you understand your mission as modelled by Jesus in His ministry? "When He saw the crowds, He felt compassion for them, because they were weary and worn out, like sheep without a shepherd." Compassion is not one of those words fathers hear very often in their everyday conversations. Yet that is one of the strongest attributes of any parent, as modelled by Jesus. As father, it is up to you to reassure the family when things get rough. Jesus saw the crowds were "weary and worn out, like sheep without a shepherd." One of the functions of a father is to step forward and accept the mantle of shepherd, of leadership in the family. This means fathers are to compassionately lead their families along a path which will guide them toward Jesus and his way of loving. At times, any or all members of the family will become weak and weary; it is then we must show strength and compassion to them.

The need for compassion and good family leadership is so great we must go to Jesus to seek His guidance for it. Jesus tells His disciples, "The harvest is abundant, but the workers are few. Therefore, pray to the LORD of the harvest to send out workers into His harvest." Are we truly aware of the need for our presence and leadership within the family structure? Jesus tells the disciples to "pray to the LORD of the harvest to send out workers into His harvest." The need is here now and it is an urgent need. "The harvest is abundant, but the workers are few." When was the last time you went to the LORD in prayer for help in making a family decision? The need for good fatherly leadership is right

now and is ongoing. Dads, I encourage you to turn to the Lord and trust in Him.

A final thought. Do not think that once the kids are out of the house, your job as a father is over. You will be a father from now on. My Dad was a father until he took his last breath; on Monday, the week he passed, I drove him to do some banking and he told me when we arrived home that he was grateful for his life and had no regrets.

Today, I am thankful for the gift of my dad.

Today, I am thankful for the message of Jesus that guided dad's life.

Today, I pray that you may all be blessed with holy earthly dads.

Amen.