

Dads should emulate God

Trinity Sunday (June 15): (R3) Matthew 28:16-20; (R1) Deuteronomy 4:32-34, 38-40; (R2) Romans 8:14-17.

This year Father's Day falls on Trinity Sunday. There are three things that Christian fathers ought to be.

First of all, they ought to love as God loves. Jesus presented God to us as a father, not as someone far removed from us. To him God is one who sees every sparrow that falls from the sky, who counts every hair on our heads. He is one who is close to us and one who deeply cares for us.

In our society the whole idea of fatherhood has been at least partially disconnected from manhood. Hugh O'Neill, in his book *Daddy Cool*, wrote that kids' heroes have seldom been daddies. "Consider the pantheon of manliness," he wrote, "the granite jawed Randolph Scott, Clint Eastwood, the Duke, Alan Ladd as Shane, James Dean, and others. All the legends have one thing in common: they are entirely undomesticated."

Society hasn't provided many fathers with models for showing affection to their children, affirming them, encouraging them. Society doesn't provide them with models. Perhaps their own fathers were distant, remote.

Lee Strobel is an immensely gifted man who has had at least three successful careers: as an award-winning journalist for the *Chicago Tribune*, as a pastor at one of the largest churches in the country and as a best-selling Christian author.

Through the years, Lee secretly wished that his father had affirmed him more. How much he coveted those words, "Son, I'm proud of you." But he never heard them.

Little things can make a father a hero to his children. For instance, to help them pick the perfect clothes for school and the perfect shoes; to comb out their hair in the morning; to help them with their breakfast. It is these little things that make a father a hero.

Also a Christian father ought to



Father Albert Shamon

A word for Sunday

reflect God's character. An Internet poll asked respondents, "Which one family member is best identified as your role model?" The father was listed as the top role model in most families, with mother coming in a close second.

When General Norman Schwartzkopf was interviewed by Barbara Walters, she asked him for his definition of leadership. He reflected for a moment and said, "It's competence. More important, it's character. It's taking action. It's doing the right thing." These four qualities are critical for success in the world.

Later Barbara asked him what he wanted on his tombstone. For a moment he grew very quiet. Then, with just the hint of a tear in his eyes, he said, "I want it to say 'He loved his family and he loved his troops — and they loved him.'"

Finally, a Christian father reflects God's gentleness and at the same time God's strength.

Many of us are familiar with professional basketball star Rebecca Lobo. Lobo says it was her dad who taught her the skills that she needed to succeed. He also demonstrated in his life strength as well as love. She wrote, "My mom battled breast cancer when I was in college. Despite his worry, dad was a pillar of strength. Even now, when my mom goes away for a couple of days, dad has a hard time with it. I think it is because it makes him think about what life would be like without her. I don't know who said it originally, but mom has passed it along — the most important thing a father can do

for his children is to love their mother. My dad was a perfect example of that."

Real dads have emotional strength, spiritual strength. They are gentle, yet strong in the same way that Christ was gentle, yet strong. Some kids no doubt have grown up somewhat afraid of their dad. Perhaps their dad embodied a style of parenting that confused strength with stoicism. Perhaps their dad was relatively absent except when discipline was needed to be meted out — and then it was with an iron hand. God is not like that.

"When we cry 'Father,' it is the Spirit witnessing that we are children of God."

Father Shamon is administrator of St. Isaac Jogues Chapel, Fleming.

Daily Readings

Monday, June 16
2 Corinthians 6:1-10; Psalms 98:1-4; Matthew 5:38-42

Tuesday, June 17
2 Corinthians 8:1-9; Psalms 146:2, 5-9A; Matthew 5:43-48

Wednesday, June 18
2 Corinthians 9:6-11; Psalms 112:1-4, 9; Matthew 6:1-6, 16-18

Thursday, June 19
2 Corinthians 11:1-11; Psalms 111:1-4, 7-8; Matthew 6:7-15

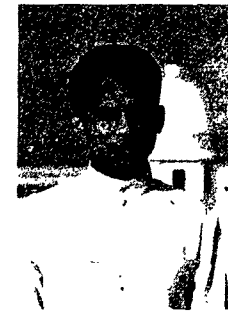
Friday, June 20
2 Corinthians 11:18; 2 Th 3:1-5; Psalms 34:2-7; Matthew 6:19-23

Saturday, June 21
2 Corinthians 12:1-10; Psalms 34:8-13; Matthew 6:24-34

MISSION NEWS

Two thousand years ago Jesus called Peter ...
Today, He calls Matthew

Matthew will be ordained to the priesthood next year — but he has already started to help satisfy the great hunger for Jesus that he sees among his people in his native India. He and other seminarians gather village children to teach them. They visit prisoners, offering a message of hope. "In all we do we are also proclaiming the Good News of Jesus to people, hoping that one day they will accept Him as their only Savior," Matthew says. "For that to happen more needs to be done."



Will YOU support Matthew and other young men in the Missions in their studies for the priesthood — as they prepare to bring the "Good News" of Jesus to the nearly two-thirds of our human family who do not know Him? ✚ Please pray for mission seminarians.
✚ Please offer your financial help as well.



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