



Abba . . . Father!

By Joan Steele, D.R.E. and Mission Administrator

image of God the Father is very often formed by our relationship with our own earthly Father as we are growing up. Now that as a child, I personally saw God the Father as a pluralian, keeping a running tally of my mistakes and shortcomings. I was already a married woman before my father gave me a *new image* of God the Father – an image strong, gentle, compassionate, supportive Father who loved me unconditionally. It was life-changing for me.

I was fortunate to have had a wonderful relationship with your Dad, growing up, I am so glad for you. If like me, your relationship was more a struggle, I want to offer to you the hope that God is not done with you yet. If you ask, He will give you a Father that deserves your respect, teaches you by example and supports you always – if not in a man – than in Himself.

Jesus told his disciples that **“If you know me, then you will know my Father. From now on you do know him and I have seen him.” Philip said to him, ‘Master, show us the Father, and that will be enough for us.’ Jesus said to him, ‘Whoever has seen me has seen the Father.’” John 14:7-9.**

We are blessed abundantly to serve a Triune God. God our Father is our Creator, the sculptor who formed us within our mother's womb. God the Son, Jesus, is our Savior. He not only has our back, he took our punishment for our sins and paid the ultimate price with his life, so that we could be with Him for all eternity. God the Spirit is the love who transpires between the Father and the Son; our Advocate, our Teacher, our Guide. A Triune God is a God of Family, of Community, of Relationship. The Godhead teaches us how to love beginning by how they exist as One.

I'm thinking that one of the silver linings of this pandemic (and there are many) is the amount of extra time that most children are getting to spend with their Dads. This can be such a blessing. Fathers can be so mysterious to their children; this extra time can offer a bounty of discovery, relationship building and a deepening of the bond between child and Father.

Another silver lining is the increase of participation in streaming, online and televised Masses. It seems that crisis situations cause us to reprioritize our thinking and our lives. For many, the ease of joining a *virtual* Mass from the safety of our homes has facilitated a return to the Church, without feeling discriminated against, shamed or put on the spot. They are welcomed, just as the returning prodigal son was welcomed by his wonderful Father. Just as we, who turn away, fall short or experience spiritual laziness in our own daily walk, are welcomed back into our Father's arms when we *turn around* and repent.

“For those who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God. For you did not receive a spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you received a spirit of adoption, through which we cry, Abba, ‘Father!’ The Spirit itself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if only we suffer with him so that we may also be glorified with him.”
Romans 8:14-17.

It has been said that it only takes biology to become a father, but it takes love, compassion and caring to become a Dad. I pray that all this extra time that children around the world are getting to spend with their fathers, will lead them to better relationships with their Abba, their Father, their Daddy!

We too have an opportunity to spend more time with our Abba. We don't have to get dressed and drive for a half hour or more to church to spend time with God. God is always with us. Blessed are those who take the time to sit with the Lord. Find a spot where you can be alone and quiet with your Abba. Tell him your concerns, share with him your fears, thank Him for the bounty of blessings He bestows on you daily. Then, listen. Just sit and be quiet. Listen for God's voice in your heart. He will be so happy to have your attention; so happy that you have decided to spend time on your relationship with Him. I heard a question posed on Christian radio today, “Are we more concerned with whether or not God the Father is listening to our prayers, or, with the question of whether or not *we* are listening to God's response?”

As you thank God for all the *Fathers* that have had a positive influence in your life, be sure to include the ultimate Abba – the One Who created you and breathed His life into you. The One Who always has your back, always helps you up and always, always welcomes you home.

Happy Father's Day!



FIND SHELTER IN ME

Georgia Cordle, Parishioner

The Covid-19 Pandemic has changed our normal. People have reacted in various ways to the news and statistics that we read or hear about from our news outlets. Some have lived in fear or confusion over what it is or isn't, how it is spread or not spread and some in anger over the changes that have been forced upon them. We have learned new catch phrases: "Social distancing" and "Shelter in place" being the most common ones.

I have thought a lot about 'sheltering'. I have worried about those who have had to shelter by themselves. No family or friends or coworkers who share any physical part of their day and night. Their only 'contact' being by phone or text. This

must be so much harder than those that have been blessed to shelter with loved ones. As I have prayed for those adversely effected by this pandemic, especially those alone, the Lord has led me to two verses that have comforted me. I have been reminded how we are promised shelter by our Heavenly Father.

Psalms 91 [Assurance of God's Protection]

You who live in the **shelter** of the Most High, who abide in the shadow of the Almighty, will say to the LORD, 'My refuge and my fortress; my God, in whom I trust.'

Psalms 61:3-5

...for you are my refuge, a strong tower against the enemy. Let me abide in your tent forever, find refuge under the **shelter** of your wings.

In the "Our Father", Jesus taught his disciples that we can call God Most High our **Father**. This changed forever the relationship from a God beyond our reach to a God that could hold us in His arms and comfort our fears, heal our anger, clarify our confusion and **shelter** us from any storm.

These verses invite us to seek a shelter that is attainable for each of us. Those sheltering alone or those sheltering with loved ones. They promise that we don't ever have to be 'alone'. Our Father has promised us that He will always be with us and always provide us the shelter that we need.

I miss you all. A positive outcome of our sheltering has made me realize how important Mass and Eucharist –especially as it is shared with my Church Family – is in my life. I wish you all good health and long for the Sunday where we shelter together at our Mission celebrating the joy of Communion with the Father who loves and shelters each of us.

Good Good Father by Chris Tomlin

Oh, I've heard a thousand stories
Of what they think You're like
But I've heard the tender whisper
Of love in the dead of night
And You tell me that You're pleased
And that I'm never alone

You're a good good Father
It's who You are, it's who You are, it's who You are
And I'm loved by You
It's who I am, it's who I am, it's who I am

Oh, and I've seen many searching
For answers far and wide
But I know we're all searching
For answers only You provide
'Cause You know just what we need
Before we say a word

You're a good good Father
It's who You are, it's who You are, it's who You are
And I'm loved by You
It's who I am, it's who I am, it's who I am

'Cause You are perfect in all of Your ways
You are perfect in all of Your ways
You are perfect in all of Your ways to us

You are perfect in all of Your ways
Oh, You are perfect in all of Your ways
You are perfect in all of Your ways to us

Oh, it's love so undeniable
I, I can hardly speak
Peace so unexplainable
I, I can hardly think
As You call me deeper still
As You call me deeper still
As You call me deeper still
Into love, love, love

You're a good good Father
It's who You are, it's who You are, it's who You are
And I'm loved by You
It's who I am, it's who I am, it's who I am

You're a good good Father
It's who You are, it's who You are, it's who You are
And I'm loved by You
It's who I am, it's who I am, it's who I am
You're a good good Father

You are perfect in all of Your ways
You are perfect in all of Your ways
You are perfect in all of Your ways

Outreach Ministry

ssion San Antonio de Padua supports several outreach programs. : are looking for someone to help us grow this ministry. It won't e a lot of time; you do not need any training and you will be wswering God's call to minister to your brothers and sisters.

Programs:

mmunion Service for the Homebound: Please let us know if u need communion brought to you. Receiving the Eucharist is idamental to our Catholic beliefs.

ayer Circle: Are you willing to pray for those in need? Do you d special prayer? The prayer circle is a great way to reach out d reach up! You don't need to be able to travel; prayer requests u be shared within the group via the telephone or email. A eduled prayer time of 8 a.m., 12 noon and 8 p.m. unites those ed prayers. Join in any time or all times to add your united voice rayer for those in our parish family who are in need.

als during a family illness/hospitalization: Would you be able provide a meal for someone who is in need? Are you in need of ne help while you deal with health issues?

pooling services for Mass: If you need a ride to Mass or if you provide a ride, this might be the ministry for you.

nt to help in other ways? We are always looking for volunteers to p in the Padre's Garden, Clean the church or work on our ecessary fund raisers. Call the Mission for more ideas.

ou are interested in lending a hand or would like to be emembered in any of these ministries, please contact Joan at the e.

Mission San Antonio

Website: www.missionsanantonio.net

Email: office@missionsanantonio.net
(831) 385-4478