

“Fathers can do no better work and do nothing more valuable either for God, for Christendom, for all the world, for themselves, and for their children than to bring up their children well ... For bringing up their children properly is their shortest road to heaven.”

“Now you tell me, when a father goes ahead and washes diapers or performs some other menial task for his child ... God, with all his angels and creatures, is smiling—not because that father is washing diapers, but because he is doing so in Christian faith.”

Martin Luther



**L**utherans For Life shares God's own gladness and gratefulness for all our fathers who have embodied to their children His own Gospel-motivated voice For Life. Your faithful fatherhood—your advice and assistance, your affirmation and encouragement, your involvement with us and example to us—makes known God's fatherly, divine goodness and mercy to all. In the demands and difficulties of fathering, you have shared in the sufferings of Christ and so you will also share in His glory. Blessed are you, fighting the good fight and keeping the faith, because God who sees what is done in secret has extended to you His Son's crown of righteousness and life eternal. Your fatherhood yields but a foretaste of the everlasting heavenly inheritance that awaits all who put God's promises ahead of their pride and meet their children's needs with no regard for their own desires. Rejoice at this calling as angels above and generations to come rejoice over you!

**P**rayers: Almighty God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, receive our thanksgiving for Your grace shown to us through the precious blessing of fatherhood. Especially do we adore You this day for the fathers You have given each of us as token and instrument of Your loving-kindness, and we thank You for all the godly men who have fulfilled for us fatherly responsibilities even apart from biological obligations. You have sanctified their self-giving struggle by lending them Your own name and offering them as reflection of Your protecting and providing compassion. Your commandment to honor their authority and Your promise that children trained in the way they should go will not depart from it even in old age makes fatherhood a holy calling. Keep them mindful that Your benediction rests upon their daily labors and redeems their failures. Defend them when their patience wanes and when their work requires absence from home and family or entrance into harm's way. Relieve and heal all hearts that do not know the joy of fatherhood because of barrenness or loss or a painful parental relationship. Embrace them in the strong, gentle arms of Your presence, forgiveness, and resurrection through Jesus Christ. Grant Your people highly to esteem and faithfully to follow the pattern of godly fathers that we may further commend ourselves into Your care and enjoy Your company alongside them without end; through the same Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.



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