

## Dear Brothers and Sisters



This Sunday, the 12th in Ordinary Time, is also Father's Day. The last time my parents visited from the UK I spent part of everyday chatting with my dad, specifically last thing at night before going to sleep, often accompanied by a wee dram he has brought with him.

It made me reflect on his influence on me. Someone told him he'd done a good job raising me, to which he replied "I got out of the way, and let his mother do it." Someone else said to him 'You must be very proud of your son' to which he answered "We were glad to get rid of him." He was joking of course, I think!

As a boy I did not appreciate all the things he did, the untold sacrifices and unspoken love. Like the time when we did not have a car, and he asked if he could use my bicycle to go get to work. He cycled to the docks and back every day, rain or shine, a 10-mile round trip with some wicked hills. At the time I never appreciated it, I was more concerned about my bike.

There was the time my sister, as a young teenager, decided Mass was boring, and didn't want to go anymore. As we drove to Mass one Saturday evening there was silence in the car, and my dad asked what was going on. My sister, who was bolder than me, piped up that she did not want to go to church. Dad stopped the car, despite my mother's pleas, and told my sister to get out. He told her not to come home, that she did not live with us anymore. It worked, we she never missed Mass again.

And there was the time when I got my driver's license and asked my dad to borrow the car. He gave me the keys and said "Drive carefully" I took off in the pouring rain like Mario Andretti, hit a curb and blew out both near-side tires. He came and changed both tires, kneeling down in the road getting drenched, telling me to stay in a storefront so that I wouldn't get wet. After changing the tires, he got up, soaked thru, and gave me the keys again, and just said "Drive carefully" and went home. I wanted the earth to open and swallow me up. What an idiot I was, I thought to myself.

Our Dads do many things for us, acts of correction and acts of kindness. Perhaps we do not always appreciate them at the time, but the influence of Fatherhood is indispensable and lasting on the formation of children.

All fatherhood is a reflection of the Paternity of God Our Father. He corrects us when we need it, and is patient and benevolent when we don't deserve it. As we celebrate Father's Day today, and honor our fathers, those living and deceased, let us give thanks to God our Heavenly Father, and ask him to mold us into his children.

Fr. Sean