

# Fatherhood

## An appreciation of the gift of being a dad

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The arrival of this past June's Father's Day caused me to reflect on what the occasion means to me. As I gazed around the table and viewed my family, I observed my partner in life, affectionately known as mom, and my children, each with his or her own uniqueness.

The good Lord is a co-Creator with us, the parents, and stands beside us throughout life's journey. As dad, I muddle through life's daily challenges, but am supported by mom and the good Lord in the raising of my children ... make that "our" children. Mom provides the nurturing that is indeed a spiritual gift bestowed on mothers. For dad, mom is a safe harbour in the midst of the often stormy seas of our family journey. For the children, she provides an attentive ear, a soft shoulder to cry on and innumerable hugs when needed. Thank you, Lord, for moms.

In my view, dads should demonstrate the model of steward leadership. In this role, we are called to serve our children in their physical, emotional and spiritual needs and to be a source of stability and peace for our families. Jesus taught his disciples that whoever wants to become great must serve others. Alas, we often don't measure up to God's expectations of fatherhood. On these occasions, we come face to face with our own humanity and the accompanying imperfections. From these experiences, we pray and move forward a little wiser, hopefully.

The words, "You are a father once again," echoed through the waiting room at Scarborough Centenary Hospital, announcing the birth of my youngest child, Lindsey Sara Molloy.

This joyous moment was quickly shattered with a subsequent announcement that she was born with Down syndrome. I was devastated. I had no answer to the questions cascading through my mind. I also pondered a very common question: Why us Lord? I lashed out initially as it being a poor decision by him. My faith was definitely shaken. I had forgotten that God creates people in his own image and likeness and that Lindsey was a one-of-a-kind personal creation sent directly from God's workshop. Admittedly, it took time and the support of family and friends to help us see the light.

The world often sees people with disabilities as "imperfect human beings." I remind those who may think this that God doesn't make junk. All of us are made to his unique specifications.

Lindsey has enriched our family life beyond belief, despite formidable challenges. Our gift of faith has enabled dad to view the world through God's lens. Believe me, it's a much better view. It's one that sees the gifts in all.