

Father's Day Reflections

Once again we approach that special day we have come to know as Father's Day. Ever since childhood I have recognized this day as an opportunity to express my appreciation for my dad and all that he has done for me and my family. So I, along with most everyone else, have shared in this tradition throughout the years. Father's Day was always very special to me.

On May 14, 1976, I experienced the awareness of truly becoming an adult and feeling like one for the first time in my life even though I was 33 years old. My son, Donnie, was born on that day. He is our only child. All of my wonderful experiences with my own dad carried over to me and my son. I had the opportunity to put into practice my promises to myself of those things I would do if I had a child. Every day becomes special when you have your own child. Father's Day was celebrated together with my father (Pop-pop) and me (Pop) as my son called me. I always thought that life would take its expected course, and one day my Dad would not be here physically with us, but the tradition of Father's Day would go on with me as the focus of it, and later, as my son grew up, he would get to experience all of these things just as my Dad and I had. But my life did not take the expected course.

As this Father's Day approaches, I realize that something is very different. It is not at all like I expected or wanted. When my Dad died, I had known that one day it would happen, and I would have to accept and adjust to it, but I was not at all prepared for my only child to die from an accident at the young age of 25. All of the joys that Father's Day brings would not continue to be a part of my life any longer. I would only have memories of those past holidays with just pictures and videos to remind me. One of the most painful realizations to me is that I will not become a grandfather, that my wife will not become a grandmother, or that we will not have the prideful sharing with our friends of OUR grandchildren as others so excitedly do. The fact that my son will not experience all of these things as a dad himself, is most painful to me. Little did Kathy and I know just how much our child was like the battery in a car that gets us started. Now we have to jump start ourselves every day.

How do I deal with Father's Day now is the big question. I will have to tell you that my faith is the only thing that allows me to endure and cope with each day. As I see people shopping for their dads and celebrating this special day, I just have to continue to live and move forward. In life my dear and wise son always had a secondary plan (a plan B) in dealing with everything, and he has taught me to follow in his footsteps and do the same. Now, it is I who must have a plan B. My plan is to put my circumstances into God's hands and trust in His promises.

I am glad there are many people who will not have to face these issues and can appreciate and honor their dads. I hope others who may read this will have a renewed relationship with their dads. Fathers are so special, and we are fortunate to be able to celebrate this day and show our love and appreciation for them. My own Father's Day will now be remembering all of the loving times we were blessed to have with one another while at the same time I will look to the future when we will be joined again in the company of our Heavenly Father.