

# ACTION GUIDE

## FATHER'S DAY: THIRD SUNDAY OF JUNE

### INTRODUCTION

*While not a liturgical observance, Father's Day is an appropriate time to recall the essential role of fathers in the life of the family and in building a culture of life. It is also an opportunity to highlight spiritual fatherhood, which all men are called to embrace.*

*Simple steps, sample intercessions, homily notes, and an activity are provided to help your parish celebrate and pray for the fathers in your community. Please feel free to adapt the following resources to fit the needs of your specific parish or ministry.*

Fatherhood has its origins in God, who chose to reveal Himself to us as Our Father, sending his only Son for the sake of our salvation. Fathers therefore have a special role "in revealing and in reliving on earth the very fatherhood of God" (*Familiaris consortio* 25). Indeed, the role of the father "is of unique and irreplaceable importance" (*FC* 25).

Although society increasingly tells fathers that they have no say in the lives of their children before birth and fails to recognize the dynamic and critically important role of fatherhood, it is both a biological and spiritual reality. Pope Saint John Paul II said fathers are called to exhibit

"generous responsibility for the life conceived under the heart of the mother" (*FC* 25). They are uniquely entrusted with the protection and defense of both mother and child and, in this way, in safeguarding the sanctity of human life. Yet research continues to show that the top reasons women seek abortions include lacking support from the child's father and financial challenges, which are only exacerbated by a father's absence.

As a Church community, we need to encourage and support men to follow the example of St. Joseph and embrace their various roles as father. Even if a man is not a parent, he is still called to spiritual fatherhood—a fatherhood that fosters others' relationship with God, protecting them from evil and providing an example of Christ's love.

St. Joseph, himself, was unexpectedly called to both practical and spiritual fatherhood, and amid very difficult circumstances. But despite all obstacles, Joseph was faithful. He welcomed life, offering care and protection to Mary and Jesus. We pray that each expectant father will find courage in the example of St. Joseph and offer loving, life-affirming support to the mother of his child.

**The resources referenced in this action guide can be found at [respectlife.org/action-guides](https://respectlife.org/action-guides), unless otherwise noted.**