

Single Parent Networker

**Ascension, Cathedral of the Holy Spirit,
Corpus Christi, St. Anne, St. Mary, St. Joseph,
Christ the King, and Spirit of Life**

Volume 23 Issue 6

June 2014

Divorced Dads: Maintain Your Poise

Dr. Little was a key father figure in my life. He was a dentist and a highly respected leader in his town, and eventually became my father-in-law.

Although he had many qualities I admired, like any dad he was not perfect. After a while, he divorced his wife and married another woman. I don't know all the circumstances that led him to do that, but I am very aware of the heartache that his leaving caused for my bride Melanie, his daughter. There are ways she was set back because of that.

And while I have not been through a divorce in my own marriage or with my parents, knowing Dr. Little has helped me understand a little bit about what divorced dads go through. He didn't get to see his daughters as much as he wanted to, and in his later years I saw his pain. He told me that the divorce was a big mistake, and he lived with that regret every day.

Still, he strived to be a good dad for his children; he wanted to make up

for what he had done. His kids respected him, and he earned my respect also. And of course I went to *him* when it was time to ask for Melanie's hand in marriage.

I have also learned about being a divorced dad from other dads I know. My friend Dave is married, with children from a previous marriage. Not long ago, Dave was excited to see his son play football. Dave's son is a good-sized kid for a 16-year-old, and an excellent first baseman. That day, the boy had three base hits and Dave took some great photographs. I could tell how proud he was when he told me on the phone.

But then his mood changed as he continued his story. You see, Dave had agreed with his son's mother that he and his son would go out to dinner after the game. He had the grandparents in town and had arranged to meet them; it would be a great time of celebration.

But even all these years since the divorce, there's still some

bitterness. I only heard Dave's side of the story, and I'm sure it's a complex situation. But like what has happened several times before, Dave's former wife found a way to cut off his time with his boy. I heard the pain in Dave's voice as he told me about leaving the football field that day without his son. I've never experienced that, and I can only imagine how it would feel.

Maybe you're a divorced dad and carrying around a lot of pain -- maybe some anger, maybe some regret. Maybe you feel like things aren't fair and your ex is being vindictive and unreasonable. Although I haven't experienced it, I believe your best course of action is clear: maintain your poise, keep your dignity, and do the right thing.

Your kids know you aren't perfect -- or they will very soon -- but they also know you're still their dad. They need you, and that won't ever change. If your kids are dealing with some complicated issues, if they don't seem to want you around, or if things are so tense with their mother you *can't* be around, just be patient. Think about your

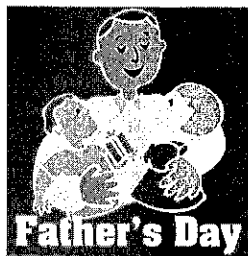
relationship with them years or even decades from now, when they're grown up. How you conduct yourself *now* will pave the way for that relationship.

I believe this is a chance to model perseverance and sacrificial love, and even in these painful situations, something good can come about.

That's what Dave has done. Even through his pain, he is reaching out to help other dads get through similar situations. And maybe even better, Dave is showing his son how to handle adversity. As hard as it is, he's training his boy how to function in a tough situation.

Dad, it's not always easy keeping your poise. But no matter how your life unfolds or how hard your challenge might be, I hope you'll follow Dave's example. Maintain a good attitude and make the best of it. During challenges when many guys would go to the other extreme and do something hurtful toward their ex, choose a higher path. Your children need you to be a father who carries himself with character and dignity. Set an example your children will learn to respect in the long run.

Written by Carey Casey, Used with permission by Fathers.com, National Centering for Fathering.
www.fathers.com.



Happy Father's Day Sunday, June 15

What is a Dad?

A dad is someone who wants to catch you before you fall, but instead picks you up, brushes you off, and lets you try again.

A dad is someone who wants to keep you from making mistakes but instead lets you find your own way, even though his heart breaks in silence when you get hurt.

A dad is someone who holds you when you cry, scolds you when you break the rules, shines with pride when you succeed, and has faith in you even when you fail.
- Unknown



Good Fathers make good sons.
- Unknown

By the time a man realizes that maybe his father was right he usually has a son who thinks he is wrong.
- Charles Wadsworth

Dad, a sons first hero. A daughters first love.
- Unknown

May God bless all Father's!



Parenting Pointers

575. June 6: "The whole world spoke the same language, using the same words." (Gn 11:1) Does anyone in your family know a second language? How about one helpful word in a second language. As a family, learn a new word/phrase in a foreign language today.

576. June 13: (Father's Day) What did your own father teach you about being a father. Hopefully it was positive like fidelity, loyalty, protection, unconditional love. But even if your father was absent or flawed, you can still be inspired to do better with your own child.

577. June 20: Food is important. God provided the Israelites with manna in the desert. Through bread and wine Jesus gave us a way to remember him. Families share food not just for hunger but to be together. How many dinners will you eat together this week?

578. June 27: Crops are starting to produce their fruit. Talk to your children about eating healthy and as locally as possible. Pick some food together that doesn't come from a store. Maybe it's from your own garden or berries from a U-Pick farm.

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www.SusanVogt.net

Rights of Children of Divorce

Lois V. Nightingale



Children have the right to:

1. Continue to love both parents without guilt or disapproval (subtle or overt) by either parent or other relatives.
2. Be repeatedly reassured that the divorce is not their fault.
3. Be reassured they are safe and their needs will be provided for.
4. Have a special place for their own belongings at both parents' residences.
5. Visit both parents regardless of what the adults in the situation feel, and regardless of convenience, or money situations.
6. Express anger and sadness in their own way, according to age and personality (not have to give justification for their feelings or have to cope with trying to be talked out of their feelings by adults).
7. Not be messengers between parents; not to carry notes, legal papers, money or requests between parents.
8. Not make adult decisions, including where they will live, where and when they will be picked up or dropped off, or who is to blame.
9. Love as many people as they choose without being made to feel guilty or disloyal. (Loving and being loved by many people is good for children; there is not a limit on the number of people a child can love.)
10. Continue to be kids, i.e. not take on adult duties and responsibilities or become a parent's special confidant, companion or comforter (i.e. not to hear repeatedly about financial problems or relationship difficulties).
11. Stay in contact with relatives, including grandparents and special family friends.
12. Choose to spend at least one week a year living apart from their custodial parent.
13. Not be on an airplane, train or bus on major holidays for the convenience of adults.
14. Have teachers and school informed about the new status of their family.
15. Have time with each parent doing activities that create a sense of closeness and special memories.
16. Have a daily and weekly routine that is predictable and can be verified by looking at a schedule on a calendar in a system understandable to the child. (For instance: a green line represents the scheduled time with dad, and a purple line represents the scheduled time with mom, etc.)
17. Participate in sports, special classes or clubs that support their unique interests, and have adults that will get them to these events, on time without guilt or shame.
18. Contact the absent parent and have phone conversations without eavesdropping or tape-recording.
19. Ask questions and have them answered respectfully with age-appropriate answers that do not include blaming or belittlements of anyone.
20. Be exposed to both parents' religious ideas (without shame), hobbies, interests and tastes in food.
21. Have consistent and predictable boundaries in each home. (Although the rules in each house may differ significantly, each parent's set of rules needs to be predictable within their household.)
22. Be protected from hearing adult arguments and disputes.
23. Have parents communicate (even if only in writing) about their medical treatment, psychological treatment, educational issues, accidents and illnesses.

For further information on this topic you can read:

My Parents Still Love Me Even Though They're Getting Divorced: An Interactive Tale for Children, available through Amazon.com.

By Lois V. Nightingale



A Prayer for Father's

God Our Father,

In your wisdom and love you made all things.

Bless those fathers who have taken upon themselves the responsibility of parenting.

Bless those who have lost a spouse to death, separation, or divorce and who are parenting their children alone.

Strengthen all Dads by your love that they may become the loving, caring, person they are meant to be.

Grant this through Christ our Lord.

Amen

Beginning Experience:

Separated, Divorced, Widow
Tara at 701-426-8303

Level I—Charity Lutheran

Level II—Faith Lutheran

Level III—Good Shepherd

Each level is 10 weeks. All levels run concurrently. See website below.

Children's Beginning Experience:

Susan at 1-701-258-3152

Free Preschool for 3&4 year olds for eligible families, contact **BECEP** at 701-323-4400 for school year.

Caring for Children Program—health coverage to uninsured children. 1-800-342-4718. www.ndcaring.org

Single File Newsletter

For information

www.bismarcksinglefile.com

Parish Information:

Cathedral—222-2259

St. Anne—223-1549

Ascension—223-3606

St. Mary- 223-5562

Corpus Christi—255-4600

Spirit of Life-663-1660

Christ the King -663-8842

St. Joseph -663-9562

Office of Family Ministry—Diocese of Bismarck—

Joyce McDowall 701-204-7209

Toll Free 1-877-405-7435

www.bismarckdiocese.com

jmcdowall@bismarckdiocese.com

If you would like your name removed from the mailing list, please call your parish coordinator

Parents Forever-Education for Families in divorce Transition, call NDSU Parent Resource Center, 667-3342 or 667-3340

WEBSITES THAT MAY BE OF INTEREST:

- www.celebratesimply.com
- www.bereavementmag.com
- www.beginningexperienceofwesternnorthdakota.org
- www.vibrantfaithathome.org
- www.usccb.org

www.fambooks.com/moms.htm

www.singleparents.about.com

www.bridgetobenefits.org