

A Litany for Fatherhood

Introduction

God as Father has been the predominant image of God in the church for centuries, yet our understanding of what it means to be a father varies across cultures and personal experience.

So at times this image of God falls short— in part because our imagination for fatherhood falls so short.

Today we pray for the church, the world, and all those in need, lifting up the wide spectrum of the fatherhood experience, as a way to open us to the wideness of God's love.

To dads who are biological fathers—

we rejoice with you.

To those who have become fathers through adoption –

we are grateful with you.

To stepfathers who claim their family in a special way,

we walk with you on these complex paths.

To foster dads, mentor dads, and spiritual dads –

your presence matters.

To those who father by loving nieces and nephews, students and neighbors –

we give thanks for your nurturing.

To those who have experienced loss through miscarriage, failed adoptions, or running away –

we cry with you.

To those who know the strong ache of losing a child –

we mourn with you.

To those who have wrestled with the frustration and disappointment of infertility,

we walk with you.

To those who care for little ones every day

we appreciate you.

To those who work outside the home

we are thankful for you.

To those who have had warm, close relationships with their children –

we delight with you.

To those who have been delighted and surprised by the things their children teach them
we are grateful with you.

To those who have struggled to understand and connect with their children—
we hurt with you.

To those who have dreamed of being a father or grandfather, yet that dream has not
been realized,
we honor your loss.

To those who have experienced good work and good play with their fathers
we celebrate with you.

To those who have lost their fathers —
we grieve with you.

To those who have experienced abuse at the hands of their fathers —
we believe you and bless your continued healing.

To those estranged from their children due to incarceration,
we surround you with love.

To those separated from their children due to deployment,
we pray for your loving connection.

To those who are challenged and daunted by parenthood right now—
we encourage you to keep on.

To those who will have emptier nests in the upcoming year —
we pray for your transition.

To all those who love fiercely and completely —
we are grateful for God's love shining through you.

A prayer may follow.

This litany was made by Rev. Lisa Janke and Richard Bruxvoort Colligan for Olive Branch community,
Rochester, MN. Feel free to use as is or adapt at will.