



Boston Catholic Journal

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For Danny an Open Letter to a Fatherless Boy



We recently received a letter written in to response to an article that appeared in the Journal some months ago, entitled "Fatherhood is Forever", by Joseph Mary.

I would like to share it with you.

It was written by a boy and addressed to Joseph Mary. We passed the letter on to him and asked him to respond to this little boy. It is the policy of the Journal not to disclose the e-mail addresses of any correspondents, and this is particularly true in the case of children. In fact, when the Editor-in-Chief attempted to reply, indicating that the Journal had received the boy's letter, the mail was returned as undeliverable by the server. After pondering the situation, we contacted Joseph Mary and decided the best way to answer the little boy's letter was to publish one back to him. He found us once. Perhaps he will find us again – and this answer to his letter.

The boy's letter follows, unedited:

Dear Mr. Editor,

I kind of read your article about Dads, the one showing a afather holding a babie. I did'nt understand alot, but one thing was sure clere. MOst dads love their kids ALOT! My mom and dad got divorced and I live with my mom. I have'nt seen my Dad for a lkong, long time, and he doesnt call or visit. I almost forget what he

looks like. I am 11. Still I miss him a lot but I don't know where he is and Mom doesn't either. I go to church and pray for him but he still doesn't come. How come some kids have fathers and some don't??

Sincerely

Danny

Well, Danny, we couldn't get hold of you, although we tried, so we gave your letter to Joseph Mary. The following letter is for you.

Dear Danny,

Thank you very, very much for your letter.

Like you, I, too, was without a father. In my own case, I never, ever saw him. He left my mother when I was a baby. It seemed to me, as I was growing up, that he never loved me at all, for he never stayed.

I do not know how long your Dad had been with you before he left, but for an hour, a week, a month, a year ... if he stayed, Danny, it was because he loved you. *If he loved you once, he will love you always.*

Why he does not come back I cannot say. There are many reasons why this may be ... and you and I must leave that in God's Hands.

I know the loneliness and even the anger and resentment that you probably experience, as I did. I did not feel very valuable ... *although I was.*

And you are, too, Danny. Beyond words ... *beyond measure!* ... although it is very likely that you do not see it now in your pain.

Danny, you must somehow understand this: your first father is **God the Father**. *It is God Himself!*

He is more a father to you than any father on this earth will ever be.

He knows you intimately. Inside out! He knows your heart, your pain, your need for love, for protection, for a sense of value and worth –

... and, Danny, *He will give you all this ... and even much more! ... because He is God ... and because you are His son, too!*

I would like to ask a favor of you, Danny, and it is this: remember – *etch into your heart* – the words I am about to give you. They are not mine. They are meant for little boys like you ... and even for grown men like me.

"Can a mother be without tenderness for the child of her womb, uncaring for the infant at her breast? *She* may forget thee ... but *I will never forget thee*"

and

"Who among you, being fathers, if his son asks him for a fish, will give him a serpent, or if he asks him for an egg, will give him a scorpion? If you then, being sinful, know how to give good gifts to your children, *how much more will your Father in Heaven* give what is good to those that ask Him?"

These are God's words.

What they mean, Danny, is this: God *your Father* loves you *more* than even the most loving mother loves her own child; even *more* than a father loves his own son! *More, Danny! More!*

I do not tell you not to seek your father on earth who is gone – but I do tell you to *first* seek your Father in Heaven *Who is present, Who has never left you, and Who never will.*

I looked many years for the first one, for my father on earth ... and never found him.

But the moment I began to look for my Father in Heaven, I found Him at once.

And He never left me ... or let me go.

And he will not leave **you** Danny, or let you go!

Most children, I think, come to understand God, or at least to see something of God's love, through their fathers on Earth. For us, Danny, it's been a little different: For you and me God made the path **direct – right to Him. He reached down ...** and took hold of us.

He is reaching down to you now.

Danny ... reach back up!

With Love in the Immaculate Heart of Mary, Mother of God,

Joseph Mary



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