

Fatherhood and Purpose:

We are coming up on Father's Day, a day of celebration of fathers. If you know like I know, Christians have been celebrating Father's Day for more than 2,000 years. St. Joseph showed us the rewards gained by being a faithful, devoted and obedient father. Jesus showed us how to be a good son and father by following the lead of his father on earth and his father in heaven.

Jesus leads us to the father by being a role model of the virtues of St. Joseph as he grew into his mission on earth. Thus we have the priests of God following in the footsteps of the son's model, encouraging us to love and serve the Lord and all of his people.

As men of God/Jesus we are called to role model our love of Christ each and every day. We have been blessed by knowing and acknowledging the joy of being in love with a wonderful and forgiving brother and father. It's a love which calls us to service to our families all over the world. There are so many men in our communities who have shoes too small for their feet, and it is our duty as fathers to help unbound those feet which are bound and hurting (there is a story in this). If your feet have ever hurt you I bet you can relate to this story.

One day, in the middle of the winter, I was given a big bag of men's shoes and boots, I took them to work, where I knew they could be used. The men saw the shoes and wanted to take all of them, but I limited them to one pair. There was a brother who walked slowly and looked as if he was in pain. He looked at me in a humble way head hanging and asked in a small voice "Could I have a pair of shoes?" I told him, "Sure, help yourself." He grabbed a box and went to a corner alone. He put on the shoes and let out a big sigh and started to walk around the room smiling a long lost smile. He looked down at the shoes and smiled. His face was brighter, and the picture I had was of the man Peter told to get up and walk.

The man told me that the shoes he had been wearing were 9 1/2, but his real size is 11. He turned to me and asked if he could have a second pair of boots. How could anyone say no?

He grabbed the other shoes and treated them as he had found a treasure beyond compare. I have seen him many times afterward, and when he saw me he would look down at his feet.

We have many brothers in all of our homes, families, parishes and on the streets who have shoes which are too tight. We are called to be our brother's keepers, to free our brothers, so that they can be fathers and to let them know that they are not orphans, that they have a father who loves them. We are called to be repairers of breach for those who don't know the father and the son. To free them with our love so that they can follow in the footsteps of Jesus with a new walk and a new talk and a smile beyond compare. So this Father's Day let us become freedom fighters for ourselves and others, noting that as long as one of my brothers and sisters are bound up we are all bound up. On June 18 the Mens' Ministry of St. Bernardine is hosting the Urban Pre- Fathers Day Breakfast with the theme of "Men of God Leading Our Families and Empowering Our Communities," from 8 a.m.-noon, \$10 for admission All are invited.

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