

Jacob Wheeler Foundation

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Father's Day musings ~ As I cycled the 7 ½ miles up Woodville Hill into Elk Park this morning I had time to think and ponder about what Father's Day means, at least to me. I thought about church last night. Father Beretta has all the dads stand at the end of mass and says a blessing and has the kids hand out cookies to the dads. I stood awkwardly, wondering if I deserved this blessing and recognition. Why? Losing a child creates a terrible torture on one's mind and soul. So many questions, so few answers. Then, as if Father Beretta was reading my mind, he directed one of the kids to me saying, "He needs one, he's a good dad". Simple, kind words given at the right time when I most needed it. It was overwhelming. Then I thought of my many friends that have suffered child loss, many from suicide, some not, who have this day of celebration for dads with the same hole in their heart. I thought about how they hold their heads up high and smile in spite of their loss. I thought about the grace in which they live their lives. A great model for how I wish to live out my remaining days. I then thought about my great blessings in life. I have a wonderful wife and daughter that treat me much better than I deserve. I have a son in Heaven that is a constant reminder to me of the need for kindness in this world. And, I have friends, new and old, that continue to look out for me and hold me up. Sure, I have a hole in my heart, like many of the dads out there. But being a dad has been one my greatest blessings. I don't know if Father Beretta is right or not but I know, like many of the dads out there, that I do my best and continue to enjoy the journey of fatherhood. So, today I celebrate and wish all the dads out there, especially my dad, a Happy Fathers Day!

~Bill Wheeler