

Most Gracious God: We give you thanks for those fathers who have striven to balance the demands of work, marriage, and children with an honest awareness of both joy and sacrifice. Let us praise those fathers who, lacking a good model for a father, have worked to become a good father.

We thank you for those fathers who by their own account were not always there for their children, but who continue to offer those children, now grown, their love and support. Let us pray for those fathers who have been wounded by the neglect and hostility of their children.

We thank you, too, for those fathers who, despite divorce, have remained in their children's lives. Let us praise those fathers whose children are adopted, and whose love and support has offered healing.

We offer thanks for those fathers who, as stepfathers, freely choose the obligation of fatherhood and earned their step children's love and respect. Let us praise those fathers who have lost a child to death, and continue to hold the child in their heart.

Thank you also for those men who have no children, but cherish the next generation as if they were their own.

We thank you for those men who have "fathered" us in their role as mentors and guides.

Let us praise those men who are about to become fathers; may they openly delight in their children.

And we offer our thanks for those fathers who have died, but live on in our memory and whose love continues to nurture us.

Roughly and slightly edited from Kirk Loadman