

## The Waiting Father

Once there was a family reunion. It was a large and loving gathering of people. Because the family was spread all over the country some of the members did not know each other. Into this family came a little girl, she was adopted and really felt very uncomfortable going to the reunion because she felt that she really did not fit in. She was brought to meet her great-grandfather. She was worried about his acceptance. He looked at her and said, "I can see the fam-

ily resemblance." She did not know if he was happy or sad. Was he saying she belonged or not? He looked at her and said, "I can see my father's face in your face. The girl felt that he just did not know who she was. He said, "God is my father and yours for we are both in His image. We are family and I am glad that God brought you into my family. As you have probably heard before, all these members of the family were born into it, but you were chosen to be a member."

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reconciliation.

This is the ad, too, for the Divine Liturgy. Father loves us. The Liturgy is not so much the gathering of saints, but the coming together of sinners in need of a father's love and forgiveness.

Another aspect of fatherhood is that of work. Fathers always have work to do. As Paul Harvey said, "I don't know where fathers go when they die. But I've an idea that after a good rest, wherever it is, he won't be happy unless there's work to do. He won't just sit on a cloud and wait for the girl he's loved and the children she bore. He'll be busy there, too, repairing the stairs, oiling the gates, improving the streets, smoothing the way." This is fatherhood being in the

image of the Father. For

Genesis tells us that God's "work"

was creation. Isai-

ah the prophet re-

minds us in his

prayer to the Fa-

ther, "Yet, O LORD,

You are our Fa-

ther; we are the clay

and You the potter.

We are all the work

of Your hands."

We who are the

work and image of the Father have been given work to

do, Jesus tells us, "This is the work of God, that you

believe in the one He sent." Our work is to grow in faith;

the place that helps us grow in the faith is our Father's

house, which is the Church. We need to sit at the feet of

our Father, the Holy Table is God's footstool, and be in

the presence of the source of all knowledge, all wisdom

and all understanding. We go to Church to be with the

Father who loves us, forgives us, and whose face we

carry.

Fr. Jonathan Morse

All persons are created in the image of God and this makes us all members of the human family. As a song goes, "With God as our Father, brothers and sisters all are we..."

In the Church, the family of God gathers. As in every family there are members who live up to all the demands of the family commitments and there are others who have failed miserably. The story of the "Waiting Father" more commonly known as the "Prodigal Son," reminds us that God is like a Father forever waiting for the children He loves to return. Whenever

they come, no matter what they have done, they are welcomed joyfully back into the home, if that is where they want to be.

There was once an incident in Madrid. A father and a son became separated because of an argument. Both were a bit stubborn. The father realized a reconciliation was necessary. He put an ad in the paper, "Paco, All is forgiven. I love you. Your Father. Please meet with me in front of this newspaper next Saturday at 8 am." Eight hundred Pacos showed up for the

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