



St. Therese Catholic Church

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May 26, 2011

Dear St. Therese Friends,

Dale Francis, a columnist for *Our Sunday Visitor*, reflects on his mentally challenged son:

I wish Guy were normal, of course, but he isn't. He is my son and I love him; love him not as the young man he might have been, but as the son he is. That's the secret. Only it really isn't a secret. If we are given children, we must love them as they are. And there are many satisfactions, in a sense, perhaps, more special satisfactions than we have from our [other] children because even small achievements have an importance.

So my son, Guy, I love him. Sometimes when I see signs of the leadership he might have shown, the compassion he possesses, I have a twinge of sadness for the man he might have been, but it doesn't stay with me even a second. I love him for who he is.

I said there are small achievements that can give you great satisfaction. I remember one of them. One day I was busy writing and typing when Guy wanted my attention. I kept up with my work. He came up to me and showed me pictures he had drawn, and I said they were nice, and I went on working. He wrote "Guy"—the only word he knows how to write—and I said that was good and went on working.

He was away for a little while and then he came to me, smiling big. "Look, Daddy," he said, and handed me another piece of paper. There he had written in big, but crooked letters, "DALE," my name. How he had written it I do not know. He had never done it before; he has never done it since. But he did it that day. He held it up to me proudly. "That's very good, Guy," I said. "Do you want me to play with you now?"

He grinned, and I left my typewriter. And so we sat down and drew airplanes and cows and trains. I thought there must not be many fathers who would gain a sense of joy in seeing a twenty-year-old son's writing of a name.

How we need fathers in our culture! Good, strong, generous fathers. Men of faith, men of God. Priestly fathers. Adoptive fathers. A society that does not produce men who can lay down their lives for their wives and children will be riddled with social ills and spiritual disease. Good St. Joseph, intercede for the fathers in our lives.

Totus Tuus. All children and young people going into grades 1-12 are invited to join this week-long camp here at St. Therese—daytimes and evenings respectively through **the week of June 19th-24th**. We have a team of 4 college-age men and women who will lead our kids and youth through a great week of faith-filled fun! Find registration forms and more details on the youth table.

Blessing on your summers! Stay faithful to Sunday Mass...

Fr. David Stevens