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## Father's Day, 1986

*By the President of the United States of America*

### A Proclamation

Each year the third Sunday in June is designated as Father's Day, a day on which we honor our Nation's fathers for everything they do for their families and for America.

Today fatherhood is sometimes drily described as a craft or an occupation, something which competes with career or outside pursuits for time and attention. Contemporary books and articles offer reams of advice to mothers and fathers on how to improve as parents and better manage their time at home and with their children. In this era of new demands and stresses on families, we frequently forget just what it is that is special about fatherhood, what makes it not a part of life, but a path in life that has, in every generation, the power to create and renew.

Fatherhood, after all, is about childhood. Fatherhood is walking the floor at midnight with a sick baby that cannot sleep; fatherhood is an arm around the shoulders of a child crying because a balloon is lost; fatherhood is repairing a bicycle wheel for the umpteenth time knowing that it won't last more than the afternoon. Fatherhood is guiding a youth through the wilderness of adolescence toward the vast expanse of adulthood; fatherhood is holding tight when all else seems to be falling apart; and fatherhood is letting go when it is time to part. Fatherhood is long hours at the blast furnace or in the fields, behind the wheel or in front of a computer screen, working a twelve-hour shift or doing a six-month tour of duty. In short, fatherhood is giving one's all, from a child's first day of life on, from the break of day to its end—on the job, in the household, but, most of all, in the heart.

From the vantage point of his love and responsibility, a father sees the future and dedicates himself to doing whatever is necessary to bring his family safely through. No father performs any of these tasks with thought of thanks or reward. The things that gratify him most are those that represent success in what he has labored to impart to his children: strength of character and conviction, love of family and country, a sense of right and wrong, and, above all, a spirit of thanksgiving for the generous gift of life itself.

Because human nature often keeps us from recognizing how great another's sacrifice is until we assume similar burdens, many of us realize for the first time how dearly we were prized only when we ourselves become parents. On this day for fathers, all of us have a special opportunity to say thanks to America's dads for their selflessness and devotion. We also have a chance to say a prayer for fathers everywhere—for their health and strength if they are with us, or for their blessing if this day finds them smiling down from heaven's bright corridors. Truly, for the labor and legacy of our families and our freedoms, we cannot thank them enough.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, RONALD REAGAN, President of the United States of America, in accordance with a joint resolution of the Congress approved December 28, 1970 (36 U.S.C. 142a), do hereby proclaim Sunday, June 15, 1986, as Father's Day. I invite the States and communities and the people of the United States to observe that day with appropriate ceremonies as a mark of appreciation and abiding affection for their fathers. I direct government officials to display the flag of the United States on all Federal government buildings, and I urge all Americans to display the flag at their homes and other suitable places on that day.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-second day of April, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and eighty-six, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and tenth.

*Ronald Reagan*