

# Spiritual Fatherhood as the Heart of A Catholic Vision of Masculinity

## Objectives

1. You will learn the necessity of a Catholic vision of masculinity for the New Evangelization of the Church and culture, particularly its relevance for counseling men.
2. You will be able to define the 4 components of a comprehensive Catholic vision of masculinity that features spiritual fatherhood as the summit; you will take home a bishop-approved prayer that summarizes the vision.
3. The model provides a practical framework to make a pastoral assessment (diagnosis) and implement a course of action (treatment) which can integrate established psychological techniques and suggest their timing.

“The crisis of fatherhood that we are experiencing today is a basic aspect of the crisis that threatens mankind as a whole” (Ratzinger). This threat strikes when fathers are seen only as biological accident with no claims, or a tyrant to be thrown off. He grimly concludes, “something in the basic structure of human existence has been damaged” (p. 29). As disturbing as this is, it’s not a new thing. St. John Paul II states that, “[The effects of] [o]riginal sin...attempts to abolish fatherhood.” What might be new is the highly targeted philosophies and strategies, especially the media that are used to attack both God’s and human fatherhood. The result there is a pandemic of children in the US (42%) who grow up without a father in the home. We mostly yawn, but the devastation for children on the psychological, sociological, and spiritual levels is massive and irrefutable. The effects rumble through our culture and Church. And the Church has failed to propose a cohesive and comprehensive vision of masculinity that speaks to men from all states in life and forms them so they can address the problems in our Church and culture.

Spiritual fatherhood is the antidote to our fatherlessness culture. Spiritual fatherhood goes back to Aristotle, runs through St. Paul and the early Church fathers, even if mostly in the direction of the ordained. But it is really the essence of being a disciple—caring for “the least of these” with spiritual and corporal works of mercy and living the great commission being fruitful: evangelization and discipleship. Thus it is a universal call to all males to be spiritual fathers—young or old, married or single, with or without children. St. John Paul II would put it, [spiritual] fathers are to reveal, relive, and radiate God’s fatherhood—they make God visible. All men must be fertile and fruitful spiritual fathers!

This is why spiritual fatherhood is the heart and summit of a Catholic vision of masculinity. I further develop spiritual fatherhood as living it out in chivalry as priest, prophet, and king. This is one of the four of components. The other three are: 1) “On Being Family” which is the key to our identity as men; 2) “The Fundamentals” which include some aspects of philosophy and theological anthropology; and 3) “The Integrated or Wise Man” which ties together the dimensions of living the faith out from head, heart, and hands.

The combination of components form a dynamic model that provides a pastoral framework for diagnosing and interventions. The model will be put into motion, so to speak, by analyzing certain prime movements of our faith (love, fear, and sin) which will help define what interventions to use and the timing of them.

## Marxism Quotes

Abolition of the family! Even the most radical flare up at this infamous proposal of the Communists. –  
KARL MARX, THE COMMUNIST MANIFESTO, 1848

"The first condition of the liberation of the wife is to bring the whole female sex back into public industry [work force], and this in turn demands the abolition of the monogamous family as the economic unit of society." (ibid., p.67)— Frederick Engels, *The Origins of the Family, Private Property and the State* (New York, International Publishers, 1942) p.58]

Engels wrote: "With the transfer of the means of production into common ownership, the single family ceases to be the economic unit of society. Private housekeeping is transformed into a social industry. The care and education of the children becomes a public affair; society looks after all children alike, whether they are legitimate or not. This removes all the anxiety about the consequences which today is the most essential social-moral as well as economic factor that prevents a girl from giving herself completely to the man she loves. Will not that suffice to bring about the gradual growth of unconstrained sexual intercourse and with it a more tolerant public opinion in regard to a maiden's honor and a woman's shame?" 31 (Friedrich Engels, *The Origins of the Family, Private Property and the State*, (New York: International, 1942), 67; quoted in Kengor, *Takedown*, loc 493, Kindle version).

Summary: Means of Production > Common Ownership + get women in the workforce =  
single family ceases to be economic unit in society +  
Care & Ed. Of children Turned over to society (more like government) =  
reduction of anxiety about kids out of wedlock =  
"gradual growth of unconstrained sexual intercourse."

## Feminism Quotes

'...*Women's liberation, if not the most extreme then certainly the most influential neo-Marxist movement in America, has done to the American home what communism did to the Russian economy, and most of the ruin is irreversible. By defining between men and women in terms of power and competition instead of reciprocity and cooperation, the movement tore apart the most basic and fragile contract in human society, the unit from which all other social institutions draw their strength.*'

— Harvard Professor Ruth Wisse [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ruth\\_Wisse](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ruth_Wisse)

We can't destroy the inequities between men and women until we destroy marriage.  
— Sisterhood Is Powerful, Robin Morgan (ed), 1970, p. 537:

"Since marriage constitutes slavery for women, it is clear that the women's movement must concentrate on attacking this institution. Freedom for women cannot be won without the abolition of marriage."  
— Sheila Cronan

"Just as the end goal of socialist revolution was not only the elimination of the economic class privilege but of the economic class distinction itself, so the end goal of feminist revolution must be, ... not just the elimination of the male privilege, but of the sex distinction itself; genital differences between human beings would no longer matter culturally."  
— Shulamith Firestone, *The Dialectic of Sex* (New York: Bantam Books, 1972) pp.10-11

## Socialism' Family Quotes

One Soviet official, writing in the 1980s, would state emphatically that under communism, the “school becomes literally a home.”<sup>24</sup> Kengor, loc 450.

### German Socialism—Nazism

In our German experience, most parents, even today, fear that they may spoil their children during the first year. In their worst-case fantasies, they see their child as a “spoiled monster” or a “little tyrant,” to whose every wish they will have to cater. For this reason, many parents do not necessarily see a timely response to their child’s wishes and signals as desirable, although their capacity for sensitive behavior can be seen in the mother–child and father–child interaction during the clinical examination. They are convinced that the child must learn as early as possible to endure frustration. P. 26.

In Germany, this attitude may, in part, be a legacy of the Nazi era, when the 1934 mothering book by Johanna Haarer, *Die deutsche Mutter und ihr erstes Kind* (The German mother and her first child) set the tone. This book was given to each new German mother, and even after the defeat of Nazism it continued to be given to new mothers as a gift—largely cleansed of its more blatant National Socialist ideology. The last revised edition appeared as late as 1987. It was a blueprint for raising infants to endure maximum frustration as early in life as possible by not attending to their signals, but simply allowing them to cry at night if they woke up. The theory was that this increased their lung capacity and toughened them. The recommendation that infants be made to get used to frustration in order to avoid spoiling them has been handed down over the generations and continues to haunt the minds of young mothers, wreaking havoc in new generations. P. 32.

### SOCTUS Quote

In its 1992 decision in the matter of *Casey v. Planned Parenthood*, the United States Supreme Court opined that it belongs to the very “heart of liberty” to “define one’s own concept of existence, of meaning, of the universe, of the mystery of human life.”<sup>5 1</sup>

### The Crisis

He calls himself Father. Human fatherhood can give us an inkling of what God is; but where fatherhood no longer exists, where genuine fatherhood is no longer experienced as a phenomenon that goes beyond the biological dimension to embrace a human and intellectual sphere as well, it becomes meaningless to speak of God the Father. Where human fatherhood disappears, it is no longer possible to speak and think of God. It is not God who is dead; what is dead (at least to a large extent) is the precondition in man that makes it possible for God to live in the world. The crisis of fatherhood that we are experiencing today is a basic aspect of the crisis that threatens mankind as a whole. Where fatherhood is perceived only as a biological accident on which no genuinely human claims may be based, or the father is seen as a tyrant whose yoke must be thrown off, something in the basic structure of human existence has been damaged. ...

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<sup>5</sup> *Casey v. Planned Parenthood of Southeastern Pennsylvania*, 112 Sup. Ct. 2791 at 2807.

<sup>1</sup> Barron, R. (2015). *Exploring Catholic Theology: Essays on God, Liturgy, and Evangelization* (pp. 72–74). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic.

Naturally, we must not indulge in wild exaggerations when we criticize the age in which we live. To begin with, we must not forget that there are exemplary fathers and mothers even today, and that great figures such as Janusc Korczak and Mother Teresa demonstrate in our age that the reality of fatherhood and motherhood can be achieved even without the biological dimension. ...

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Let us return to my earlier point: in Jesus' prayer, the Father becomes visible and Jesus makes himself known as the Son. The unity that this reveals is the Trinity. Accordingly, becoming a Christian means sharing in Jesus' prayer, entering into the model provided by his life, that is, the model of his prayer. Becoming a Christian means saying "Father" with Jesus and, thus, becoming a child, God's son—God—in the unity of the Spirit, who allows us to be ourselves and precisely in this way draws us into the unity of God. Being a Christian means looking at the world from this central point, which gives us freedom, hope, decisiveness, and consolation.

Ratzinger, Joseph. *The God of Jesus Christ: Meditations on the Triune God*. San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2008, pp. 29-35

## Priest, Prophet, and King

### Baptism—

In Baptism In Baptism ... we are anointed as Priest Prophet & King "become sharers in Christ's priestly, prophetic, and royal office" (CCC 871).

The CCC "The whole People of God participates in these three offices of Christ and bears the responsibilities for mission and service that flow from them." (CCC 783)

### Wojtyla's Use of PPK in his Diocese

Thus in presenting the Council's work to his own archdiocese, Wojtyla adopted the classic notion of the threefold office or mission (*munus*) of Christ—priest, prophet, and king—as the schema by which to organize the Council's teaching. The crisis of the world was the corruption of humanism; the answer of the Church was Christologically-centered anthropology; Christians lived that vision of the human in the world as priests (worshippers), prophets (truth-tellers), and servants.<sup>2</sup>

The key to Cardinal Wojtyla's episcopate was the implementation of Vatican II. To bring the Council to every parish and institution in the archdiocese, he launched a new kind of diocesan synod, a seven-year long pastoral synod whose purpose was to relive the experience of the Council and give the people of the archdiocese a chance to read and digest the Council's documents on their own. And by arranging to complete the Synod of Krakow on the 900th anniversary of the death of St. Stanislaw, the city's great martyr-bishop, Cardinal Wojtyla helped his priests and people to understand Vatican II as a Council in continuity with the Church's ancient heritage, a Council of *ressourcement* and *aggiornamento*. Hundreds of Synod discussion groups were formed, bringing together intellectuals and workers, clergy and laity, in a common effort to read the Council as a coherent whole: as a comprehensive Catholic answer to the modern world's questions about the meaning of human existence, and as an evangelical response to the crisis of humanism in the late 20th century. In the

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<sup>2</sup> Weigel, George, *Prepared to Lead*, Crisis Magazine October 1, 1998. Accessed at <http://www.crisismagazine.com/1998/prepared-to-lead> on 12/28/2014.

Synod of Krakow, years of prayer, study, discussion, and reflection preceded concrete program-planning: a reversal of the pattern in much of western Europe and North America, where implementation plans were often devised before anyone had really had an opportunity to think through the Conciliar revolution and its relationship to the Church's tradition. The Synod of Krakow built new communities and facilitated an intensified experience of the *communio* of the Church: this, to Wojtyla's mind, was an essential first step toward the programmatic implementation of Vatican II. As a result of this vast initiative, which may well have been without parallel in the Catholic world, there was neither Lefebvrisism in Krakow nor the auto-secularization that accompanied the reception of the Council in many western countries.<sup>3</sup>

Witness to Hope:

The study groups were the venues in which the Synod built Christian community according to Vatican II's concept of the Church as a "communion" (*communio*) of believers. In these groups, the archdiocese met the documents of Vatican II organically, as a coherent whole. When it came time to make arch-diocesan-wide applications of the Council's teachings, no outside experts were necessary. WTH, p. 205

The experience of the Synod also taught the people of the archdiocese some things about themselves as citizens. They learned that they could organize and carry out a massive program of study and action, independent of permission from the state. They learned that they could think through the situation of their society, independently. Priests and laity, intellectuals and factory workers learned that they could work together. This experience of *communio*, as Vatican II called it, was also an experience of what anti-communist dissidents in east central Europe later called "civil society." It would have repercussions beyond the imaginings of the communist apparatchiks who kept wondering why all those people were spending so much time talking about Church documents. WTH, p. 206

The Synod of Krakow eventually produced some 400 pages of documents, covering every aspect of the Church's life in the archdiocese. These documents, in turn, were organized under three headings, reflecting the three "offices" or roles of Christ as priest, prophet, and king—three offices in which, *Gaudium et Spes* had taught, the people of the Church who were Christ's Body in the world participated.<sup>67</sup> (Weigel, WTH, p. 205).

<sup>67</sup> The Thus under the rubric of

"The People of God's Participation in the Prophetic Mission of Christ,"

- 1) evangelization,
- 2) the family as domestic church,
- 3) catechetics,
- 4) theological studies,
- 5) religious communities,

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<sup>3</sup> Weigel, George, *Prepared to Lead*, Crisis Magazine October 1, 1998. Accessed at <http://www.crisismagazine.com/1998/prepared-to-lead> on 12/28/2014.

- 6) and missionary activity.

"The Participation of the People of God in the Priestly Dignity of Christ."

- 1) The sacraments and
- 2) the sanctification of time were explored in seven documents.

"The Participation of the People of God in the Royal-Pastoral Service of Christ,"

- 1) family, children, young people,
- 2) charitable activity,
- 3) social renewal,
- 4) contemporary culture,
- 5) the structure of the archdiocese, and
- 6) Mary in the life of the archdiocese.
- 7) special concerns or ministries in the archdiocese:
  - a. ecumenism,
  - b. the major seminary,
  - c. the ministry to the sick,
  - d. environmental protection,
  - e. and anti-alcoholism.

In adopting this "threefold-office" framework for its reflection, the Synod followed Cardinal Wojtyla's lead in *Sources of Renewal*, in which Wojtyla had used the three "offices" of Christ as an interpretive key for organizing the entire teaching of Vatican II. *Gaudium et Spes* 24 had taught that "man can fully discover his true self only in a sincere giving of himself"; it was by participating in the three "offices" of Christ, Wojtyla suggested, that the Christian embodied the Law of the Gift inscribed in human nature in a distinctively Christian way. In exercising the priestly office, men and women gave themselves to God in worship; thus the importance of active participation in the Church's liturgy. Christians exercised the prophetic office by freely giving themselves to the truth; obedience to the Word of God and to the teaching authority of the Church was, therefore, an embrace of one's responsibility toward the gift of truth. And mature Christians shared in the royal office of Christ by growing in self-command: "Every Christian who conquers sin achieves the royal self-dominion that is proper to human beings; by doing so he shares in the *munus regale* [royal office] of Christ and helps bring about Christ's kingdom"—this, another variant on Christian humanism, was the Church's answer to atheism and its demands for moral "autonomy."

*Witness to Hope: the Biography of Pope John Paul II*, George Weigel, Cliff Street Books, 1999, pp. 882-883.

Karol Wojtyla's ministry in Krakow was built around seven priorities.<sup>4</sup>

1. Religious freedom not as a sectarian issue, but a fundamental issue of human rights. A freedom that is an essential expression of the truth about the human person.
2. The intellectual and pastoral formation of his priests, teaching his young seminarians that

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<sup>4</sup> Weigel, George, *Prepared to Lead*, Crisis Magazine October 1, 1998. Accessed at <http://www.crisismagazine.com/1998/prepared-to-lead> on 12/28/2014.

holiness and a commitment to the care of souls were the secrets to pastoral success.

3. Youth ministry.
4. Family or “marriage” ministry. Cardinal Wojtyla created an Institute of Family Life to train priests and laity in service to engaged and married couples and their families. The goal of the institute was to further a couple-to-couple ministry in which experienced married couples and parents helped prepare young people for the responsibilities of marriage and family life. This included preparation for lives of sexual love, and the family ministry of the archdiocese embodied the themes that Wojtyla had developed in his first major book, *Love and Responsibility*, a modern presentation of the Church’s sexual ethic, read through the lens of Christian personalism. Given a more intensely theological reading in his papal *Theology of the Body*, Wojtyla’s presentation of marital love as an icon of the interior life of the Holy Trinity would become a powerful, if underappreciated, response to the challenges of the sexual revolution.
5. Outreach to those intellectuals whom the communist regime was determined to thresh from the husk of religious conviction... Unlike other bishops (in Poland and elsewhere) who thought of intellectuals as threats, Wojtyla saw them, Catholic and non-Catholic alike, as a field for his episcopal apostolate, as allies in the struggle for freedom, and as friends. The archbishop met regularly with discussion groups of physicists, chemists, and engineers, on the one hand, and humanities scholars of various disciplines, on the other. His constant interaction with the world of culture distinguished him, not only from some of his colleagues in the Polish episcopate, but from those bishops in Western countries who were uninterested in or insecure around intellectuals and artists.
6. Parish visitation. ... A parish, in his mind, was not an accidental gathering of Christians who happened to live in the same geographical location; **each parish was an embodiment of the threefold mission of Christ in which all the baptized shared**. Thus, parish visitations for Wojtyla became opportunities to preach his profound conviction that sanctity was a universal vocation, not a clerical preserve.
7. The ministry of charity. Poland’s communist regime forbade the Church to operate charitable institutions, as Catholics did so extensively in other parts of the world. But in Wojtyla’s view, there was no Church without an active care for the sick, the poor, the marginalized, and the elderly. So the cardinal supported a range of independent charitable activities, ranging from an “open nursing program” that sought out and cared for those who had fallen through the cracks of the communist medical bureaucracy, to annual archdiocesan “Days of the Sick” and summer vacation programs to take the sick and the elderly out of smog-bound Krakow and into the countryside.

## Resources:

### CS Lewis On Chivalry

Lewis, C.S. *Present Concerns*, ed. by Walter Hooper. San Diego: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Publishers, 1986. [On the Necessity of Chivalry]

## **Marxism and Feminism**

Kengor, Paul. *Takedown: From Communists to Progressives, How the Left Has Sabotaged Family and Marriage*. Kindle Edition

O'Leary, Dale. "Feminism" <https://www.ewtn.com/library/ISSUES/FEMINISM.TXT>

O'Leary, Dale. "The Problem of Gender Feminism" <https://www.ewtn.com/library/ISSUES/GENDFEM.HTM>

Brisch, Karl Heinz, Lotte Köhler, Kenneth Kronenberg, and Inge Bretherton PhD. *Treating Attachment Disorders, Second Edition: From Theory to Therapy*, Kindle edition,

## **Heart**

Von Hildebrand, Dietrich. *The Heart: Analysis of Human and Divine Affectivity*. Chicago, IL: Franciscan Herald Press, 1977.

Wolter, Maria, *The Role of the Heart and Will in Dietrich von Hildebrand's Vision of Love*. The Dietrich von Hildebrand Legacy Project & Franciscan University of Steubenville.  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sQzyEdgl8TI>

## Life as Gift or Reward

1. *Acceptance* as a gift. Unconditional access into full relationship with the person who is the source of 'being' and 'well-being' is free. The infant feels accepted *in toto*, i.e. with whatever doubts or destructiveness he may own up to. Because forgiveness is assured, the personality remains open.

2. *Sustenance*. Close relationships with source-persons do not exhaust because there is nothing to hide. By abiding in the spirit of the greater 'Thou', well-being is assured and refreshed. Night brings sleep in which the spirit returns to its root experiences in the foundation year. Anxieties emerge but are resolved in the 'dream work'. We wake refreshed, new every morning. The anticipation of work brings pleasurable thoughts.

3. *Status*. He starts the day as a son, having rested in the given relationship and the powers of 'being' and 'well-being'. His obligations as a son, and his inclinations as a son, both born of gratitude for the experiences of care, are harmoniously united. He loves the 'law' of his family, which is the law of love. Personal and ontological status is high.

4. *Achievement* is an expression of ontological resources. Work is donative. He gives himself and his skills as the outflow of relationships in which he has a kind of 'freehold'. Having received so much, it is now better to give than to receive. Success or failure do not affect his essential 'being'. Justification is by faith in another person and their achievement.

1. *Acceptance* as a reward. Only conditional access is granted. The 'bad' side is felt to be rejected and one's 'bad' self with it. No genuine sense of acceptance is possible. One's 'being' is no longer 'in' the person who was the source of 'being', but in oneself and one's own efforts.

2. *Sustenance*. Close relationship with personally important people is felt as a threat to security. The closer one admits them to intimacy the more likely they are to stumble on the wretched secrets. As this is construed as leading to inevitable rejection, close relationships are exhausting.

Night and its dreams is also exhausting. Dungeons of primitive experience are revisited. The enraged tigers and savage dogs which represent the primal rages and the imagined parental retribution, attack again. The censor stands guard keeping the would-be sleeper awake lest the destructive rages become too plain in the dream. Waking, the spirit is exhausted. The day ahead is viewed with distaste, as is the work that has to be done. There is no energy to get up and face it. 'Spirit' is at a low ebb, and so are courage, joy, caring, love and peace.

3. *Status*. He starts the day as a slave, having apparently nowhere to rest, no 'given' relationships, only those which can be earned. There is no 'being' or 'well-being' except his dogged willpower to battle on joylessly in hope of picking up some reward. Obligation to get up and move is in conflict with inclination to stay in bed or commit suicide. Early in the day status is practically nil. By the end of the day, if work goes well and is approved he may feel better.

4. *Achievement* is an expression of ontological needs. Work is extractive. He does it to feel better, not because he likes doing it. He performs in order to achieve relationships. His eyes are not wholly on the task itself, but on the effect his doing of it is calculated to produce. He likes to be seen doing it. His 'being' as a person is bound up with the acceptance or rejection of his work. Justification is by works, one's own achievement.

Lake, Frank. Ed. Martin H. Yoemans. *Clinical Theology: A Theological and Psychological Basis to Clinical Pastoral Care, Abridged*. New York: Crossroads, 1987, pp. 50-52. [Protestant Psychiatrist, leader in the Pastoral Care field in England.]