

Dear Father of Family,

We are the Batsi Tribe, a community of families in which we have proposed to recover the father's mission within family circle and which, thanks to the wisdom of men like Michael Gurian, we understand as equally sacred to the role of the mother. Above all, it is indispensable for the construction of mankind, exceptional men and women, capable of generating the best version of themselves.

To discuss the importance of "fatherhood", we would like to share a reflection about something written more than 2 thousand years ago by a wise King named David. He dedicated a prayer of praise to God addressing Him as his shepherd. It begins by saying, "*The Lord is my shepherd, I lack nothing...*" (Psalm 23)

This image of a shepherd, simple and profound at the same time, has inspired us in this journey of understanding parenting. What would happen, for example, if from the heart we were to utter the words, "*my father is my shepherd, I lack nothing.*" It's possible that the soul would resonate with arising feelings of security and confidence that we desire to have in life. As fathers, we should strive to achieve conveying this to our children.

We know that it's impossible to arrive at a precise definition of fatherhood, however, following this image of a shepherd we have conceived a father's sacred mission as having 3 basic functions: *Provider, Protector, and Guide.*

Provider, because the father as shepherd is responsible for bringing his sheep to...*lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters, he refreshes my soul...*As the provider it is important to....

- ✓ Become a partner in the Universal plan of love in which each man and woman has a special purpose.
- ✓ Own one's own history and live in a continual process of self-knowledge, self-regulation, and self-motivation.
- ✓ Understand and satisfy the basic needs of the family in a responsible and timely fashion.
- ✓ Be present and conscious for the big as well as the small moments as an example of wisdom.
- ✓ Work along a path of self-realization, creativity, and effort.
- ✓ Serve, plant, and nurture to patiently await the fruits that will transcend through our children and our children's children.
- ✓ Transcend blood ties and provide "fatherhood" in all areas of life: family, work, politics, social and spiritual life.

Protector, the shepherd possesses *the rod and staff* which provide security for children to make their way in life, meet others, face the world and their adventures and cross fearlessly through dark places. As protector, it is important for the father to provide...

- ✓ Structure and order for the family and for the society, with a vision to organize the priorities according to the essential values of human beings.
- ✓ A source of belonging, it is the father who is primarily responsible for inheriting the estate, passing down family traditions and all that holds the self-definition of each member.
- ✓ Security, be a safe horizon, a reference capable of bringing forth admiration and peace.
- ✓ Masculinity, to be a primary reference for sons on what it is to "be a man."
- ✓ Chivalry, to become the hero and ignite your daughter's femininity with dignity, courtesy, and nobility.
- ✓ Objectivity, with clear, coherent, sound, and impartial thought.
- ✓ Strength, physical and moral force, energy, and endurance in difficult times.
- ✓ Adventure, risk, finding new horizons and the ability to adapt in the face of change and uncertain conditions.

Guide, the father is like the shepherd who *walks ahead of his sheep*, not behind because they may become dispersed and lost, he knows them by name making each and everyone unique and special, and children *follow him because they hear his voice*, a voice that is caring, consistent, and recognized as the source of authority and trust, able to keep the herd together as a holy brotherhood. As a guide, the father...

- ✓ Is legislator, to inspire and orient guidelines for personal, family, and social life.
- ✓ Is governor, to decide and conduct based on the common well-being.
- ✓ Is judge, to ensure moral order based on justice and truth.
- ✓ Is teacher, helping each to discover their talents and translate their learning into wisdom about themselves and the world.
- ✓ Is revealer of man, to guide everyone in fulfilling their mission.
- ✓ Is the initiator of exceptional men, able to assume and enjoy the sacred role of fatherhood.

To conclude, we would like to mention that this is not intended as a model to follow, but simply words to show what we have learned thus far as a tribe and that we hope will inspire other fathers in search of purpose.

Batsi Tribe Coordination