

Spending time with our sons

One of the past chaplains of Strathmore School, during the talk for fathers of young primary boys about to receive their First Holy Communion, was fond of calling their attention to a deep but often overlooked fact.

09/19/2018

“Your sons are using the same name to address God, that they use to address you – dad.”

And haven't many saints and commentators down the centuries and across the globe precisely remarked on how each father was meant to be an image of God the Father (cf. Eph 3:15). Pale, smudged, cracked sometimes, but an image nonetheless.

In our Catechism classes, we memorized that concise answer to the question "Why did God make you?" "God made me to know Him, to love Him and to serve Him in this world, and to be happy with him *forever* in the next."

Forever. God wants each of us to spend forever with Him. He wants to spend His time – eternity – with us. In the same breath, every good father on earth also wants to spend his temporal, limited time with his children. "The best gift you can give your children is *presence*" they have said, "not presents."

A number of boys clubs around East Africa are in different ways trying to live this out with their father-son activities. Fahari Boys Club in Thika, Cool Boys Club in Kampala and Hodari Boys Club in Nairobi. Their father-son activities that span from an afternoon to a two-night camp have your everyday fathers spending time with their sons in all manner of activities from football, to barbecues to camping or hiking.

One speaker was caught animatedly challenging fathers – and mothers – to spend actual face-time with their children every day. “Even if it is time in the traffic, when you inconveniently have to drop your son to school, spend that time with him! Make use of it! It means a lot to them.”

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