

Fatherhood: Learning to Give When It's Hardest

Thomas became a dad after 40 and soon saw how much it asked of him. In the tired days and small moments, he started to see a deeper kind of love taking shape.

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Thomas, a supernumerary, got married at 44 and became a father soon after. When you speak with him, you immediately sense how

much he values his role as a dad. There's a warmth in the way he talks about his children and his family that leaves no doubt they mean everything to him.

But behind that affection is a quiet struggle that began in his early days of fatherhood. As an older dad, he often found his energy stretched thin. "After a long day at work, the evenings are precious," he admits. "That's when I want time for myself."

He soon learnt that fatherhood doesn't leave much room for that. The vocation to love doesn't switch off. Every cry, every small request from his children calls for another act of giving. "The temptation is always to say, I've had enough, I need space. But love calls on you 24/7."

Through those moments, Thomas began to see himself more clearly. He realised how protective he was of his comfort, his time, his opinions, his

energy. But having a child changed that. “You suddenly see that someone depends on you completely. Then you have to decide: will I keep living for myself, or for something greater?”

Saint Josemaría's teaching that *something holy can be found in the most ordinary situations* helps Thomas see meaning in these daily struggles. Holiness, he's realised, isn't found in grand gestures but in the small, hidden acts of love that fill his days, especially when he's tired.

“God gave me children to save me from my selfishness,” he says. “If I ever reach heaven, it will be through the grace of my wife and children.”

Each day brings another chance to love more and think less of himself. Some days it comes easily, other days it doesn't. But as Saint Josemaría taught, even the smallest effort to love can be a prayer.

“Fatherhood is a vocation to happiness; not without difficulties and struggles, but a vocation to happiness nonetheless,” says Thomas.

For Thomas, fatherhood is both exhausting and redemptive. It’s where his vocation comes alive, learning, again and again, to love beyond himself and discovering that grace meets him right there, in the middle of ordinary life.

Thomas’s story first appeared on Catholic Family Life (Singapore)’s YouTube channel, where he speaks more about the joys and challenges of fatherhood. <https://youtu.be/ogG0Ky-ardc?s...>

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