

## Prayer for Choosing Our Parents:

by Fr. Bob Sears, SJ

It is essential, out of loyalty to our parents who gave us life, to acknowledge that gift. God has chosen our parents for us, and even if they have disappointed us or been abusive, they have nevertheless given us life and they are the parents God chose for us. When we do not choose them, we find we cannot choose others with total commitment. Spouses cannot choose each other deeply unless they have chosen their parents, for otherwise it would be like substituting the spouse for one's parents and that would be disloyalty, whether or not we are aware of it. Often we cannot choose a vocation, like succeeding in college or a field, because it feels disloyal our mother or father who could not do that or gave it up for the sake of us children. Sometimes, because of hurts received, we have no reason to choose our parents except for God's sake -- because God chose them for us. Jesus came into our world only to be abused and put to death. He chose to come for his Father's sake to bless us (Heb 10:7). Choosing our parents is at the root of all our choices. It is a choice we must make.

If we are adopted, we still need to choose our biological parents, whether or not we even know who they are, as well as our adopting parents. We can see our adopting parents as helping our biological parents bring us up so there will be no divided loyalty, no "either one or the other." Rather, we choose both as helping each other.

If you find you don't have the will or the power to honestly choose your father or mother, you can give God permission to choose them in you. Ez 36:27 says, "I will put my Spirit within you and make you live by my statutes." God will do it if we are unable and ask. Following is a prayer that can be adapted thls purpose:

1. Put yourself in the presence of Jesus, in a way that you feel safe and cared for by God.
2. When you feel safe with Jesus, see him bring your mother to you and ask you, "Will you choose \_\_\_\_\_ (give her name) to be your mother? Out of all possible mothers? If you can choose her, do so. If somehow you feel you are blocked, then ask God to choose her in you. Then pray that your mother will choose you too, since she didn't know who she was getting either. Finally, pray that the life Jesus meant for you to share would be released for both of you. Then wait a few moments to experience that change.
3. If you feel ready and safe, see Jesus bring your father to you and ask, "Will you choose \_\_\_\_\_ (give his name) to be your father? Out of all possible fathers? If you can choose him, do so. Again, if you feel blocked, as God to put his Spirit in you and choose him in you. God already has chosen him and can put that choice in you. Then pray that your father can also choose you, as we did with your mother. Finally, prayer that the life Jesus meant for you to share be released for both of you.
4. Then pray that your father and mother would be able to choose each other in the way God intended. It is through their unity that you have a healthy grounding for life, for we are made in God's image of self-giving love. If they are separated, pray that they be reconciled, and that the life God meant for the three of you to share would be released.

**Conclude** with an Our Father and perhaps a Hail Mary, in thanks to the divine family.