

Picturing Fatherhood

By Antonio Peluso

It was Sunday, and my family and I were attending the dedication services of a newly remodeled meetinghouse in our area. Just a few minutes before sacrament meeting, the stake president asked me to please drive to our ward building, three kilometers away, to retrieve an item he needed. I had just enough time to get there and back. While completing that simple errand, I had an experience that touched me spiritually—a wonderful reminder of what is important.

With just a few blocks left to go to return to the meeting, I saw ahead of me two bicycles, one large and the other quite a bit smaller, each being ridden very energetically. I recognized the cyclists at once. They were two people I knew well, a good brother from my ward and his young son. They were riding to church—just as they did every Sunday.

As I watched them, there came to my mind an image out of the future, when that boy—and his father too—will remember those bicycle rides. I thought, “What a great example this father is setting and what an eternal influence he is going to have on the precious son God has given him. That boy,” I reflected, “may grow up to cherish that experience, and perhaps he will repeat it when he becomes a father himself.”

As I caught up to them, there sprang to mind an image of my childhood memories of my own father, who used to carry me on the handlebar of his bicycle. The close relationship that develops from these kinds of experiences is a pleasure to have and tender to remember.

When I got to church, I greeted the bicycle riders with a smile and received the same in return as they expressed silent happiness to be attending



Seeing the two bicycling figures wasn't unusual, but this Sunday their simple image reminded me of the past and gave me confidence in the future.

church. At priesthood meeting that afternoon, I had a chance to express to this brother how impressed I had been with the picture of righteous fatherhood I had seen earlier. His face brightened, and perhaps he was surprised because what I described was such a common occurrence for him.

As Latter-day Saints, we are fortunate to see a picture of many fathers like this one who promote their children's spiritual and emotional welfare. And as children blessed with such parents, we can feel heartfelt gratitude for their simple yet profound examples and sacrifices. ■