

SOPHIE MEINHARDT MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP 2012

HOW GREAT IS OUR GOD?

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It is one of the easier things in life to say you found the greatness of God in a person or certain situation, but it is harder to truly find one of those persons or situations that matter. I was lucky enough to find multiple signs of God's greatness in one of my own family members, my dad.

I have been lucky enough to see God's greatness shown to me through my dad a couple of times. The first time was when I was 5 years old, throwing up blood the day after Halloween. I had been sick with what we thought was the flu. When I threw up blood, my mom and dad rushed me to the hospital and I had to spend a few days there. I saw God's greatness shine through my dad then because of what happened. Even though we were baptized and Catholic, we went to church, well, "sometimes." I can't remember ever really seeing my dad pray except in church. God was part of our lives, but not the big part that he is now. I witnessed my dad praying about me being sick, asking me to get better. Then, after I left the hospital, my father became a changed man. He began to pray more often, took up lecturing at Sunday Mass, and we began to go to church every Sunday like we were supposed to do.

The second time I got to see the greatness of God through my dad was just a few years ago. On May 30, 2009, my Papaw passed away suddenly. This was my dad's dad, and it broke my heart to watch my dad suffer, losing his father so suddenly like that. After he and my mom came home and told us about Papaw, I could see that this had changed my dad like when I was in the hospital. I caught dad praying even more than before. On the day of the funeral, my dad got to stand up and give the eulogy for my Papaw. He told us about the rules he grew up with and how Papaw always gave of himself, always having time to help others. He

talked about how Papaw always went to Sunday mass, how he was an usher and he was never late. He told us about how Papaw would never let him wear jeans to mass, and how even when he could drive he was expected to go to Sunday mass, even if he went without the family. But was also found out that day how important prayer was to Papaw. His best friend also talked and told us about how every day at lunch, Papaw would stop what he was doing and prayed the rosary. This was shock to my dad; he didn't know.

After the funeral, life got back to normal, sort of. Like I said before, my dad was praying more and going to Mass every Sunday, but I didn't think it was possible for him to do more. However, the next time we went to Mass, Dad pulled out his rosary and started praying, just like Papaw would have done. And he still does it. Dad took up reading at Saturday Mass as well, and we always attend the Easter Triduum masses as part of Holy Week.

There aren't many people that you can feel God in when just standing around them, but from what I heard from others and from what I've seen with my own two eyes is that my dad is one of these people. Every time he reads a reading at mass he is told by one of the "Sunday regulars" that his reading is the best the man has ever heard. I feel that it is a gift that was given to him to make him a better man both in and outside of Christ's house. So many people appreciate the man that I am lucky enough to call my dad, he was put on the earth that God created for more of a reason to just be here... He was put here to change the way people think about the way things work.

No matter who you are you would almost have to respect a man like my dad. It is amazing how God can do so much to change one man out of a million men. When you know that God is able to show his greatness through one man after such a tragic time when I was hurting and he was hurting, you understand the ways things work.

I have heard of the phrase "man of many words" that description fits my dad but it excludes one word: Meaningful. My Father talks a lot, but usually the words that are coming out of his mouth aren't just words, but

words that mean things to people. He has been through so much and I believe that is what makes him who he is today.

It is hard to understand how God works in mysterious ways but it is easy to understand that he has worked through my dad. God is so powerful, with the greatness that is so great it is indescribable. God works on such an innocent man after such a hard time. I love that man and I know so does God after all that he has done for him.