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## On Appreciation of Parents

I had never driven so carefully through the downtown streets, then on toward our little home in North Toronto. No running the amber lights; no exceeding the speed limit even by a hair! My young wife sat beside me, while asleep in his shiny new carry cot in the back seat lay our newborn son, only a few days old, sound asleep and en route home from the hospital. I'd first looked at him in amazement in the early dawn of that memorable day, just minutes after his birth. Each tiny hand was perfect, down to the shape of each fingernail, the wrinkles on each knuckle. All truly amazing!

The days ahead were filled with new learnings as I experienced the overwhelming sense of caring and protection for a child which only a parent knows and understands. We watched the eyes endeavouring to focus, then beginning to recognize and respond to those two distinct faces appearing over his crib. Yes, there were those endless nights of colic, both parents past the point of total exhaustion until we finally discovered that magical medicine that managed to dissolve the bubbles in the tummy! Of course our personal lives were radically changed, even the simplest outing now transformed into a major undertaking of advanced planning and detailed preparations. In time the new daily and weekly routines became a matter of course, and we had the freedom to think and dream beyond today and

even tomorrow, and to reflect on the possibilities for this new life which we had had some part in bringing into the world. Who might he eventually become, what might he achieve, and what of his descendants in untold generations yet to come? The implications were mind-boggling! Now with three grown children, six grandchildren and four great-grandchildren, the eventual outcome of those early years exceeds imagination!

In May and June, our society observes Mother's and Father's Day. Our thoughts are fastened on all those entrusted with the highest responsibility any human being could possibly carry: the raising of children and young people in a world filled with possibilities and opportunities unimaginable even a generation ago, along with hazards and pitfalls beyond anything we could ever have conceived of in our darkest moments.

21<sup>st</sup> Century parents are challenged to the uttermost, and need to think long and hard about the long-range implications of each passing day for the children and young people in their care, while all the rest of us are reminded of the mantra, "It takes a village...!" The village can be assured that young eyes are watching all of us, and young ears are always open, alert and listening. What are they picking up, evaluating, remembering and using to shape their decisionmaking, with all the implications for years and generations to come?

**A happy and thoughtful Mother's and Father's Day to one and all!**

Archdeacon David Peasgood, St. George's Anglican Church