EMIGRANT AND EXILE: REMEMBERING MY FATHER

Thomas F. Mahoney, Jr.

My father, Thomas Francis Mahoney, was pronounced dead April 2nd, 1985 at Christ Hospital, Oak Lawn, Illinois, just west of Chicago. My mother had found him that morning, lifeless in his chair. In the wastebasket were two empty Guinness bottles from the previous evening, when he had watched Villanova upset Georgetown for the NCAA basketball title. He was 91 years of age. In terms both of time and space, he had dwelt in two different worlds.

Dad was born in Midleton, Cork, an O Mahony, the third of eleven children. Eight would survive infancy, and six would emigrate to Chicago. He was named after his father, who was a baker. His mother was Mary, née Roche. She had spent time in Boston as a domestic before returning home.

Dad’s parents realized they were raising their children for the emigrant ship. Life was hard. To supplement the table, Dad would regularly go after rabbits, flushing them with ferrets and then clubbing them, a practice he termed “coursing.” As a child I thought it cruel. In America children thought of Peter Rabbit and the Easter Bunny.

At age 12 or 13 Dad was apprenticed to a blacksmith, Mr. Williams. His few years of education had been with the Christian Brothers. He remembered them as stern disciplinarians, but fundamentally good men, dedicated to their teaching vocation. A half century later he would entrust to their care the secondary education of his only son, at Leo High School on the South Side of Chicago.

Dad learned no Irish, at home or school. His older brother Will did receive some, likely because he remained longer in school. From Dad’s youngest sister Chris I learnt that their mother, though raised an English speaker, had absorbed enough of the old tongue to be quite fluent. Not to impart it to the children was a conscious decision by my grandparents, who knew it would not help them to get on in the New World.

Dad became an altar boy, and once served Mass for the visiting Bishop, Dr. Cohalan. He approached the honour with trepidation, but in the event performed well and was complimented by the clerical dignitary. The great love of his youth however was hurling. When he and I visited Cloyne in 1980 and said a prayer at the grave of Christy Ring,
Dad pointed out that as a boy he had hurled on the site of Christy Ring's grave, before it became a cemetery. Dad and I had once been privileged to see the great Christy perform in Chicago. Though well past his Glen Rover prime, he could still score a point at will, over either shoulder. We knew at the time that he was employed by Shell, and I assumed that it was in some sort of public relations capacity. Years later, when reading Val Dorgan's biography, I learned that Christy drove a petrol lorry, and that Shell management had hassled him about the American trip. I also then realized that the Midleton Petrol Station out of which he had been working was owned by the same family to which Dad had been apprenticed.

The work of the blacksmith was hard. One project on which he was involved was an iron fence for the Midleton Distillery, which then produced the famed whisky, “Paddy.” The smith also removed infected teeth. Dentistry for country people was primitive, and years later, before getting his own false teeth, Dad would pack his gums with tobacco to ease the pain. He would work long hours and then walk several miles to hurl. The food provided was rarely enough to satisfy hunger, and on these walks he would sometimes flinch an egg from a farm and swallow it raw.

The Williams' Forge was a gathering place for many of the youngsters with whom Dad hurled. Their club was the “Forkims.” Some of them would lose their lives in the War of Independence, shot by Black and Tans at Clonmult as they tried to surrender, having been trapped in a burning farmhouse. Another died on duty with the Royal Navy. The Cork of Dad’s youth was the scene of intense Irish nationalism. Sean O'Faolain described the atmosphere well in his autobiography Vive Moi! Dad himself was called “Kruger,” after the great Boer leader. All his life he would hold a deep bitterness against English imperialism. The operative concept here is England. I don't recall that he ever said Britain.

Dad arrived in Chicago in 1913. His brother Will had preceded him. His brother Arch would follow, then his sisters, Tillie and Christina. His sister Bridie came to Chicago in the late fifties, after their parents had passed away.

Chicago early in the century was, and arguably still is, the most ethnically diverse city in the world, drawing unskilled labour for meat packing, steel and railroads. The Irish were concentrated in police, fire, streetcars, railroads and construction. Second and third generation Irish Americans were moving into education, medicine and law, but social mobility would not become widespread until implementation of the G. J. Bill, following WWII. Dad quickly realized that Henry Ford had rendered his skills obsolete, and so found a job on the Grand Trunk Railroad, an affiliate of the Canadian National. There he would remain more than forty years as a switchman and yard conductor working out of the Elsdon Yards.
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Dad enjoyed his long bachelorhood. The railroad meant a steady paycheck, a situation that continued throughout the Great Depression, when many people were less fortunate. He used his pay liberally to help out family members and friends, and periodically sent money back home, a practice my mother would later continue. For a while he moonlighted as a bouncer in a bar in White City, an amusement area of some notoriety long since disappeared. He joined Clan na Gael and the Knights of Columbus, and cheered Eamon de Valera when he visited Chicago on behalf of the Provisional Republican Government. All his life he would be great for Dev. He made friends with many fellow Irish immigrants in parlor greenhorns on the various Chicago lines; one of them raised a son who would become a distinguished Irish historian, Lawrence J. McCaffrey. But he never developed a knack for saving money, nor did he attach any particular significance to the notion.

His great interest however was hurling. He would compete in Chicago for nearly twenty years. Two clubs for which he hurled were the McSweeney’s and the Harry Bolands. The former were called after the Lord Mayor of Cork who had died on hunger strike - spelling was apparently not their forte. The latter were named for the comrade of Mick Collins who died on the Republican side in the Civil War. One of the squads against whom he competed was the Kevin Barrys, who after a victory would sing that mournful ballad in a triumphalist manner. It therefore never became one of Dad’s favourite rebel songs, notwithstanding that its air was identical to the song which memorialized MacSwiney, “Will My Soul Pass Through Old Ireland.”

In 1926 Dad captained a Chicago All Star team which hosted the touring All Ireland Champions, Tipperary, and lost a hotly contested match. Dad always maintained that the outcome reflected officiating bias; and when he complained to the umpire about a flagrantly wrong and decisive call, he was told, “Ah, Tom, they’re the boys from home.” It availed Dad nothing that the windy City lads were from home, too. The crowd supported the visitors also. It may have been the only time in his life he truly felt like a Yank.

When Dad passed away several members of the Bolands attended the wake and veteran sports journalist Pat Hennessy paid him tribute in the New York Irish Echo. I was born too late ever to have seen him compete, but was told by many immigrant Irish that he was a magnificent hurler. He bore several scars, including one on his face, and told me that many defenders, frustrated by his quickness, simply had cut him with their hurleys. Whatever role he may have played in the naming of either the McSweeney’s or the Bolands I do not know, but he was in fact a founding member of the latter club, and his militant Republicanism is a given. The Bolands still exist, and a permanent tribute to the memory of Terence MacSwiney may be seen in Chicago in the form of a stained glass window at Old St. Patrick’s Church at Adams and Des Plaines.

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Dad differed from many of his immigrant friends in one notable particular: while maintaining an active interest in hurling, he also turned his attention to American football and baseball. He followed Notre Dame and the Chicago White Sox. On autumn Saturdays he and Arch would motor in their jointly owned Model T over to South Bend, Indiana and roam the Cartier Fields sidelines as Knute Rockne’s disciplined troops, many bearing Celtic names, routinely demolished visiting foes whose rosters were drawn from the host Anglo-Saxon culture. And like millions of Catholic immigrants and their offspring, he took pride in seeing that, given a level playing field, the “Fighting Irish” could hold their own and then some. He was stunned when in 1919 Kid Gleason’s powerful White Sox, led by Shoeless Joe Jackson, Eddie Collins and Buck Weaver, mysteriously lost the World Series to a clearly inferior team from Cincinnati. He remained nonetheless an avid Sox fan during the lean years that followed baseball’s worst scandal, and passed that loyalty along. He also learned to play golf respectfully, but did not pass that skill along. And he ran in track meets, some sponsored by the Knights of Columbus.

He was some twenty years in the country before he married. My mother was a native Chicagoan, born Margaret Grace Curran. Her parents, Nicholas Curran and Johanna Prendergast, were both from Inistighe, Kilkenny, the location of much of the filming of Maeve Binchy’s “Circle of Friends.” They first met however in Milwaukee. They married, moved to Chicago, and raised seven children, four boys and three girls. My mother received her education at St. Patrick’s elementary school in South Chicago. Both her parents died when I was an infant, so I have virtually no memory of them. Her father however worked for the railroad - he tended a crossing gate. He and Dad apparently got along well. When Dad would visit their home, Nicholas would invite him down to the basement to check on the furnace. Dad enjoyed his drink, and so would always accept the offer.

My parents’ first child, a daughter, was stillborn. I followed in 1936, my sister Patricia two years later. We grew up in St. Leo’s, a large parish, strongly Irish. Until the late forties we lived in a six flat at 76th and Normal. My Mom’s bachelor brother John lived with us, and slept in the dining room. He won a 1941 Plymouth in a church raffle; Mom, and only she, drove it. John had lost a leg as a child, crawling under a boxcar while taking a shortcut across railroad tracks on his way to school. My sister shared a bedroom with Mom, and I with Dad.

My sister went on to secondary school at St. Xavier’s, with an academic scholarship. St. Xavier’s was staffed by Mercy nuns, and ... would later become Mother McAuley. Shortly after graduation she entered the Providence Order, joining the nuns who had taught us in at St. Leo’s school. She would spend her life in education, many of the years with poor black children in the inner city.
Our best friends were the Murtaugs, who lived two doors to the south, in their own home. Hugh Murtaug, a Fire Department Lieutenant, was from Cavan, his wife Peg from the Ardoyn. Their sons, Hughie, Paddy and Barney, attended the parish elementary school with my sister and me. They owned a summer cottage up near the Wisconsin border, and every year we would spend some of our school holiday visiting them. Mrs. Murtaug often took us to the cinema. We especially liked Abbott and Costello and Laurel and Hardy. Hughie would become a diocesan priest, and preside at the funerals of both my parents and Aunt Bridie. He died quite young, in his early fifties.

Given the War, his seniority, and union scale wages, Dad earned a respectable middle class living. Uncle John found work too, pumping gas and then manning the tool crib at a nearby factory. Dad commuted to his job by streetcar. Coming home he would get off at 77th and Vincennes, conveniently close to the 7700 Club, a popular watering hole. He was a good provider, but enjoyed the sociability of local bars, which were prevalent in the parish. Close to the 7700 Club was a barbershop which fronted Brookskie’s betting parlour. For quite some time Dad phoned in bets to Carl Brooks, the proprietor. These were serious conversations, and Mom was often worried, the practice being technically illegal. But Dad never got into trouble. By doing so he picked up a few bucks, but I think he was also motivated by knowledge that he was performing a service for the railroad men whose bets he was placing. Across the street from the 7700 Club was the car barns, a large facility where the traction company stored and serviced its streetcars. Many of the men who operated the cars were Irish immigrants, among them a brother of Michael Collins. Buck Weaver, one of the old ‘Black Sox’, would also be seen in the area. Two blocks to the south was the IRA Veterans Club. There was more social history at hand than a narrowback youngster was capable of realizing.

Dad often took me to the 7700 Club, and on summer evenings we would walk to Hamilton Park and root for its 16” softball team. On Saturdays we would sometimes go to one of the dime stores, Kresge’s or Woolworth’s, and then to the tavern where, armed with my new toy or comic book, I would order a beer. And be served, with a shot glass full of foam. I deemed it incumbent to pay for my drink, and would do so with a penny. My favourite tavern was ‘The Three Pat’s,’ or Pat Barrett’s, because it offered patrons complimentary cheese and crackers. I opined that it was a nice place for people who didn’t have any money, because the food was free. In those days it was not uncommon for men down on their luck to knock at back doors, begging sandwiches. Dad invariably drank shots of whiskey with his beer, and called the bourbon “medicine.” Once I told him that a man at the bar must be very sick, because he was drinking a lot of medicine. The 7700 Club was the first venue in the neighbourhood to sport a television, and boxing was shown almost every evening of the week. It was very popular, and sometimes after supper Dad and I would walk over to watch the fights. I also recall a news telecast reporting that Pius XII had warned the Italian electorate against voting for the Communists.

At that time I was also a singer. At age two I knew the ‘Notre Dame Victory March’ and ‘I Met Her in the Garden Where the Praties Grow.’ Dad would put me up on the counter, and I would entertain. As I grew older I gave up this career to focus on the pinball machines. At age ten I stopped drinking beer, this because of some sort of a pledge that related to confirmation. Dad himself had done so as part of his own spiritual development at the same age. Only when I was well into my twenties and long released from the implications of that vicarious pledge did I begin to realize that tossing it down with a grimace was not the universally accepted way of enjoying whiskey.

Dad worked considerable overtime, and of course spent a good bit of his waking hours in one or another of the locals. But there were many happy hours within our apartment on Normal. The focal point was the radio. In addition to Notre Dame and the White Sox, we listened regularly to the Lone Ranger, the Morris B. Sachs Amateur Hour, and the Sunday Evening Irish Hour with Maurice Lynch. The Lone Ranger classical music background was almost as enjoyable as the stories. Dad would remark favourably upon the marksmanship of the masked stranger as, utilizing his famed silver bullets, he consistently shot the guns right out of the hands of the bad guys, sometimes from the saddle of his great horse Silver. Winners on Sachs would thank the sponsor, Morris B. himself; Mr. Murphy, their host; their music/dance teachers; and lastly, "all the wonderful, wonderful people" who had voted for them. And Maurice Lynch, between musical offerings, would list one after another benefit at Carpenters Hall for some misfortune immigrant family which had suffered death or serious injury. We loved the show’s stirring theme, particularly its poignant refrain: "Ireland, I Wish You Were Free."

Periodically we would entertain. This frequently took the form of a poker game around the dining room table. Guests would be friends, neighbours and relatives. Many smoked and/or drank, although Mom did neither. Dad would tease Mom’s younger sister Agnes, Aunt Deed, whom he called “Picklepuss.” Deed gave as good as she got, and enjoyed her highball, bourbon in ginger ale. Her husband, Uncle Cozy Dolan, often entertained us with his party piece, “Mush, Mush”:

But Mickey Moloney the blackguard,  
Came and stole her affections away.  
He’d money whilst I hadn’t any,  
So I sent him a challenge next day.
The game itself was always low stakes, penny ante. But one type of hand, “Better Get Out,” entailed multiple raises, and would be met with a chorus of groans. Our neighbours across the hall, the Hartmans, would bring Mrs. Hartman’s widowed father when he was visiting. He was a farmer, and was called “Moo Moo.” His favourite hand was two cards down, five up, threes, sixes and nines wild. The hooker was that a third wild card up killed the hand. The game became known as “Moo Moo.” I was not allowed to play along, but I watched and learned all the games. I also became aware that Dad cheated. He was handy with the cards, and could favour any player with a good card the first time around, a clear edge in a five card hand. The most frequent beneficiary of his largesse was Kay Mulvihill, whose father, my Dad’s Uncle Nedly, hailed from Cahirciveen, Kerry. I rarely play poker myself, but when I do I always call a few hands of Moo Moo. And God rest your soul, Grandpa Schroeder.

Dad was invariably gentle and kind with Patsy and myself. This contrasted sharply with his own youth in Ireland. His da was the strictest of disciplinarians, and Dad never addressed him except as “Sir.” As a youngster his da had helped shelter the Fenian Peter O’Neill Crowley, on the run from Crown forces who would in time kill him at Kilclooney Wood. The funeral was described by novelist Canon Sheehan, who as a seminarian had witnessed it, in his fine work “Glenanfar.” There was also an occasion - but it must have been during Land League times - when representatives of the law, police or military, entered his da’s home only to be mollified by the sight of a picture on the wall of Gladstone, the Grand Old Man who late in life had embraced to the Home Rule cause.

There was also a story about a family musician, my Dad’s Uncle Arch, having gotten into difficulty by playing on his cornet “The Peeler and the Goat,” a song which mocked authority. And that Archie’s namesake, my own Uncle Arch, told me once of having himself participated in obstruction to an eviction. All this and more helped shape the unreconstructed Republicanism which marked my Dad’s life. And which led to one frightening incident I still recall vividly.

During the War my parents were speaking worriedly, and not for my ears. Still, I could hear. It concerned an impending interview with Dad by the FBI. What I did not know then but learned later was that during WWI Dad had openly refused induction into the American military; and when threatened with deportation had said he’d gladly go back home for the opportunity of fighting England. In the event he was neither conscripted nor deported. This hard attitude would never change, and there had been for some time bad blood between him and Arch when his younger brother, shortly after arriving here, had joined the American Navy. Even during WWII, when Uncle Will’s two sons and several of Mom’s nephews were in service, one, Gene Curran, would die.
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Dad, after a few shots and beers, would tell me how he would like to get in one of those big B29s and drop all the bombs on London. It was not the sort of opinion prudently expressed at the time. So, what about the FBI? They simply wanted him to keep an eye out for sabotage. He never did catch Hans or Fritz tampering with the switch-es, but he did come home one night and tell us he’d spent the entire afternoon in a pleasant chat with an English officer who was going through the yards with a Canadian troop train. The point, and with the passage of time I’ve sensed it increasingly, is that while Dad detested England as an abstraction, he was much too friendly to dislike individual people. When he died, my wife said to me that Grandpa didn’t hate anything. Wrong, I told her. He hated England and the Chicago Cubs.

Returning with my wife in 1987 from an Irish holiday, I met an Irish first cousin at Heathrow. This was our only encounter, and he has since passed on. He bore the ubiquitous family name Archie, and was retired from the Royal Navy, living near London. Early along I mentioned Dad’s militant Republicanism, and he cautioned me marshally that the Airport was not a wise venue to engage in such reflections. He then proceeded to volunteer that when he had first apprised our mutual grandfather he was thinking of joining up, the old man gave him his blessing. I had my reasons for believing that the child who’d sheltered Crowley had no great love for the British Navy; but I sensed at the telling that this grandfather who had lost so many descendants to the emigrant ship likely took comfort in the knowledge that this one grandson at least would not be permanently removing himself from home. And I reflected, not for the first time, that his stern manner to his children had perhaps been, more than anything else, a defense mechanism against the inevitable pain of permanent loss. Other countries lost children to America too, but none bled as did Ireland.

And I remembered another anecdote from childhood. His da had come home from the bakeshop and fallen asleep, and Dad, curious to try his pipe, had filled and lit it. He had taken just a few puffs when he heard from within the house: “Tom, have you seen my dudeman?” Panicked, Dad thrust the clay into a bucket of water, shook and blew it dry, then presented it. His da looked at him and said nothing. Only with the passage of years did Dad remember the slight twinkle.

The single happiest memory I retain of those years was our annual trip to a Notre Dame football game. We would rise early, breakfast, take the streetcar and El downtown, and board a Grand Trunk special train. Arriving in South Bend we would take a bus to the campus. Never again would fall leaves be so vivid. The band would march, and the Naval ROTC corps would parade. The team would sport jerseys either of rich blue or brilliant green. On one of the first such occasions All American Bob Kelly from Leo caught in full stride a touchdown pass from Boley Danciewicz right in front of our seats, and the rout of Dartmouth was on. One year Dad and I were accompanied by Uncle Arch and Dad’s friend Eddie Burke. On the way home the train stopped at Valparaiso, and Dad and Eddie disembarked to get me some milk. No matter that I had not requested milk. They miscalculated the duration of the stop; and when the football special arrived back in the Loop a weary Arch had to transport home not just me but two extra overcoats. In those days Notre Dame was a dress up affair. Sometime in the middle of the night Dad was able to flag down a freight train, and he and Eddie finally made it back.

Twenty years later I was at a Loop hotel. The occasion was a Marquette University luncheon. My wife, an alumna, had been involved in the arrangements. Chicago that day was on edge. The day before Martin Luther King had been assassinated. One of my wife’s classmates was brought to the luncheon by her father, who years before had coached several national championship teams at Notre Dame. By accident therefore I had an opportunity to meet and chat with the immortal Frank Leahy. The unfortunate circumstances notwithstanding, it was an enormous thrill. I told Coach Leahy that what I best remembered was that when his teams were facing a badly outnumbered opponent which was nearly always the case he would clear the bench early and allow the reserves to participate. That spirit of sportsmanship has long since disappeared from major college football. With big money and rankings at stake, stronger teams now grind inferior opponents mercilessly into the ground.

In the late forties we had to leave 76th and Normal. A new landlord was subdividing the building, and everyone was evicted. Virtually nobody had ever moved during the War. We bought a house nearby, at 78th and Union, still in St. Leo’s. With it came three boarders, two of them Irish immigrants, Jim McArdle and Joe O’Malley. Their rent helped with the mortgage, but after a few years Mom wanted more privacy, so we asked them to leave. Dad continued to receive the Cork Weekly Examiner from home, and to read his favourite writer, Carbery. And he continued taking the streetcar to and from work, but now on Halsted instead of Vincennes. He no longer worked most Sundays, and we now lived closer to Church. The first drink after twelve o’clock Mass was on the house at Sterling Liquor, and Dad became a regular. I was growing up, and now attended Sox games mostly with my buddy, Jack McFadden. Dad was no longer necessary. I moved on to Leo, then to college at St. Joseph’s, Rensselaer, Indiana. At age twenty I learned that my parents had never been married in the Church, that Mom had been previously divorced. I contacted the former Leo Chaplain, Fr. William Devereux, then at St. Jerome’s on the North Side, and he arranged for them to receive the sacraments and return to the Church. He also told me that their status had been unknown in St. Leo’s. That however was not my concern, rather that they be in Sanctifying Grace. After completion of college, there was military service, and then law school. I became engaged, then got married. There would be no more Notre Dame games for several years, and then I would take Dad in my car, not on the Grand Trunk.
As his seventieth birthday approached, Dad’s voice became increasingly raspy. He sounded like Babe Ruth, whom I had heard speak at a Comiskey Park American Legion baseball game shortly before his death. Dad of course had taken me. Finally he did go to a doctor, barely in time for the laryngectomy which saved his life. It also forced him into retirement, three months before he would have been compelled to quit. And it wiped out the little savings my parents had accumulated. Knowing he would never take sick, Dad had opted not to buy medical insurance at work. The savings he thereby managed helped him sustain his habit of three packs of Camels a day. The throat surgery was his first stay ever in a hospital.

St. Leo’s changed racially, and my parents sold for eight thousand dollars the home for which they had fifteen years before paid eleven. And they began a trek from apartment to apartment, each one a little further south and west than the last. They ended up in Oak Lawn. I would slip Dad a few bucks now and then so that he could get out and have a drink. But the surroundings were never as friendly or familiar as St. Leo’s. His major diversions were television and reading. He watched sports and Jeopardy, and with Mom her “stories,” or soap operas. Growing up he had read little. The only writer he ever named was Tom Moore, the only book “Speeches From the Dock.” But when I entered college and discovered the wonders of Irish literature, so too would he. He especially liked Frank O’Connor’s short stories, and was moved by Joyce’s rendition in his “Portrait” of the Christmas Dinner argument - Parnell had scarcely died when he himself was born. He would read a good deal until he was well along into his eighties, and his eyesight failing. Authors he enjoyed included Edwin O’Connor, John Dos Passos, James T. Farrell, Theodore Dreiser and John O’Hara. A lot of good stuff.

He went home twice. The first time was 1977, with Patsy and the two granddaughters he adored, Mary Pat and Sheila; the second, 1980, with me. These were his only two times in an airplane. The first time flying he was frightened, the second time he enjoyed the experience. On both visits he took in a hurling match, and saw family: his sister, Rita, was still alive, in Bray; and his brother John’s widow, Madge, in Mitchelstown, to which the family had moved after he left. He visited his boyhood haunts, Midleton and Cloyne; and received from Michael Williams a horseshoe he himself as an apprentice had crafted. As a boy he had never been outside the County. Now he saw Limerick, Clare, Tipperary, Wexford and Kerry. He drank pints, and said that while some of what he was seeing was new, most seemed as it had been.

In his brilliant study, Emigrants and Exiles, Kerby Miller argues that most Irish emigrants left home reluctantly and remained estranged in their new land. The thesis is open to scholarly dispute, particularly the latter aspect; and perhaps will never be resolved. Graphs, charts and statistics can impart only so much about the human spirit, and the Irish diaspora is a complex phenomenon. Then too, if substantial numbers of immigrants didn’t really blend in, just what is the nature of the body politic into which the others did?

And he taught me things, basic things. In a crowd, keep your hand on your wallet. Always take a streetcar transfer - if there’s an accident you can prove you were on board. Never throw away your raincheck before the sixth inning. The first row seats in the right field upper deck, just past the grandstand reserved section, that’s a good spot to get a foul ball from Luke Appling. If somebody’s paying you, give an honest effort. - it doesn’t matter if the others don’t. Always take care of your family. And don’t skip Mass.

All sons grow apart from their fathers over time. James Joyce experienced the birth of his first grandson shortly after learning that his father had passed away; and in "Ecce Puer" he spoke for the entire human family:

A child is sleeping:  
An old man gone.  
O, father forsaken,  
Forgive your son!

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