

A Tribute to My Father

from Funeral Services (1/4/96) at the National Presbyterian Church (D.C.)

In the last few days, I have met with many people who knew my father, but who I had not met before now. I am very grateful for that special gift. As a result of so many people's willingness to speak well of my father, I have found many new ways to admire him, and a greater feeling of gratitude to God for giving me Nick Pasti as a father. Thank you very much.

What I will say here about my father is this: his desire for me to find great joy in this gift of life—and his willingness to provide support for me so that I could continue towards that goal—were absolute and eternal. His love was simply always there. In this way, it seems no coincidence to me that as I felt I was becoming closer to God, I also felt I was becoming closer to my father. I am very grateful for my father's unwavering devotion to God, and for the many people who—through this particular church, or through other associations—helped my father maintain his faith, and his desire to serve others.

Many of us here may know my father had a long career in the U.S. Air Force—first serving in World War II, then for many years serving in the Air Force Reserve. I knew that myself, but I rarely asked my father about his military career, and still know very little about it. However, I have now read for the first time some of the official evaluation reports that he received—specifically during the last 6 years of his career—and I would like to share with you now a few of the comments made in those reports:

From a Commander at Ft. Belvoir:

"Colonel Pasti is exceptionally dedicated and motivated and thoroughly versed in human intelligence methodology. He possesses an outstanding ability to motivate personnel to perform their very best."

From the Commandant of the National War College:

"Colonel Pasti consistently displayed a high degree of interest and enthusiasm in the total proceedings. He readily and very effectively responded to the tasks assigned, thereby promoting a congenial and cooperative atmosphere in which to function."

From a Director of Intelligence at Military Airlift Command:

"Colonel Pasti fully supports and practices equal opportunity for all people. He is capable of taking on a top-level intelligence or managerial position. Colonel Pasti is a professional superior officer and I strongly recommend promotion to brigadier general."

All of these comments—and much of my experience with my father—may be summarized by this comment in a letter he wrote in 1971:

"Thank you for your congratulatory letter on my promotion to Reserve Colonel. I have always considered it an honor to be a member of the USAF Reserve, and will be available for any assignment in which you feel I may contribute to the support of the active force."

My father always considered it an honor to serve. May we all feel blessed by the gift we have received: a chance to share the gift of life with a man who very much enjoyed life, and who so willingly offered his best to his family, his community, and his country.