

Thoughts On Parenting

These are unprecedented times. Stay-at-home restrictions, social distancing, home learning, drive-by birthdays, cancelled proms and graduations are just a few of the daily routines to which families have become accustomed. For parents, it is a new territory of disrupted routines, but also an opportunity to reflect on the gift of being a parent.

Parent - one who brings up and cares for another. The definition, according to Webster's Dictionary, seems very short when one tries to encompass the entire role one has as a parent, and with it the never-ending worry that maybe we aren't doing enough or the constant thorn that one could be a better parent. There isn't in existence a barometer or tool that measures one as a parent, but in Proverbs 22:6 we are reminded to train up a child in the way he/she should go, and when she/he is old he/she will not depart from it. The greatest love of all is that Christ himself has allowed each of us to be a parent; in some form, to those that are younger either by blood and genetics or simply as someone that is able to share God's love.

With the reminder that our time here on this Earth is short, it's important to remember the words that Jesus left the disciples: "I will not leave you orphans; another Advocate will be with you." This is known as the Holy Spirit and as parents of the world we understand that in leaning into the Spirit we are reminded that the Father and Son is in us; therefore if and when we depart from our children, the act of sharing our love and joy of Christ in the practice of our faith during our time with them will remain a reminder that even we will be with the children we've raised and loved while here and when we are gone.

Our daily practice of our faith as parents is crucial to not only us as individuals but to those who may bear



witness: the children we lead and love. Imitation is the greatest form of flattery and providing examples in building a relationship with Christ for our children allows them to have the tools to begin their own personal relationships with Christ; this in turn provides them with the support they will need in times of joy, despair, love, and grief. But as grandmothers would say, "closed mouths don't get fed" it's important that our practice in our faith be solidified in our acts of prayer, bringing to God our worries and fears as parents and asking the Holy Spirit to guide us into a state of peace. It is through prayer that we will be reminded that whoever loves God will be loved by Him and thus we as parents become a bridge for the children we raise to Christ. Therefore in our absence our children will know that they are not alone, they will realize that even in not seeing their parents, they will always live in them. Like Christ, parents will live in their children, one just needs to remember to hear these words and have faith; whoever observes Christ will always be loved and never left alone.

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