THE WAY

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FROM THE CHAPLAIN

Have you heard the phrase in loco parentis? It's a Latin term used for teachers, meaning "in the place of a parent." In Spanish, though, it almost sounds like "parents are crazy!" I remember when I first learned that phrase - it has stayed with me ever since.

I work hard at being a father, but I often feel like I get it wrong. Sometimes I'm too hard, sometimes too soft, and sometimes I say the right thing at exactly the wrong time. I love my children deeply, but parenting can often feel like an uphill battle.

When my son was a teenager, he started attending the church down the road after they appointed a new youth leader. He absolutely loved him and thought he was the best. I remember him coming home one day, excitedly telling me what he had learned. He spoke about how wise Eliseo, his youth leader, was and shared everything he had said.

I found myself feeling frustrated. I had been saying many of those same things for years, and they seemed to fall on deaf ears! As a father, I couldn't help but wonder: Why is he listening to him and not me, especially when he doesn't even have kids?

I didn't take it out on my son, but I did vent to my wife. She gently reminded me, "Isn't it wonderful that there are other godly people speaking into our son's life?"

Grumbling a little, I had to admit she was right. Parenting is a partnership, even with people who are not parents themselves.

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You also know we did everything for you that parents would do for their own children. We begged, encouraged, and urged each of you to live in a way that would honour God. He is the one who chose you to share in his own kingdom and glory.
- 1 Thessalonians 2:11-12

The apostle Paul “parented” adults as he taught the faith. Not in a condescending way, but with genuine, familial concern. He longed for the people in his care to become those who honour God with their lives.

I’m really looking forward to the remaining Parent Teacher Night. I can’t wait to meet the parents of the students I teach, and to share both the wins and the challenges together as a team.

What a gift it is that our students are surrounded by adults, both at home and at school, who are working together, with that same hope: that they would grow into people who honour God with their lives.

Reverend Denis Oliver
College Chaplain

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