

TRANSPARENT AND IN YOUR FIELD OF VISSION #4

By Fr. Ivan Nahachewsky

Glory be to Jesus Christ!

Don't be mad at me, but I love the snow. A few weeks ago, I was doing military survival training north of La Ronge and they had 2 feet of snow. Awesome! I don't like the shoveling and I don't like what it does to traffic and I hate that the little girl died under the snow, but I love to play in it and I love the way it sparkles in the sun and the way that a rabbit's tracks record a glimpse of the history of its travel.

I have a lot of topics that I could share today. I have a lot of projects on the go. But I want to reflect today about a piece of advice given to me 29 years ago. My oldest son Roman was 1 year old and I was chaperoning a high school dance with a man who had 10 children and his youngest was in grade 12. I was starting to parent and he was very experienced. I asked him for advice. He said "if you want to be a good parent there are only 3 rules: 1. do your best – you will not be the perfect parent, but be the best parent you can be. 2. Pray for the best – creating a baby is between three persons – a wife and a husband and God, and raising a child is with God's help too so keep Him in the loop often. 3. Accept whatever happens – Some things will be great and other things will be awful – but love your kids unconditionally.

I have pondered those words since then. I have shared them with many. Now I believe them to be true.

I know that I am not a perfect dad and that Debbie is not a perfect mom. Together we have passed on some undesirable characteristics to our kids. They have unfortunately received some



of our disfunctionalisms. But as soon as you realize that your children will be "warped" because of you, you can relax and the good stuff has a better chance of being passed on to them. I encourage my children to copy the good stuff and reject the bad stuff of who we are as parents.

Prayer is a given. God is everywhere present and fills all things. Every morning I ask God to make me a good priest, a good husband and a good father (and now, a good Dido). God is connected. God is my coach and my crutch. At night, I reflect on how my day went and I apologize for my misgivings, my faults, my inabilities and my sins. I journal, so I am able to "see again" the faces that I met; the ones I was too strict with and the ones I didn't push hard enough. The ones I looked at too much and the ones I ignored completely. Every 6 weeks I aim for confession so that I can be absolved of my sins, but also so that I can receive the grace that is required to resist the sins and the failures of the future. God makes me conscious and gives me conscience.

Finally, the hardest of the three rules, according to the man who shared the advice, is to accept whatever happens. I have understood this to mean that you cannot take credit for your children's successes and you cannot take the blame for your children's "screw-ups". There are a million things that can and will go wrong in life: sickness, disease, wrong group of friends, addictions, secularism, false gods, lack of motivation, rebelliousness, apathy, fear, low self-esteem, car accidents, momentary laps of judgement, fatigue, evil, suicide, PTSDs, ... this list goes on and on. There are also a million things that go right in life: health, fitness, good friends, role models, balance, faith, holiness, proper motivation, obedience, compassion, grace and mercy, confidence, good reflexes, spiritual resilience, respect for life, mental health, ... this list goes on and on.

So? I go on. I try my best. I pray for the best. And I accept whatever happens.

Just me, Fr. Ivan

PS This is how I treat my ministry too. 1. I do my best, but I know that I make lots of mistakes. I have many forgotten loose notes and unread emails. I have favorite projects and projects I do out of obligation. I sometimes procrastinate and sometimes I take myself too seriously. 2. I pray for the best. I am a child of God and He is my coach and my crutch. I talk with Him often and sometimes I even listen. 3. I accept whatever happens. I am not in control. Almost every one of my projects is dealing with people and although I recognize huge influence, I rarely have unilateral authority. That means I depend on people. I work best as part of a team. My choices affect you and your choices affect me. I'm ready to work with you.