

Dealing with Adversity

By Deacon Tim Sullivan

A primary responsibility of parents is helping their children constructively handle adversity. For children to mature, they have to know that obstacles are part of life and how to deal with them.

We should tell our children that, as followers of Jesus, we have to pick up our crosses, the challenges in our lives, and carry them as Jesus did. Jesus is always going to be with us and will give us what we need to get through hard times.

So, when confronted with difficulties, we should pray with our children to ask for God's grace and guidance in overcoming life's burdens. The next step is for our children to come up with a plan that God would endorse for dealing with a problem. Using Jesus as an example, the goal is to convert the problem into a blessing for all who are involved.

Parents also should turn to prayer for themselves, asking God to lead them in helping their children. Sometimes children need a drill sergeant, other times a cheerleader. God can help them know which approach is best in a particular situation.

If children want examples from the Bible of how faith helped people, there is plenty to choose from in Chapter 10 of the Letter to the Hebrews.

"Consider it all a joy, my brothers, when you encounter various trials, for you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance." James 1:2-3