



Thirtieth Sunday in Ordinary Time October 27, 2013 C

Three books I partially read during my Notre Dame trip

Last weekend, I had a wonderful quick trip to Notre Dame—departing on Saturday morning and returning Sunday night. This was my third trip to a football game. Notre Dame won each time beating big rivals Miami, Stanford and USC!

It was beautiful fall weather. While the fall colors were not yet in full bloom, enough trees had changed their colors to make the campus beautiful. All of you who have been to Notre Dame know it's a beautiful campus with its super special places for all visitors: Sacred Heart Basilica, the Grotto (consistently voted the number one favorite place on campus by the students), the iconic Touch Down Jesus painting on the Library, and of course, the Golden Dome on the top of the administration building.

Two other highlights. The first was watching and listening to the Notre Dame Marching Band, joined at this particular game by the legendary rock band *Chicago*.

The second was running into one of the super stars of my Kilkenny hurling team. Two hurling teams from Ireland were playing a game at Notre Dame on Saturday afternoon. Unfortunately, I didn't know about the game until it was too late. But as I walked around the campus, I ran into Tommy Walsh who has won seven all Ireland championships medals (equivalent to Super Bowl rings) with my native Kilkenny. Not only that but Tommy happens to be from the club/parish I grew up in back home (picture below).

The game, especially the second half, was uneventful until the last two minutes. But as we say in sports: A win is a win, however it comes.

I'm grateful to Michael & Ann Schneider for the gift—purchased at last year's Gala. My hosts were Tom & Joyce Sopko. Tom's 98-year old mother was an active member of Our Savior's Parish in Cocoa Beach when I was there. She is now in a retirement center on the Notre Dame campus and these wonderful seniors have a tailgate party before every home game.

The three books

While travelling back and forth to South Bend, I read bits and pieces of three books that could be of great help to those of you dealing with depression, live in a stepfamily situation and are currently raising children. The three books are:

- *The Catholic Guide to Depression* by Catholic psychiatrist Aaron Kheriaty with Fr. John Cihak, S.T.D.
- *Surviving & Thriving in Stepfamily Relationships—What Works & What Doesn't* by Patricia Papernow
- *Compass—A Handbook on Parent Leadership* by James Stenson

The Catholic Guide to Depression—Table of Contents

Part I

Understanding Depression

1. Types of Depression and Their Causes
2. Depression and the Spiritual Life
3. Depression and Related Disorders
4. Depression and the Tragedy of Suicide

Part II

Overcoming Depression

5. Medication and Other Biological Treatments
6. Psychotherapy: Its Benefits and Limitations
7. Spiritual Help for Depression
8. Divine Filiation and the Virtue of Hope

Appendices

1. Resources for Further Reading
2. Prayers in Times of Distress
3. Address of Pope John Paul II on the Theme of Depression

Surviving and Thriving in Stepfamily Relationships Table of Contents

PART I—Laying the Foundation

A Map for Stepfamilies What Makes Stepfamilies Different?

PART II—Five Challenges

The First Challenge: Insider/Outsider Positions Are Intense and Stuck

The Challenge
Easy Wrong Turns
Stories of Step couples Meeting Their
Insider/Outsider Challenges
Best Practices: Key Strategies for Connecting
across the Insider/Outsider Divide
Two Case Studies
Conclusion to Chapter 5

The Fourth Challenge: Creating a New Family Culture

The Challenge
Easy Wrong Turns
Stories of Honoring Differences and Creating
Shared Ground
Best Practices: Key Strategies for Navigating
Differences and Growing a New Stepfamily
Culture
Case Study
Conclusion to Chapter 6

The Fifth Challenge: Ex-Spouses are part of the Family

The Challenge
What the Research Says about Conflict and Kids
What the Research Says about Co-Parenting
Arrangements
Easy Wrong Turns
Stories of Stepfamilies Fostering Co-Parenting
Relationships
Best Practices: Key Strategies for Negotiating
Family Life across Households
Case Study
Conclusion to Chapter 7

PART III—Four “Diverse” Stepfamilies

PART IV—Stepfamilies Over Time

PART V—Helping Stepfamilies Thrive

Becoming a Stepfamily is a Process, not an Event

Compass—A Handbook on Parent Leadership

1. The Big Picture: Forming Character
2. More about the Virtues
3. The Consumerist Family: Kids in Trouble
4. Parent Leaders
5. The Power of “We . . .”
6. Discipline: Affectionate Assertiveness
7. The Media as Rivals
8. Issues of the Heart and Mind
9. Parents’ Wisdom: Forming Children’s Judgment
10. Parents’ Wisdom: Forming a Great Family
11. Summary: A Composite Picture of Parent Leaders

Appendix: Profiting from Compass Group Discussions

The author believes the compass of great parents is several things:

- Their sense of sacred mission: the certainty that God has called them to lead their children to responsible adulthood, to lead them to have a great life, and to lead them home to Him.
- The compelling and hopeful vision they have of their children’s lives twenty years from now, what kind of responsible, competent, upright men and women they should grow to be.
- Their commitment to build character and conscience in their children that will last them all their lives.
- Their reliance on three sources of strength: God’s help, their own never-failing love for their children, and the experienced wisdom of other parents who’ve succeeded.
- Their steely determination, bolstered each day by their ideals and prayers, never to give up until their children have grown to become excellent men and women.

This book explains details of this compass that great parents live by and succeed with.

I read enough of all three books to say that I strongly believe that each book will be helpful to the reader interested in the issues discussed.

Have a great week,

