

Best advice from fathers

Compiled by Elizabeth Lowe

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According to the National Responsible Fatherhood Clearinghouse, there are an estimated 70.1 million fathers across the nation.

The Catholic Review asked a handful of members of the Archdiocese of Baltimore to share the best advice they received from their fathers.

"Dad always told us 'loose lips sink ships.' It was a World War II saying and Dad was in the Navy during the war. It was easy advice to remember and taught us to respect confidentiality and not to gossip. The second sage advice Dad gave us was, 'Once you make a decision, always believe it is the best decision. You might later change it, but at the time it was the best decision. No regrets.' It taught us to work hard to decide what the right decision was and then believe in it and yourself. Lastly, Dad always said, 'Don't worry about what you cannot control.' It was so easy to worry about something that might happen. Dad's advice kept us focused on the important aspects of life, those that you can take care of, and not worry about what others were doing."

- **Deacon Gerald B. Jennings**, *father of two and a deacon at St. Peter the Apostle in Libertytown*

"Don't be afraid to be yourself."

- **Ella Ogundarre**, *Notre Dame Preparatory School, Class of 2016*

"Remembering specific advice from my father has become a difficult task. This is not because he did not give advice but because he instilled it more by actions than by words. He instilled the values of integrity, fairness, sportsmanship and compassion by the little things he would say, but even more so by the things he did. He played football with us as kids, took us fishing, as well as on memorable trips and vacations. If I had to sum up the best advice he ever gave it was the example of his work ethic. He instilled in each of his seven children a work ethic that encompassed each of the above values and the value in doing your best in whatever line of work you choose. The result is that each of us has enjoyed the work we do and some of us view it as a vocation as opposed to a job. I actually enjoy hard work."

- **Dennis Robinson Sr.**, *father of five, grandfather of eight and a parishioner of St. Michael the Archangel in Overlea*

"I left home when I was 18 to enter the seminary. One day, about a month or so before I was to go, my father and I were sitting in the living room watching a ballgame. He turned to me, out of the blue, and said, 'You know, I was about your age when I left home to enter the service. I went a lot of places and I saw a lot of things, some of them good and some of them bad. But in all of that time I was never homesick because I always took the best of what was home with me wherever I went. I want you to do that too.'"

- **Father Charles M. Wible**, *pastor of St. Francis de Sales in Abingdon*

My dad is a "don't sweat the small stuff" type of guy, who has taught his family many different things about responsibility, generosity, and independence, and the best advice he gave us is simply to "enjoy life by sharing with the people you love. Appreciate the simple joys."

- **Cassandra Palmer**, *coordinator of youth ministry at St. Ursula, Parkville, wife and mother of two*

"Live each day as if it's your last."

- **Morgan Peck**, *Notre Dame Preparatory School, Class of 2016, parishioner of the Catholic Community of St. Francis Xavier in Hunt Valley*

Jennifer Williams of the Catholic Review also contributed to this article.

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