

A silhouette of a person sitting on a grassy hill under a large, spreading tree. The person is facing right, with their hands clasped in prayer. The background is a warm, golden sunset sky with a few palm trees visible on the right horizon. The title text is overlaid on the right side of the image.

Handbook for Reflection and Prayer

Spiritual and Mental Health Ministry
Diocese of Honolulu, Hawai'i
(Published September 2023)



This book belongs to



ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH IN THE STATE OF HAWAII
DIOCESE OF HONOLULU
WITNESS TO JESUS

**SPIRITUAL AND MENTAL HEALTH MINISTRY
HANDBOOK FOR REFLECTION AND PRAYER**

We all have burdens to bear in life. We move away from loved ones and friends. We lose a job or a significant part of our savings. We are anxious about performance at school or work. We are stricken with grief at the death of a loved one. We feel imprisoned by a destructive habit such as alcohol abuse or pornography. We are in a destructive relationship and do not know how to extricate ourselves from it.

It is because of these normal kinds of challenges to our mental and spiritual health that the Diocese of Honolulu is introducing a SPIRITUAL AND MENTAL HEALTH MINISTRY. This handbook is the fruit of reflection of your sisters and brothers who have suffered through their own burdens and crises, and who now want to share their experiences with you so that you can be liberated from debilitating burdens.

This handbook can be used for individual and private prayer and reflection, but it is designed to be used in a small, voluntary group that meets to support each member in his or her growth in holiness and in freedom in the Holy Spirit. We, as members of the Body of Christ, have been entrusted with the healing power of Christ himself, and we can exercise this ministry in helping each other.

These reflections are not at all meant to take the place of mental health professionals, whose services are important, or in some cases, essential. We pray that no one will feel shame about seeking professional help when needed. Yet there are so many spiritual and mental health issues that do not require professional intervention, just listening and compassionate hearts. This handbook is designed to be a guide in such cases.

It is essential that each group that forms, whether in a parish setting, a home, or a park, be facilitated so that everyone respects everyone else in the group by careful listening, helpful accompaniment, and supportive prayer. It is also essential that discussions be kept confidential, so that a sense of trust is built among the members of the group.

The handbook is composed of specific topics a group may choose to discuss. A group may focus on one particular topic for several sessions, if there is a need; or it may take one topic each session. Each topic has a narrative introduction, a suggestion for Scripture readings to assist with a spiritual focus, some reflection questions, and a prayer.

We pray that this Spiritual and Mental Health Ministry will bring Christ's healing and health to many!

Sincerely yours in Christ,

+ Larry Silva

Most Reverend Larry Silva
Bishop of Honolulu
July 7, 2023



Vision Statement

*Spiritual healing for every beloved child of God
through the visible Holy Face of the Divine
Physician, and through Jesus Christ's divine and
human presence in the Holy Eucharist, the Medicine
of Immortality.*

Mission Statement

*To provide resources at the Parish level that provide
Spiritual/Mental health support that concentrates
on the concept of redemptive pain and a Spiritual
connection to healing.*

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*The Spiritual and Mental Health Ministry is not
a substitute for professional mental health care.*

*We recommend seeking professional help to
diagnose and manage illness.*

Addictions

Author John Bradshaw defined an addiction as *a pathological relationship with a person, behavior or substance that has mood altering effects and life-threatening consequences.*



Substance addictions are chronic, relapsing disorders characterized by compulsive alcohol or other drugs seeking and use, despite adverse consequences. It is considered a brain disorder, because it involves functional changes to brain circuits involved in reward, stress, and self-control.

Substance addictions are a lot like other diseases, such as heart disease. Both disrupt the normal, healthy functioning of an organ in the body, both have serious harmful effects, and in many cases, are preventable and treatable. If left untreated, they can last a lifetime and may lead to death.

Why do people use alcohol and drugs? In general, people use alcohol or drugs in order: (1) *to feel good* - drugs and alcohol can produce intense feelings of pleasure (euphoria) followed by other effects, which differ with the type of substance used. For example, stimulants such as cocaine or methamphetamine can increase energy and a sense of power and self-confidence. In contrast, the euphoria caused by opioids such as heroin is followed by feelings of relaxation and satisfaction; (2) *to feel better* - some people who suffer from social anxiety, stress, and depression start using alcohol or drugs to try to feel less anxious or depressed; (3) *to improve performance* - people may take drugs because they feel pressure to improve their focus in school or at work or their abilities in sports; or (4) *curiosity and social pressure* - teens are particularly at risk because peer pressure can be very strong.

The first decision to take drugs or alcohol is typically voluntary. But with continued use, a person's ability to exert self-control can become seriously impaired. This lack of self-control is the hallmark of addiction.

Other Addictive Disorders. There are also many non-substance addictions. People can be addicted to gambling, sex, pornography, food, shopping, internet, social media, and other behaviors. Similar to alcohol or drug use, these addictions trigger physical, emotional and social responses that provide an “excitement” or a “rush.” Individuals with non-substance addictions compulsively engage in these behaviors, have trouble controlling or stopping them, and continue to take part in them despite negative personal consequences, such as problems with work or relationships.

Treatment. Addiction is a treatable disorder. Research on the science of addiction and treatment has led to the development of evidence-based methods that help people to stop engaging in addictive behaviors and resume productive lives. This is known as being in recovery.

Scriptures

No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your strength, but with the temptation will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it. 1 Cor. 10:13 (New American Bible Revised Edition)¹

* * *

For the Spirit that God has given us does not make us timid; instead, his Spirit fills us with power, love, and self-control. 2 Tim. 1:7

* * *

And after you have suffered a little while, the God of all grace, who has called you to his eternal glory in Christ, will himself restore, establish, and strengthen you. 1 Pet. 5:10

* * *

I can do all things through him who strengthens me.
Phil. 4:13

* * *

For the grace of God has appeared for the salvation of all men, training us to renounce irreligion and worldly passions, and to live sober, upright, and godly lives in this world, awaiting our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ.
Titus 2:11-13



Reflection Questions

- What do the above scriptures mean to you? What speaks to you in relation to addiction and recovery?
- How has your life (or the life of someone you love) been affected by addiction?
- What gives you hope that you and/or the people you care about can recover from addiction?

Prayers

The Serenity Prayer - attributed to Reinhold Neibuhr, 1892-1971

*God grant me the serenity;
To accept the things I cannot change;
Courage to change the things I can;
And wisdom to know the difference.
Living one day at a time;
Enjoying one moment at a time;
Accepting hardships as the pathway to peace;
Taking, as He did, this sinful world as it is,
not as I would have it;
Trusting that He will make all things right
if I surrender to His Will;
So that I may be reasonably happy in this life
And supremely happy with Him Forever and ever in the next. Amen.*

¹ New American Bible Revised Edition is the source of all Scripture quotes in this Handbook for Reflection and Prayer.

Book of Common Prayer, 1979 version, Protestant Episcopal Church in the USA

O blessed Lord, You ministered to all who came to You. Look with compassion upon all who through addiction have lost their health and freedom. Restore to them the assurance of Your unfailing mercy; remove from them the fears that beset them; strengthen them in the work of their recovery; and to those who care for them, give patient understanding and persevering love. Amen.

Third Step Prayer

Dear God, help me turn my spirit towards You so that I can find the strength to overcome my problems. Forgive my doubts and fears and fill me with Your love and strength. In Jesus' name. Amen.

God, I offer myself to Thee – To build with me and to do with me as Thou wilt. Relieve me of the bondage of self, that I may better do Thy will. Take away my difficulties, that victory over them may bear witness to those I would help of Thy Power, Thy Love, and Thy Way of Life.” Amen.

Resources

- SAMHSA's National Helpline, 1-800-662-HELP (4357) 24-hour-a-day, 365-day-a-year, information service
- Aloha United Way, Hawai'i Cares Line. 808-832-3100 (local helpline for resources and referrals)
- Alcoholics Anonymous Big Book (4th edition). (2002). Alcoholics Anonymous World Services. (PDF downloadable versions available online for free)
- Celebrate Recovery: Christian 12-step program for people struggling with addiction or codependency www.celebraterecovery.com (The Life Recovery Workbook: A Biblical Guide through the Twelve Steps, Stephen Arterburn)
- *Freedom Starts Today: Overcoming Struggles and Addictions One Day at a Time*, John Elmore
- Ted Talk: Johann Hari - *Everything you think you know about addiction is wrong*



Notes _____



Agitation

Agitation is a normal human feeling. But it can become problematic when it negatively impairs a person's judgment and self-control. In certain cases, a person can be consumed by a persistent and overriding explosive disorder as agitation takes over. This is the state addressed in this mental health ministry. Agitation is a common problem in many people with **schizophrenia, bipolar mania, or dementia**. In such situations, a person can experience sustained confusion and disorientation, intense impulsivity and irresponsible actions, unrelenting irritability and annoyance, inner turbulence, murderous thoughts; and engage in such behaviors as road rage, domestic abuse and torment, bullying, destructive temper tantrums, glaringly conveying the "stink-eye" or death glare, and making demeaning and humiliating threats.



Problematic agitation is ultimately a hurtful reality. It tends toward destruction and must be mastered by virtues such as meekness and patience, the source of which is the person of Jesus Christ, to whom we must turn when we suffer.

God's wisdom and active goodness will always survive the louder agitation of man's private plans for himself and the world.

Scriptures

Next morning his mind was agitated. So Pharaoh had all the magicians and sages of Egypt summoned and recounted his dream to them; but there was no one to interpret it for him. Gen. 41:8

* * *

For we ourselves were once foolish, disobedient, deluded, slaves to various desires and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful ourselves and hating one another. Titus 3:3

Reflection Questions

- Can you forgive when you are irritated and crushed from agitated and distraught thoughts?
- Are you willing to open your agitation to God's grace of healing your troubled state of mind?
- Are you willing to reform your life through seeing your agitation as ultimately redemptive?

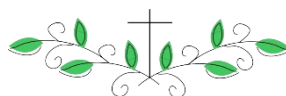


Prayer

My merciful Lord, You call us to perfect freedom from all that burdens us. Help me to see the burden that my agitation imposes upon me and help me to seek true freedom through the act of forgiveness and reconciliation. Please forgive me, dear Lord, as I forgive all who have hurt me. Jesus, I trust in You. Amen.

Resources

- “The Forgiveness Prayer”, Fr. Robert DeGrandis, S.S.J. <https://prayersroom.com/fr-robert-de-grandis-ssj-forgiveness-prayer>
- “Hope and Healing”, **A Pastoral Letter from the Bishops of California, 2018.**
- *Unbound: A Practical Guide to Deliverance*, by Neal Lozano.



Notes _____



Anger

While it would be wonderful if we could feel nothing but joy and love at all times, reality dictates otherwise. We often feel anger toward another because of some real or perceived injustice, or because we are simply upset about the trials life seems to put in our way. God has provided us a spiritual release valve in what are sometimes called “the Cursing Psalms.” These are prayers from the inspired Word of God, the Bible, which are rather nasty in what we wish toward another. If God is love, and if we abide in God if we love one another, why would God have allowed such terrible things to be said in his inspired Word? Because God knows very well that we do have hurt, angry, and even hateful feelings at times. If we can express these feelings to God in the safety of prayer, then we are much less likely to do violence to another in our words or actions. These are not the first words of God nor his last, but they are the Word of God, and ironically, a tool to increase our love for God and for one another.

Prayer



Scriptures

Oppose, O LORD, those who oppose me; war upon those who make war upon me.
Take up the shield and buckler; rise up in my defense.
Brandish lance and battle-ax against my pursuers. Say to my soul, “I am your salvation.”
Let those who seek my life be put to shame and disgrace.
Let those who plot evil against me be turned back and confounded.
Make them like chaff before the wind, with the angel of the LORD driving them on.
Make their way slippery and dark, with the angel of the LORD pursuing them.
Without cause they set their snare for me; without cause they dug a pit for me.
Let ruin overtake them unawares; let the snare they have set catch them; let them fall into the pit they have dug. Then I will rejoice in the LORD, exult in God’s salvation.
My very bones shall say, “O LORD, who is like you,
Who rescue the afflicted from the powerful, the afflicted and needy from the despoiler?”

Malicious witnesses rise up, accuse me of things I do not know.
They repay me evil for good; my soul is desolate.
Yet I, when they were ill, put on sackcloth, afflicted myself with fasting, sobbed my prayers upon my bosom. I went about in grief as for my brother, bent in mourning as for my mother. Yet when I stumbled they gathered with glee, gathered against me and I did not know it. They slandered me without ceasing; without respect they mocked me, gnashed their teeth against me.

O Lord, how long will you look on?
Restore my soul from their destruction, my very life from lions!
Then I will thank you in the great assembly; I will praise you before the mighty throng.
Do not let lying foes rejoice over me, my undeserved enemies wink knowingly.

They speak no words of peace, but against the quiet in the land they fashion deceitful speech. They open wide their mouths against me.
They say, "Aha! Good! Our eyes have seen it!"
You see this, LORD; do not be silent; Lord, do not withdraw from me.
Awake, be vigilant in my defense, in my cause, my God and my Lord.
Defend me because you are just, LORD; my God, do not let them rejoice over me.
Do not let them say in their hearts, "Aha! Our soul!"
Do not let them say, "We have devoured that one!"
Put to shame and confound all who relish my misfortune.
Clothe with shame and disgrace those who lord it over me.
But let those who favor my just cause shout for joy and be glad.
May they ever say, "Exalted be the LORD who delights in the peace of his loyal servant."
Then my tongue shall recount your justice, declare your praise, all the day long.
Ps. 35

* * *

For the leader. Do not destroy. A miktam of David.

Do you indeed pronounce justice, O gods; do you judge fairly you children of Adam?
No, you freely engage in crime; your hands dispense violence to the earth.

The wicked have been corrupt since birth; liars from the womb, they have gone astray.
Their venom is like the venom of a snake, like that of a serpent stopping its ears,
So as not to hear the voice of the charmer or the enchanter with cunning spells.

O God, smash the teeth in their mouths; break the fangs of these lions, LORD!
Make them vanish like water flowing away; trodden down, let them wither like grass.
Let them dissolve like a snail that oozes away, like an untimely birth that never sees the sun. Suddenly, like brambles or thistles, have the whirlwind snatch them away.
Then the just shall rejoice to see the vengeance and bathe their feet in the blood of the wicked.
Then people will say: "Truly there is a reward for the just; there is a God who is judge on earth!" Ps. 58

* * *

For the leader. A psalm of David.

O God, whom I praise, do not be silent, for wicked and treacherous mouths attack me.
They speak against me with lying tongues; with hateful words they surround me, attacking me without cause. In return for my love they slander me, even though I prayed for them.
They repay me evil for good, hatred for my love.

Appoint an evil one over him, an accuser to stand at his right hand,
That he may be judged and found guilty, that his plea may be in vain.
May his days be few; may another take his office.
May his children be fatherless, his wife, a widow.

May his children wander and beg, driven from their hovels.
May the usurer snare all he owns, strangers plunder all he earns.
May no one treat him with mercy or pity his fatherless children.
May his posterity be destroyed, their name rooted out in the next generation.
May his fathers' guilt be mentioned to the LORD; his mother's sin not rooted out.
May their guilt be always before the LORD, till their memory is banished from the earth,
For he did not remember to show mercy, but hounded the wretched poor and brought death to the brokenhearted.
He loved cursing; may it come upon him; he hated blessing; may none come to him.
May cursing clothe him like a robe; may it enter his belly like water, his bones like oil.
May it be near as the clothes he wears, as the belt always around him.

May this be the reward for my accusers from the LORD, for those speaking evil against me.

But you, LORD, are my Lord, deal kindly with me for your name's sake; in your great mercy rescue me. For I am poor and needy; my heart is pierced within me.
Like a lengthening shadow I am gone, I am shaken off like the locust.
My knees totter from fasting; my flesh has wasted away.
I have become a mockery to them; when they see me, they shake their heads.
Help me, LORD, my God; save me in your mercy.
Make them know this is your hand, that you, LORD, have done this.
Though they curse, may you bless; arise, shame them, that your servant may rejoice.
Clothe my accusers with disgrace; make them wear their shame like a mantle.
I will give fervent thanks to the LORD; before a crowd I will praise him.
For he stands at the right hand of the poor to save him from those who pass judgment on him. Ps. 109

* * *

So the gifts went on ahead of him, while he stayed that night in the camp.

That night, however, Jacob arose, took his two wives, with the two maidservants and his eleven children, and crossed the ford of the Jabbok. After he got them and brought them across the wadi and brought over what belonged to him, Jacob was left there alone. Then a man wrestled with him until the break of dawn. When the man saw that he could not prevail over him, he struck Jacob's hip at its socket, so that Jacob's socket was dislocated as he wrestled with him. The man then said, "Let me go, for it is daybreak." But Jacob said, "I will not let you go until you bless me." "What is your name?" the man asked. He answered, "Jacob." Then the man said, "You shall no longer be named Jacob, but Israel, because you have contended with divine and human beings and have prevailed." Jacob then asked him, "Please tell me your name." He answered, "Why do you ask for my name?" With that, he blessed him. Jacob named the place Peniel, "because I have seen God face to face," he said, "yet my life has been spared."

At sunrise, as he left Peniel, Jacob limped along because of his hip. Gen. 32:22-32

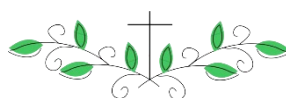
Reflection Questions

- When I am angry with God, do I tell him so, or do I give him the “silent treatment,” perhaps absenting myself from worship because I want him to know how upset I am with him?
- When I am angry with another person, do I blast that person, or do I decide to love that person, while at the same time not burying my anger but expressing it vehemently in the safety of prayer – then letting God take over from there?
- Am I afraid to “wrestle with God,” as Jacob did, so that God would bless him? (See Gen. 32:22-32.) After this incident, God gave Jacob the name Israel, which means “one who wrestles with God.”



Prayer

Lord God, even if I hide my true feelings from others – sometimes for very good reasons – I could never hide them from you, because you know me through and through. Let me always be completely honest with you in my prayer, not sugar-coating my more negative feelings and thoughts, yet letting your healing calm refresh me, through Christ our Lord. Amen.



Notes _____



Anxiety

Anxiety is defined in the dictionary as, “a feeling of worry nervousness or unease, typically about an imminent event or something with an uncertain outcome.” Sometimes anxiety can be so severe that it leads to panic attacks and an inability to act. Often fear and lack of trust are at the root of anxiety. Comfort and relief from anxiety can be found in God’s word, the Bible.



Freedom from anxiety comes from developing a deeper trust in God who cares more for us than we can ever begin to imagine. We can trust Him to take our burdens, cares and worries. When we begin to feel the dark cloud of fear and anxiety enveloping us, all we need to do is cry out to God and ask Him to take our worries and replace them with the peace that only He can give. As we learn to continue to turn our anxiety over to Him, we will increasingly learn to trust Him more and begin to experience a greater sense of peace.

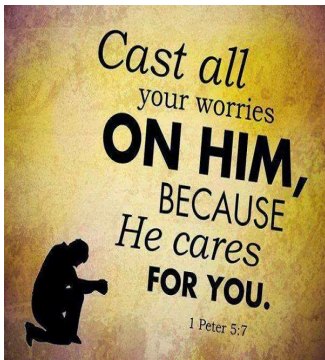
Scriptures

Rejoice in the Lord always. I shall say it again: rejoice! Your kindness should be known to all. The Lord is near. Have no anxiety at all, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, make your requests known to God. Then the peace of God that surpasses all understanding will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.

Phil. 4:4-7

* * *

Cast all your worries upon him because he cares for you. 1 Pt. 5:7



Reflection Questions

- What is preventing you from casting your cares on God?
- Can you remember a time when you did cry out to God with your burden? How did you feel afterwards?
- A key feature of freedom in Christ is gratitude. How can you cultivate a thankful and rejoicing heart?

Prayer

Dear loving Father, thank you for loving me more than I can ever imagine. Please walk with me as I face life's challenges. Please teach me to turn my anxiety, worries and burdens over to you so that I might experience true freedom in You and the peace that passes understanding. Amen.

Resources

- **Anxious for Nothing** by Max Lucado
- **Seven Answers for Anxiety** by Dr. Gregory L. Jantz



Notes _____



Cultural, Biological, and Sociological Realities

The population of the Diocese of Honolulu is composed of a number of different Pacific Islander and Asian cultures, many with a diverse mixture of ethnicities and ancestry.

This means that spiritual and mental health ministries in Hawai'i need to be very sensitive to the cultural realities of behavioral and emotional aspects that appear to be misunderstood and misperceived among these populations. Family and clan and friends' involvement would be essential, as well as considering the biological (genetic), sociological (group behaviors) and ancient spiritual practices and beliefs of the culture.

"One of the most notable features of the peoples of Oceania is their powerful sense of community and solidarity in family and tribe, village, or neighborhood. This means that decisions are reached by consensus achieved by an often long and complex process of dialogue. Touched by the grace of God, the peoples' natural sense of community made them receptive to the mystery of *communio* in Christ." *Ecclesia in Oceania*, Pope John Paul II, p. 8.



Faith and family are therefore integral components to any mental health model developed for the Diocese of Honolulu. That is because there is a significant fear, trepidation and anxiety in nearly all of the different Pacific Islander and Asian cultures in Hawai'i and in their homelands to receiving mental health services or to receiving prescription medications for mental health treatment, not only due to the stigma of seeking help from mental health professionals but mistrust of outside inclusion into personal and family issues.

These cultures have a strong preference for family members and close friends to serve as protective factors that buffer one's experience of distress. Pacific Islander peoples experience concern for loss of face, sense of shame, and adherence to Asian values of conformity to norms where mental illness is considered unacceptable and puts the family's reputation at stake or places one's cultural group in a bad light. Long periods of separation from their families of origin and a different cultural



background may make them more prone to acculturative stress, depression, anxiety, substance use and trauma while acculturating to the Westernized environment of Hawai'i. Economic survival seems to take priority over self-care, as mental health services can be costly to people who often lack health insurance, have precarious employment conditions, and face language barriers.

Another cultural issue has to do with suicide. Suicide is the primary cause of death for Micronesian youth and several other Pacific Islander groups, such as Samoans and Tongans, and is viewed as a way of restoring honor to a family beset by conflict, fighting or substance abuse. These suicide rates are extraordinarily high, about five times higher on average than the rate among young Japanese men, which is already high by world standards.

It is essential therefore to classify the behavior manifestations which would typically be identified as a mental health issue in the Diocese. Perhaps, a different lens in addressing the issues as a “loss of happiness” and lack of inner peace that led to externalizing distrustful behaviors that may lead to maladaptive coping during the stressful situations, will definitely impact family, social, occupational, and community level of functioning. Also, another less stigmatizing approach would be asking people if they “wish to be well” that help is available rather than suffering in silence resulting in fractured family social relationships. The Ministry should also target friends and family as potential and significant resources in changing help-seeking attitude and behaviors of Pacific Islanders’ peoples experiencing spiritual and mental health issues in the Diocese of Honolulu. “The tendency to reduce or assimilate the Gospel to non-Christian cultural beliefs and practices is a constant, corroding presence, unique to each time and place and often subtle in its operation.” (*From Christendom to Apostolic Mission*)

Scriptures

During those days Mary set out and traveled to the hill country in haste to a town of Judah, where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. Luke 1:39-40

* * *

One of them, a woman named Lydia, a dealer in purple cloth, from the city of Thyatira, a worshiper of God, listened, and the Lord opened her heart to pay attention to what Paul was saying. After she and her household had been baptized, she offered us an invitation, “If you consider me a believer in the Lord, come and stay at my home,” and she prevailed on us. Acts 16:14-15

* * *

He took them in at that hour of the night and bathed their wounds; then he and all his family were baptized at once. He brought them up into his house and provided a meal and with his household rejoiced at having come to faith in God. Acts 16:33-34

Reflection Questions

- How can you involve your immediate and extended family and friends in addressing your woundedness and your family’s reputation by seeking support through this new Ministry of the Diocese?
- Are you willing to let the Holy Spirit penetrate your culture through the support of your immediate and extended family and friends and transform your sense of shame and restore your happiness?
- Are you willing to become an apostle of mercy to help your immediate and extended family and friends to bring the healing of the Holy Spirit into your life and culture so that you can be well and no longer languish in your relationship with God?

Prayer

O Most Holy Trinity, you are a Divine family, and in you our blessed Mother and the saints of heaven and earth comprise an extended family; may your Holy Spirit lead us to Jesus the Word, and through the Word to the Father, in whom all life is completed, and every creature finds its perfection and its happiness, and heal us.



“Wash the stains of guilt away, bend the stubborn heart and will; melt the frozen, warm the chill, guide the steps that go astray.” (Sequence of Pentecost Sunday) Amen.

Resources

- *American Schools for the Natives of Ponape: A Study of Education and Culture Change in Micronesia*, Nat J. Colletta, 2004
- *Christendom to Apostolic Mission*, University of Mary, 2020, pp 20-21
- *Filipino help-seeking for mental health problems and associated barriers and facilitators: a systematic review* <https://doi.org/10.1007/s00127-020-01937-2>
- *Making Sense of Micronesia: The Logic of Pacific Island Culture*, Francis X. Hezel S.J., 2013
- *POST-SYNODAL APOSTOLIC EXHORTATION ECCLESIA IN OCEANIA of his Holiness POPE JOHN PAUL II to the Bishops, Priests and Deacons, Men and Women in the Consecrated Life and all the Lay Faithful on Jesus Christ and the Peoples of Oceania: Walking His way, telling His truth, living His life.* Given in Rome at Saint Peter's, 22 November 2001, the twenty-fourth of my Pontificate



Notes _____



Depression



Merriam-Webster Dictionary. A mood disorder marked by varying degrees of sadness, despair and loneliness – typically accompanied by inactivity, guilt, loss of concentration, social withdrawal, sleep disturbances, and sometimes suicidal tendencies.

Modern Catholic Dictionary. A term used by spiritual writers to describe a state of despondency in which a person feels inadequate, tends to withdraw from others, lacks response to normal stimulation, and is pessimistic about the future.

Scriptures

For the leader. A psalm of David.

Surely, I wait for the LORD; who bends down to me and hears my cry,
Draws me up from the pit of destruction, out of the muddy clay,
Sets my feet upon rock, steadies my steps. Ps. 40:1-3

* * *

Do not fear: I am with you; do not be anxious: I am your God.
I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my
victorious right hand. Isa. 41:10

* * *

I have told you this so that you might have peace in me. In the
world you will have trouble, but take courage, I have conquered the
world. John 16:33



Reflection Questions

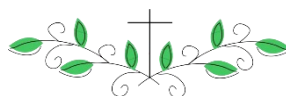
- Do I regularly have feelings of despair—or—do I have feelings of despair that persist?
- Do I share my feelings with others—or—do I seek help for my feelings?
- Do I feel guilty about my feelings?
- Do I want to address and overcome my feelings with help from available resources?

Prayer

Lead, Kindly Light, amidst the encircling gloom. Lead Thou me on! The night is dark, and I am far from home. Lead Thou me on! Keep Thou my feet, I do not ask to see. The distant scene. One step enough for me. Amen. (Hymn & Prayer by St. John Henry Newman)

Resources

- Parish Pastor, Deacon, trusted parish members
- Trusted family members or trusted friends
- Catholic Charities Hawai`i Helpline. CALL (808) 527-4470
- Aloha United Way Helpline. CALL 211. AUW211.org
- NAMI Hawai`i (National Alliance for Mental Health). CALL (808) 591-1297. <https://namihawaii.org>



Notes _____



Domestic Violence

Family violence (also called domestic violence or child abuse for youth), is the use of violence, threats, force or intimidation to control or manipulate a family member, partner or former partner. In such a relationship, there is an imbalance of power where abusive behavior or violence is used to control others.



Rehabilitation after family violence. Adult and child victim-survivors who live with a perpetrator of family violence, live in a constant state of anxiety and fear. A perpetrator who is undergoing counselling for their violent behavior needs to recognize that regaining the trust of their family, and the behavior-change process, will take time. They also need to accept that their partner has a right to end the relationship if they wish due to the violence if left untreated/addressed through counselling. If the abusing spouse decides to leave the relationship, victims will need to be reassured that they are not alone and that there are options that they may or may not have explored. They can reach out to family and friends whom they trust for emotional and sometimes financial support. The local Domestic Violence Programs and Shelters in the community can also supply emotional support as well as peer counseling, safe emergency housing, and general information based on individual circumstances and needs, that can be tailored to their situation. Victims should also maintain their spiritual journey faith in God and begin focusing on building or re-establishing a strong support system which includes emotional support from their parish, family, and friends. Most importantly, they need to know that they are not alone.

Scriptures

Honor your father and your mother, that you may have a long life in the land the LORD your God is giving you. Exod. 20:12

* * *

Our ancestors worshiped on this mountain, but you people say that the place to worship is in Jerusalem. John 4:20

* * *

Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ loved the church and handed himself over for her. Eph. 5:25

* * *

Children, obey your parents in everything, for this is pleasing to the Lord. Fathers, do not provoke your children, so they may not become discouraged. Col. 3:20-21



Reflection Questions

- In what way can I turn to God to help me understand the issues of family violence in my home?
- If I am the abuser, how important is it for me and am I willing to seek God and repent?
- How has gospel principles helped me to overcome abusive tendencies and behaviors?
- What am I willing to do to change?
- Am I willing to seek God and repent?

Prayer

*God of endless love, ever caring, ever strong, always present, always just:
You gave your only Son to save us by the blood of his cross.*

*Gentle Jesus, shepherd of peace, join to your own suffering the pain of all who have been hurt in body,
mind, and spirit by those who betrayed the trust placed in them.*

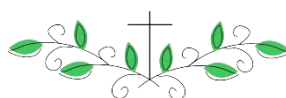
*Hear the cries of our brothers and sisters who have been gravely harmed, and the cries of those who love
them.*

*Soothe their restless hearts with hope, steady their shaken spirits with faith.
Grant them justice for their cause, enlightened by your truth.*

*Holy Spirit, comforter of hearts, heal your people's wounds and transform brokenness into wholeness.
Grant us the courage and wisdom, humility, and grace, to act with justice.
Breathe wisdom into our prayers and labors.
Grant that all harmed by abuse may find peace in justice.
We ask this through Christ, our Lord. Amen.*

Resources

- Domestic Violence Action Center
- Hawai'i State Coalition Against Domestic Violence
- Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA)
- Domestic Violence Victim Advocacy Program (Military Personnel)
- Family Advocacy Program (Military Families)
- Safe Environment Program (Diocese of Honolulu)
- Child & Family Service (681-3500; www.cfs-hawaii.org)
- Catholic Charities (536-1794; www.catholiccharitieshawaii.org)
- Hawai'i Psychological Association (521-8995; www.hawaiipsych.org)
- Suicide prevention help (DOH – ACCESS Line: 832-3100;
www.suicidehotlines.com/hawaii.html)
- Parents and Children Together (832-0855; www.pacthawaii.com)
- The Parent Line (counseling and referrals) (800-816-1222)
- USCCB



Notes _____



Fear

Fear is a normal human emotion, and as we all know, our greatest human fear is fear of death. Yet the most common phrase in the Bible is: “be not afraid/peace be with you.”

What if God loves us so much that the second person of the Trinity came down from heaven to defeat death, both the bodily (material) death as well as the death of the soul (spirit)?



What if there is evidence of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ, which is evidence of defeat of bodily or material death? What if there is both Biblical and scientific evidence that the Shroud of Turin is the burial cloth of Jesus Christ? Further, what if the image of Shroud of Turin is evidence of the Passion of Jesus, congruent with the eyewitness account by the Apostle John's Gospel? What if there is 21st century evidence of the supernatural Resurrection of Jesus Christ? (See The Coming The Quantum Christ)

In Luke's Gospel, Jesus is referring to the nail wounds in his hands and feet and then goes on to demonstrate his living resurrected body by eating a fish. (See 1 Cor. 15:16-19)

The earliest Catholics/Christians were so convinced that there was a Resurrection that they proclaimed the “good news.” The good news that was preached is that Jesus Christ defeated death, and as his human body was Resurrected, so will our human bodies be Resurrected and immortal if we follow him. (See 1 Cor 15: 54-55)

Amazingly, Jesus Christ loves us so much that we now have 21st century evidence that the image on the Shroud of Turin is scientific evidence of the Resurrection. Further, there is also 21st century evidence that the Shroud of Turin dates back to the 1st century. (See Father Spitzer Magis Center references below)

Scriptures

For if the dead are not raised, neither has Christ been raised, and if Christ has not been raised, your faith is vain; you are still in your sins. Then those who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. If for this life only we have hoped in Christ, we are the most pitiable people of all. 1 Cor. 15:16-19

* * *

And when this which is corruptible clothes itself with incorruptibility and this which is mortal clothes itself with immortality, then the word that is written shall come about:

“Death is swallowed up in victory. Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?” 1 Cor. 15:54-55

* * *

While they were still speaking about this, he stood in their midst and said to them, “Peace be with you.” . . . “Look at my hands and my feet, that it is I myself. Touch me and see, because a ghost does not have flesh and bones as you can see I have.” . . . They gave him a piece of baked fish; he took it and ate it in front of them. Luke 24:36, 39, 42-43

Reflection Questions

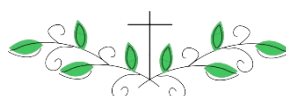
- How does Jesus Christ conquer death of the soul?
- How does Jesus Christ conquer death of the body?
- Do we have an immortal soul?
- What is the scientific evidence that the Shroud of Turin is evidence of the Resurrection?
- How do the 21st Century Eucharistic Miracles provide evidence of the defeat of death and the Resurrection? (See references 7-9)

Prayer

The LORD is my shepherd; there is nothing I lack. . . Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff comfort me. . . . Indeed, goodness and mercy will pursue me all the days of my life; I will dwell in the house of the LORD for endless days.
Ps. 23:1, 4, 6

Resources

1. <https://www.magiscenter.com/blog/what-is-shroud-turin-heres-what-science-says>•
2. <https://www.magiscenter.com/blog/facts-about-shroud-turin>•
3. <https://www.magiscenter.com/blog/history-of-the-shroud-of-turin-cutting-through-controversy>•
4. <https://www.magiscenter.com/blog/how-did-shroud-turin-get-image>•
5. <https://www.magiscenter.com/blog/how-old-is-shroud-turin>•
6. [https://www.magiscenter.com/blog/where-did-shroud-turin-come- from](https://www.magiscenter.com/blog/where-did-shroud-turin-come-from)•
<https://www.magiscenter.com/blog/5-key-pieces-of-evidence-on-the-shroud-of-turin>
7. https://www.magiscenter.com/hs-search-results?term=21st+century+eucharistic+miracles&limit=15&type=SITE_PAGE&type=LISTING_PAGE&type=BLOG_POST&type=LANDING_PAGE&groupId=29905716149&groupId=35773392428&groupId=52950942377
8. <https://www.magiscenter.com/blog/contemporary-eucharistic-miracles>
9. <https://www.magiscenter.com/blog/approved-eucharistic-miracles-21st-century>



Notes _____



Forgiveness



Unforgiveness is like a drop of acid on the skin. A single drop produces a nasty sting but as the drops persist the skin is eaten away and rots. So, it is with an unforgiving heart. Soon the unwillingness to forgive eats away at one's heart until there is only anger and bitterness left. The one who doesn't forgive comes to realize that the only person truly harmed is him/herself. Like drops of acid ruin the skin, the person's heart has become hardened. Unforgiveness can come in the form of not forgiving others or even not being able to forgive oneself. In the end the result is the same, a broken, bitter heart.

What if there was a way to repair the unforgiving and wounded heart?

We have assurance in God's word that if we have put our faith and trust in Christ we are forgiven and freed from our sin and God's condemnation. God has also supplied a means for us to experience on-going forgiveness through the confession. By confessing our sins, we are cleansed and free of the burden of our sin.

As we experience forgiveness from God ourselves, we are called to forgive those who sin against us. Granting forgiveness to one that has wronged us does not mean that we forget what was done, but that we choose to let go and stop the acidic drops that burn our heart and soul. Just as God has extended his grace to us by dying on the cross for our sin, we extend the grace of forgiveness to the one that has wronged us. It doesn't necessarily mean that we have to engage in relationship with the one that has wronged us, only that we will choose day by day to make a conscious effort to release our hurt to God. As we practice releasing our hurt daily, God will begin to set us free from the pain and anguish that the wrong caused us.

Scriptures

Hence, now there is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.

Rom. 8:1

* * *

He was not the light, but came to testify to the light. The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. John 1:8-9

* * *

Then Peter approaching asked him, "Lord, if my brother sins against me, how often must I forgive him? As many as seven times?" Matt. 18:21

Reflection Questions

- How does it feel to know that once you've put your faith and trust in Christ you are no longer under God's condemnation?
- What prevents you from confessing your sin and experiencing God's forgiveness and freedom from sin?
- Who do you need to forgive today so that you can be set free?

Prayer

Merciful Father, thank you for dying on the cross to forgive my sins and set me free. Help me to remember that what I've confessed to you is forgiven and is no longer chained to me. Please help me to forgive others as you have forgiven me. Amen.

Resources

- **The Gift of Forgiveness** by Charles Stanley
- **When You've Been Wronged** by Erwin W. Lutzer



*Notes*_____



Grief



The American Psychological Association describes grief as the anguish experienced after significant loss, usually the death of a beloved person.

Feelings of grief can also take the form of regret for something lost, remorse for something done, or sorrow for a mishap to oneself.

Or grief can come from a loss of faith, hope and/or trust after going through a traumatic experience.

Feelings of grief often include physiological distress, separation anxiety, confusion, yearning, obsessive dwelling on the past, and apprehension about the future. Intense grief can become life-threatening through disruption of the immune system, self-neglect, and suicidal thoughts.

The mistake most of us make is thinking that we can heal ourselves or be healed completely by going through human counseling or therapy. While we can use many different avenues of human therapy and counseling to start a healing process, without an understanding of and a belief in the power of Christ to heal all wounds we will not fill the hole left in our heart from grief. This can lead us to spin in circles from grief to depression and worse.

Scriptures

He gives power to the faint, abundant strength to the weak. Isa. 40:29

* * *

For I will restore your health; I will heal your injuries—oracle of the LORD.
"The outcast" they have called you, "whom no one looks for." Jer. 30:17

* * *

Heal me, LORD, that I may be healed; save me, that I may be saved, for you are my praise.
Jer. 17:14

* * *

The righteous cry out, the LORD hears and he rescues them from all their afflictions.
Ps. 34:18

* * *

Healing the brokenhearted, and binding up their wounds. Ps. 147:3

* * *

Blessed are they who mourn, for they will be comforted. Matt. 5:4

* * *

When you pass through waters, I will be with you; through rivers, you shall not be swept away. When you walk through fire, you shall not be burned, nor will flames consume you.
Isa. 43:2

Reflection Questions

- Have you tried to heal your wounds of grief through human processes of therapy and counseling? These are great ways to start a process of working through grief but in the end, human love cannot equal the love of God. Only God can heal those deep cuts of toxic shame, remorse and feelings of unworthiness.
- Are you ready to look to God for the process of connecting with His acceptance of who you are and not what you do? No matter what you have done or what has been done to you, He will accept you as you are and the place that you are in now. You are a beloved child of God.
- Will you take the first step to explore the spiritual connection to true healing for the grief that comes from the sins of the world?

Prayer

Lord Jesus Christ, as I kneel here before your Cross, I am overcome with grief for both the sorrow you went through for me and the grief that I feel for my inability to overcome sins of the world to love you with my whole body, mind, and spirit. I know that you are always with me and walking beside me as I struggle to overcome worldly fear, anxieties and daily losses that cause me pain and grief every day. I ask the Blessed Virgin Mary to intercede on my behalf and for You to provide me with the strength, courage and Grace to take refuge in your heart and do your will every day that will lead me to understand and participate in the love that you have for me. Amen.



Resources

- Catholic Charities, <https://www.catholiccharitieshawaii.org/counseling-mental-health/>
- Diocese of Honolulu Social Services, <https://www.catholichawaii.org/resource-center/social-services>
- Feldmeier, Peter. The Developing Christian; Spiritual Growth Through the Life Cycle
- The Word Among Us. A daily/weekly/monthly guide to Daily Mediations and a guide for understanding Scriptural Readings. (Online and in magazine form) <https://wau.org>

References

- <https://www.apa.org/topics/grief>
- <https://www.joincake.com/blog/bible-verses-about-grief>
- <https://lynndove.com/2013/12/06/25-encouraging-scripture-verses-for-those-who-are-grieving>



*Notes*_____



Suffering

We may wish it were not so, but suffering is a part of life. Sometimes it comes upon us because of poor decisions we have made, sometimes it is due to the poor decisions of others, and at other times it is due to circumstances beyond anyone's control. We naturally recoil from suffering, but it can be redemptive if we have the proper attitude toward it. Some people suffer more intensely because they do not know how to harness suffering and make it an experience that can help us grow. The cross of Jesus is our greatest model of redemptive suffering. He did not deserve the agonizing sufferings he bore, but he accepted them to redeem us; and by his resurrection, he showed us that they can never ultimately rob of us our life. We can learn from suffering to be more patient, more compassionate toward others who suffer, or more forgiving. While it is not easy, it can be a source of our growth in spiritual and mental health.

Scriptures

See, my servant shall prosper, he shall be raised high and greatly exalted.

Even as many were amazed at him—so marred were his features, beyond that of mortals, his appearance, beyond that of human beings—

So shall he startle many nations, kings shall stand speechless;

For those who have not been told shall see, those who have not heard shall ponder it.



Who would believe what we have heard? To whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed?

He grew up like a sapling before him, like a shoot from the parched earth;

He had no majestic bearing to catch our eye, no beauty to draw us to him.

He was spurned and avoided by men, a man of suffering, knowing pain,

Like one from whom you turn your face, spurned, and we held him in no esteem.

Yet it was our pain that he bore, our sufferings he endured.

We thought of him as stricken, struck down by God^l and afflicted,

But he was pierced for our sins, crushed for our iniquity.

He bore the punishment that makes us whole, by his wounds we were healed.

We had all gone astray like sheep, all following our own way;

But the LORD laid upon him the guilt of us all.

Though harshly treated, he submitted and did not open his mouth;

Like a lamb led to slaughter or a sheep silent before shearers, he did not open his mouth.

Seized and condemned, he was taken away. Who would have thought any more of his destiny?

For he was cut off from the land of the living, struck for the sins of his people.

He was given a grave among the wicked, a burial place with evildoers,
Though he had done no wrong, nor was deceit found in his mouth.
But it was the LORD's will to crush him with pain.
By making his life as a reparation offering, he shall see his offspring, shall lengthen his days, and the LORD's will shall be accomplished through him.
Because of his anguish he shall see the light; because of his knowledge he shall be content;
My servant, the just one, shall justify the many, their iniquity he shall bear.
Therefore I will give him his portion among the many, and he shall divide the spoils with the mighty,
Because he surrendered himself to death, was counted among the transgressors,
Bore the sins of many, and interceded for the transgressors. Isa. 52:13 – 53:12

* * *

Then Jesus came with them to a place called Gethsemane, and he said to his disciples, "Sit here while I go over there and pray." He took along Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to feel sorrow and distress. Then he said to them, "My soul is sorrowful even to death. Remain here and keep watch with me." He advanced a little and fell prostrate in prayer, saying, "My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me; yet, not as I will, but as you will." When he returned to his disciples he found them asleep. He said to Peter, "So you could not keep watch with me for one hour? Watch and pray that you may not undergo the test. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak." Withdrawing a second time, he prayed again, "My Father, if it is not possible that this cup pass without my drinking it, your will be done!" Then he returned once more and found them asleep, for they could not keep their eyes open. He left them and withdrew again and prayed a third time, saying the same thing again. Then he returned to his disciples and said to them, "Are you still sleeping and taking your rest? Behold, the hour is at hand when the Son of Man is to be handed over to sinners. Get up, let us go. Look, my betrayer is at hand." Matt. 26:36-46

* * *

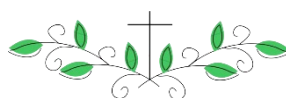
But may I never boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world. Gal. 6:14

Reflection Questions

- While I do not want suffering, how can I learn to accept it, bear it, and ultimately overcome it?
- Reflecting on my own sufferings, how can I be more compassionate to others who suffer?
- What are ways I can allow others to help me in my suffering, so that I will know I do not suffer alone?
- What can my suffering teach me about the joy I ultimately desire?

Prayer

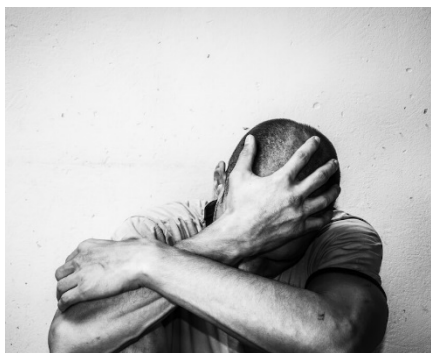
Lord God, you sent your Son to be our Savior, and he suffered mentally by being rejected, criticized, and abandoned. He suffered physically by being scourged, crowned with thorns and crucified. Yet it was because of the sufferings he bore for us and for the sake of truth that his resurrection became all the more significant. Help us in our time of need that we may never lose hope in your love and in your power to heal and to save, through Christ our Lord. Amen.



*Notes*_____



Suicide



Suicide is a growing public health crisis. The spiritual healing ministry has an important role to play in addressing this issue. As parishioners, community organizers, and public policy advocates, we can address factors that put people at risk.

Like most public health problems, suicide is preventable. While progress will continue to be made into the future, evidence for numerous programs, practices, and policies currently exists, and many programs are ready to be implemented now.

Scriptures

He said, "Naked I came forth from my mother's womb, and naked shall I go back there. The LORD gave and the LORD has taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD!" In all this Job did not sin, nor did he charge God with wrong. Job 1:21-22

* * *

The LORD is my shepherd, there is nothing I lack.
In green pastures he makes me lie down; to still waters he leads me; he restores my soul.
He guides me along right paths for the sake of his name.
Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff comfort me.
You set a table before me in front of my enemies;
You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.
Indeed, goodness and mercy will pursue me all the days of my life; I will dwell in the house of the LORD for endless days. Ps. 23: 1-6

Reflection Questions

- What is it about suicide that makes it difficult to discuss?
- Why do you think so many people are affected by suicide in our parishes?
- How do our personal struggles relate to Jesus' sacrifice on the cross?

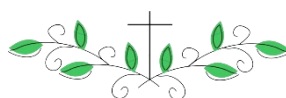


Prayer

God, we celebrate the gift of life for each person. We commit to nurturing the wellbeing of each person here. We know for some; life is a burden filled with suffering. Help us to talk about our fears, our anger, and our despair with someone we trust. We celebrate that life has purpose and meaning. For some, purpose and meaning are like dry bones, dead and lifeless. Remind us that You know us by name. You know our place and purpose in this world. We are created to live in community. Some feel alone, unloved and disconnected. Give us courage to reach out with love to someone who needs us. May we be Your presence with them. Teach us to be gentle and non-judgmental. We remember those who ended their life before it was time. Comfort those who grieve and bring healing. Amen.

Resources

- <https://www.ewtn.com/catholicism/library/suicide-gravity-and-responsibility-1156>
- <https://uscatholic.org/articles/201410/is-suicide-a-sin>
- <https://www.archindy.org/criterion/local/2020/06-12/suicide-catechism.htm>



*Notes*_____





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