



Students at schools across the Archdiocese of Milwaukee, including St. Sebastian in Milwaukee, are getting used to wearing masks in class. (Photo by Mark Frohna)

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Aquinas' Remedy for the Sadness and Malaise We are Feeling

Malaise is the best word I can think of to describe what many people I know are experiencing, myself included. Dictionary.com defines malaise as “a vague or unfocused feeling of mental uneasiness, lethargy or discomfort.” When asked how they are, I hear answers such as tired, bored, exhausted. People tell me they struggle to concentrate. We collectively feel unsettled and unsure. There are many question marks right now and we all agree that 2020 has turned out to be a third-rate year. Lamentably, we are barely 75 percent of the way through; so we can expect more surprises in the fourth quarter. Malaise.

As humans, we desire control and predictability. We have had none of that. A pandemic alone would be enough for one year, add in quarantine and economic deterioration, protests and riots, an ugly election and it makes sense that we feel mental uneasiness, lethargy and discomfort. Mass and community, the places where we usually find consolation, were stripped from us. For a long time, we couldn't receive Holy Communion, which gives us grace to persevere. Many still haven't been back to Mass. We couldn't gather with our loved ones, where we can laugh and find some emotional relief. Some days, I'm tempted to stay in bed under the safe covers but this nonsense has crept into my dreams. Malaise.

As adults, it is challenging enough and, blessedly, kids are resilient but I am beginning to hear from parents that they are struggling to explain all of it to their kids. Some kids are back to school full-time, some part-time, some just virtually. Some kids are playing their sports; others are sidelined. Kids can't see their grandparents or play with each other. The Class of 2020 was denied



REAL LIFE. REAL FAITH.

MERRIDITH FREDIANI

their senior spring semester and many of them are starting their freshman year of college at home. Malaise.

I was seeking solace with a friend one sunny afternoon on my front porch and she shared five remedies for sadness from St. Thomas Aquinas. I share these now because they are simple and work with all ages. These remedies can help us manage the malaise but are also an excellent reminder of something that has not changed: God.

God is constant. God is with us. God has it under control. This is where our faith must sustain us. Things feel nut bonkers because much in our world is nut bonkers but God has not abandoned us. Now is the time to lean on him more. We must throw ourselves and all our good and not so good feelings in front of him, and he will accept us and help us regain the peace we miss. He's got this.

The prophet Isaiah instructs us to “take care you remain tranquil and do not fear.” (Isaiah 7:4) The remedies from Aquinas help us achieve that tranquility.

Grant yourself something you like. Maybe it's taking 30 minutes to read a book you enjoy. Maybe it's a piece of Dove chocolate. Maybe it's going for a walk around the block. Maybe it's watching an episode of a favorite show.

Let yourself indulge but don't overdo it. Moderation is a good thing. Too much indulgence can lead to feelings of guilt or remorse. This may not be the time for leading the ascetic life but don't get extreme, either.

Have a good cry. Crying is our body's way of releasing. It's ugly and snotty and usually embarrassing if we are not alone but there's no shame in lying on your bed clutching a roll of toilet paper because you're out of Kleenex and heaving out the emotion. Weep and you'll feel better.

Share your sadness with a good friend. God created us to be together. He tells us to love each other. While you may feel you are burdening another person, you are also letting that person love you. It's good for kids to learn that when we share with someone we trust and love,

it makes the hardship easier to bear. We do not need to stoically handle this by ourselves. Let someone listen to you and in turn listen to someone else.

Contemplate the truth. The truth is that you are a beloved child of God. He desires goodness for you and he will bring goodness forth from struggle. “For I know well the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans for your welfare and not for woe, so as to give you a future of hope.” (Jeremiah 29:11) This is the truth. Spend some time with it.

Take a bath and a nap. No explanation needed; these things can only be helpful.

Try these five remedies if you're struggling. Then offer up a prayer to your heavenly Father and invite him into your malaise. Believe that he is there with you holding your hand and that he has it all under control.

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Four Pandemic Family Lessons

Who knew that pandemics could be so troublesome, even to families who never got sick? In my pastoral duties in the parish, I have encountered several families who are having a tough time with the pandemic and all the fear and worry that come along with it. None of the families I spoke with had actually contracted the disease but they had felt the ill effects of isolation, the dampening of spirits from lack of social activities, and the sense that these four walls are not big enough to hold so many different personalities with so many opinions and differing ideas. Can there be too much face-to-face contact?

I am going to share from my father's heart through the lens of my deacon's heart about how we can not only tolerate all the pressures and anxiety of this pandemic time but actually come out of it the better for it. In March, when everything shut down, our family kept going on as normal. Since we already were homeschooling, we just kept on with our lessons and books but all our outside activities were canceled. So, we managed to finish the school year earlier than usual and began our summer break a few weeks earlier than normal.

The first lesson, different than normal, does not have to be bad. Since we had a longer summer break, we decided to do things we had not done before. We



FAITH AND FAMILY

DEACON HENRY REYES

planted several trees, we started the garden early and planned to garden throughout the summer. We heard about some nights with meteor showers; we put it on the schedule. We even went to the yard of a deacon friend to get the extra dark skies. We had more time together; so we explored the local walking trails and even found a couple of fishing spots to make a note for fishing fun another day. My two older boys each caught their first ever large-mouth bass this summer.

Since we didn't have any outside activities for our five kids, we ended up watching more TV and movies and streaming videos; more tablet use, more YouTube instructional videos, more video games, more online chats, more virtual meetings. Second lesson: more screen time is not better. Because of our active schedule of evening and weekend

activities, we previously spent less time in front of a screen. Without outside commitments, our lives began to be ruled by screens – the kids' time, the family time, the together time. We recognized symptoms of what we later learned Dr. Victoria Dunckley called Electronic Screen Syndrome. We had gotten out of balance; it was time to cut back on the screens and plan to be outside in nature more. The old adage "go out and play outside" really rang a bell in our heads after reading Dr. Dunckley's book, *Reset Your Child's Brain*.

Mass on TV is just not the same as in person. We were being extra careful with exposure to anyone outside our home because my elderly father lives with us and he has several underlying factors that would make contracting the disease especially dangerous for him. After a couple of months, it was my elderly parents who broke the quarantine. As daily Mass goes, my parents couldn't take another TV Mass and when the churches were opened with 25 percent capacity they jumped at the chance of receiving Our Lord, body, blood, soul and divinity. Third lesson: nothing compares to receiving the Bread of Angels and the Lamb of God. The general dispensation from attending Sunday Mass has expired and most people, except those with underlying conditions and others with a grave reason, will be expected to attend the Sunday Eucharist. Details are found here: shorturl.at/tz579.

The final lesson is that parents lead, and the kids follow. The changes that we made came from a response to the unique circumstances of the pandemic. As always, my wife and I had to discuss what we wanted to do for the benefit of our family and then implement the changes as a team. But I think the best way that we have led as we reinvent our families in this unique environment is

that my wife and I made an intentional and deliberate recommitment to our faith. Darkness is not a time to succumb to the shadows but a time to light a lamp. We embraced the family rosary wholeheartedly, we pulled out the kid bibles from the basement shelves, we read about the lives of the saints, we watched some movies about the saints, we enjoyed God's creation, we visited the grave of our little son in heaven, we celebrated feast days and memorials at home, asking for the intercession of the saint of the day. We embraced Jesus Christ, the Blessed Virgin Mary, the most glorious St. Joseph and the whole Communion of Saints even more tightly than before. We had already made a family enthronement of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Immaculate Heart of Mary; this summer we made a family consecration to St. Joseph. Now our family is consecrated to the entire Holy Family. This connection to the Holy Family and the Communion of Saints has proven to be the most important aspect of our new pandemic life because alone anyone can succumb to the fear and the panic, but with Christ and the Blessed Virgin and St. Joseph and our Patron Saints by our side, we are not so easily disturbed or overcome.

"Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us rid ourselves of every burden and sin that clings to us and persevere in running the race that lies before us while keeping our eyes fixed on Jesus, the leader and perfecter of faith. For the sake of the joy that lay before him he endured the cross, despising its shame, and has taken his seat at the right of the throne of God. Consider how he endured such opposition from sinners, in order that you may not grow weary and lose heart." (Hebrews 12:1-3)



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Can This Nation Become a Multi-Racial Family?

When my husband and I first applied to become foster parents in 2003, we were asked to check a box to include or exclude races and ethnicities of the foster child. As Bill and I sat together at the dining room table with pages of forms, our two young sons played nearby. We hadn't needed to check any boxes before the birth of Jacob and Liam. As parents of biological newborns, we knew what race and ethnicity our children would be. But now, as we were considering welcoming another child, we were being asked if we might be open to becoming a multi-racial family. And we checked yes.

Fast forward to 2020. Of the three children we fostered between 2003 and 2011, two — Teenasia and Jamilet — are now our adopted daughters and one — Luchita — returned to her biological grandmother. Teenasia, 18, is African American and Jamilet, 17, is Puerto Rican, with African ancestry. We have a Black Lives Matter sign in our front yard and have participated in a number of the marches and prayer services over the summer.

The global racial justice movement has brought to the attention of all Americans what the Black community has known since the earliest days of slavery — that public hangings, beatings, forced separation of families and other dehumanizing treatment caused deep generational trauma; that being Black today puts a person more at risk for just about everything from higher rates of infant mortality to being killed at the hands of police; that the sin of racism is so insidious and pervasive that it is often unrecognized by the majority culture.

If the Emancipation Proclamation and the Civil War were America's first



FASTEN YOUR SEATBELTS

ANNEMARIE SCOBEY-POLACHECK

attempt to right the wrongs of its racist underpinnings, and the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s was the second, the movement that has surged since the killing of George Floyd is the third such call for our nation to live out its creed of equality under the flag. And I pray that Catholics everywhere join this third movement.

Catholic social teaching has always been on the side of those whose voices have been silenced; those whose power has been stripped. The strong Catholic teaching of “preferential option for the poor” puts the expression “all lives matter” into proper perspective. Yes, of course all life is sacred, but throughout scripture, the prophets of the Old Testament and actions of Jesus and the disciples in the New Testament show again and again, God siding with the powerless, especially in the face of those exploiting their high positions. The people who must matter most at any given moment are those who are in harm's way. Jesus, with every teaching, in every miracle, sided with the hurt and the broken. When Jesus instructed his followers on who to invite to their banquets, he didn't tell them to invite everyone, since everyone mattered;

instead, he instructed them to invite those who would least be able to return the invitation — the poor, the lame, the blind. Jesus was always on the lookout for those who were left out.

And today, in the United States, we have a whole category of people who have been historically left out. Four hundred years ago, our Black brothers and sisters were stolen from Africa and enslaved, left out of the newly forming United States. Just 157 years ago, slavery was abolished, but Black Americans were legally prevented from voting, from holding certain jobs, from living in certain places, from attending schools — they were left out as full citizens. Then, even after the passage of the Civil Rights Act, in 1964, institutional racism persisted, and now, 56 years later, many from the Black community continue to be left out or actively discriminated against. At the same time, we as a society have grown in our understanding of the toll of generational trauma. Research is confirming what experience has taught us about what happens when an entire racial group is not invited to the banquet, or even to the lunch counter. We, as a nation, have to make up for 400 years of the sin of racism.

And that's where we, as Catholics,

need to be alert to our responsibility. We need to stand with those who have been told that their lives don't matter, finding the intersection between our own gifts and what is needed to bring about justice. We need to be part of the marches; part of the thought leadership; part of the reform. We need to do more than pray in our pews; we need to leave our own ZIP codes and volunteer. We need to admit our ignorance and listen and learn. We need to ensure every institution of which we are a part — from our churches to our schools to our workplaces to our government — is a place of inclusion and equity. We need to take to heart Jesus' parable of the vineyard worker who got paid a full day's wage even though he came at the last hour — understanding that our nation's history of injustice prevented access to the vineyard. Now is the hour to demonstrate integrity and full pay.

The question posed to our nation at this important moment in history isn't so different than the question Bill and I faced around the dining room table so many years ago.

Is our country willing to be a multi-cultural family; a multi-racial family? The time has come to finally check the box and say yes.

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October is Dedicated to Rosary in the Church

COLLEEN JURKIEWICZ
CATHOLIC HERALD STAFF

Every year since the time of Pope Leo XIII, the Church has dedicated the month of October to the Rosary. October has many tie-ins with the rosary — the anniversary of the Battle of Lepanto, which lent its date (Oct. 7) to the celebration of Our Lady of Victory and later Our Lady of the Rosary. Our Lady of Fatima gave us “The Miracle of the Sun” on Oct. 13, 1917. And October is also home to the feast days of several Marian saints, like St. Therese of Lisieux and Pope St. John Paul II.

If ever a year needed a month dedicated to rosary, it would be the year 2020.

Pandemic? Check. Social unrest? Double check. Election? Just around the corner. Economic upheaval, attacks on religion and on the religious, the rise of a culture of chaos which denies the very existence of objective moral truths — to dwell on it all is to be tempted into a sin against the Holy Spirit, that of despair.

St. Dominic felt, in the year 1214, much like we do today. He had spent his priestly career traveling from town to town preaching against the Albigensian heresy (for a full understanding of this heresy and its doctrines, read “The Albigensian Attack” by Hilaire Belloc), with little effect. He retreated to the forest to engage in penance and prayer. It was in that forest, tradition holds, that the Virgin appeared to him with the solution to the problem — the Marian Psalter, a collection of Hail Marys and Paternosters said upon prayer beads. The Psalter had been in existence for some time but, heretofore, without any meditative element concerning the lives of Jesus and Mary. This addition of the mysteries



▲ The month of October has been dedicated to the rosary. (Photo by Colleen Jurkiewicz)

— Joyful, Sorrowful and Glorious — gave the rosary an evangelical dimension that could fuel St. Dominic’s efforts against the Albigensian errors.

Against the rosary — containing as it does the very prayer taught by Christ and the Angelic salutation that heralded his coming into this world — the devil has been shown, time and time again throughout history, to have no power.

“This life is nothing but warfare and a series of temptations; we do not have to contend with enemies of flesh and blood, but with the very powers of hell,” wrote St. Louis de Montfort in “The Secret of the Rosary.” “What better weapons could we possibly use to combat them than the

“How grateful and magnificent a spectacle to see in the cities, and towns, and villages, on land and sea — wherever the Catholic faith has penetrated — many hundreds of thousands of pious people uniting their praises and prayers with one voice and heart at every moment of the day, saluting Mary, invoking Mary, hoping everything through Mary,” he wrote. “Through her may all the faithful strive to obtain from her Divine Son that the nations plunged in error may return to the Christian teaching and precepts, in which is the foundation of the public safety and the source of peace and true happiness.”

A popular historical anecdote details how Oliver Cromwell, who was tasked by the English government with subduing Roman Catholicism in Ireland during the English Civil War, wrote to Parliament decrying his own poor progress. “You gave us the money, you gave us the guns,” he is said to have written. “But let me tell you that every house in Ireland is a house of prayer, and when I bring these fanatical Irish before the muzzles of my guns, they hold up in their hands a string of beads, and they never surrender.”

We have no control over this pandemic, mamas. We have no control over who wins the election next month (even if it is our duty to vote righteously). We cannot singlehandedly heal racial divides. And though we can strive to be Christs in our families and our communities, we cannot convert the world.

But we can say our rosary. Like St. Dominic, we can retreat into a figurative forest of prayer each day, and emerge with our weapons in hand. We can hold up our beads, and we can never surrender.

Stayed tuned for more stories on the impact the rosary has had in the lives of Milwaukee Catholic moms.

Prayer which our great Captain taught us, and the Angelic Salutation which has chased away devils, destroyed sin and renewed the world?”

“The prayer is composed of words proceeding from God Himself, from the Archangel Gabriel, and from the Church,” writes Pope Leo XIII in “Octobri mensi,” one of his many encyclicals about the rosary. In the same encyclical, he beseeches the faithful to embrace anew this ancient devotion, “especially in the passage of difficult times.” Though it was promulgated in 1891, “Octobri mensi” speaks to a world that is not so unlike our own. The Pope writes of “a storm of evils” — specifically, the erosion of a sense of religion in the world, and Catholics who have grown lukewarm in their faith.



Soles Walk to Take Different Look This Year

**KAREN MAHONEY
SPECIAL TO THE CATHOLIC HERALD**

This year's Soles for Education Walk, the annual fundraiser for Catholic Schools in the Archdiocese of Milwaukee, is going virtual.

The fundraiser provides parish schools an opportunity to raise funds to benefit their classrooms and students. Each school sets its own goal for their needs, and determines how and where walkers will participate.

At St. John XXIII School in Port Washington, Principal Kristi Klein and Lauren Koch are walk captains and plan to have students walk Oct. 2 from their current campus to their former elementary campus, St. Mary's on the Hill, 1.6 miles away. Younger students will make a half loop — all will walk with their classes, socially distanced and wearing masks.

Students are required to have a minimum sponsorship of \$10. The school is also hosting out of uniform days and crazy sock days for \$1 each

"Each class will have a sign that says, 'Soles Walk – Walking to support Catholic Education at St. John XXIII.' When students return from the walk, they will enjoy an ice cream treat outdoors," said Koch. "Our goal is to minimally raise \$5,000 or more."

At St. Matthias, event captain Kaitlin Hahn said they are encouraging families to walk through their neighborhoods, and spread messages of kindness by saying hello to neighbors and leaving messages in chalk on the sidewalks.

"We are doing fundraising to give our students tools to help them in their virtual education," said Hahn. "We will be holding games, a virtual raffle/silent auction and decorating our hallways to raise funds and build community."

This year, Waukesha Catholic School System plans to walk in a socially



▲ Instead of participating at the Soles for Catholic Education Walk at Mount Mary University this year, students, staff and parents of St. John XXIII Parish School in Port Washington will walk through the community on Oct. 2. (Submitted photo)

distant manner on the Catholic Memorial track. According to captain Lisa Dietz, they are holding a trick-or-treat event for their Soles for Catholic Education Walk.

"The kids will be able to dress up in costumes if they wish. Participants are also offered the opportunity to walk in a different area of their choice, if they prefer," she said. "A flyer about the event is available to see on the Waukesha Catholic School System Facebook page if they want more information."

Like other schools, registration recently began, but Dietz said she is optimistic for good participation.

"We are hopeful that our school community will enjoy having a safe activity to participate in during this

challenging season," she said.

In Kenosha, All Saints School families are encouraged to "kick off" their Soles Walk on Oct. 17 in their neighborhoods, according to captain Sue Wendorf.

"Participants are asked to send in pictures of their walk. Then, the following week, students from 3K to eighth grade will be participating in the Soles Walk and will be walking during their gym class on Oct. 20-Oct. 22," she said. "We will have a route set up outside (weather permitting) for the students to walk. Having the walk during the school day will encourage full participation by all students and will show them the importance of walking for the benefit of their school."

Though the walk is normally held at

Mount Mary University in Milwaukee, facilitating it at All Saints will increase participation and hopefully increase funds for the school, explained Wendorf.

"We understand that we have to be sympathetic to families that may not be able to donate or are experiencing difficult financial situations due to COVID, yet we also know that there are many families and community members that are passionate about our school and are looking for an opportunity to give especially in times such as these," she said. "Finding that balance will be important."

St Gabriel School in Hubertus encourages families to consider the school's mile-long nature walk as a destination for the Soles Walk this year, said Principal Bridget Bartholomew.

"St. Gabriel has had an excellent track record of participation by our families; so we'll be encouraging all 100 of our families to register for the walk," she said. "We'll also take part in the 'Stuff the Bus' shoe collection to assist families in need. Our school theme this year is 'See Christ in Others, Be Christ for Others.' The Soles Walk and the shoe collection allow us to tangibly support each other in our school community and care for others in the larger community."

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Family

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