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OUR PIUS UPDATE February 9, 2021



DELIGHT IN UNEXPECTED GRACE

Bedtime in T-minus fifteen minutes. Per usual, my daughter's room was a mess. "Where do the trains go?" "Why are the doctor toys everywhere?" "Don't let your sister put that in her mouth!" Sounds from our daily cleanup scramble.

I pulled open a cupboard, just looking to cram a pile of books anywhere I could, and my eyes fell upon a single, solitary block. It was the fruit of a baby shower game nearly four years ago; guests had written messages and drew pictures on blank, wooden blocks. Simple as they are, those blocks are a real hit with both of my daughters.

Those particular blocks lived in a different room of the house, so I swapped it for my book pile and went to put it in my pocket. The handwriting, though, made me *pause*. *Love you, baby*, it read. *Nana and Pop Pop*.

It was penmanship I knew well – even scrawled across a tiny block – from years of birthday cards. I pursed my lips together, thoughtfully, glanced around the room. Is this a sign? Am I supposed to do something, see something, say something? What? My grandmother, whose handwriting that was, passed away last October.

I wonder how many people experience moments like this each and every day. You stumble upon a sudden reminder of a loved one – a photo tucked in an old book, a memory shaken loose by a scent or a turn of phrase, or maybe a message scrawled across a small, wooden block. The moment is so surprising, so unexpected, that we look up and around and assume the universe is trying to tell us something. We want that moment to mean something, to count for something, to help us do something.

That same temptation lurks in moments of consolation, moments when we can feel God holding us close; God's compassionate love feels so near to us. We can practically see the Holy Spirit hovering just beyond our reach. We want to thrust out our hand and grab it, grasping at the moment as though we can hold it forever, dissect it and analyze it and make it count.

We know, though, that we have to open our hands, loosen our grip and simply allow these moments of grace to wash over us. Allow that consolation to fortify you, encourage you, inspire you. That's just God loving us – loving you – and all you need to do is smile.

That's what I did, finally, after a long moment, holding that wooden block in my hand. It was an unexpected grace. A mountaintop moment, the embrace of the Divine. Perhaps, too, the embrace of a grandmother.

God delights in us. We're allowed to delight in God's delight, pure and simple. Chaotic as life is, there are times when that's all the moment calls for. We don't need to do anything more.

SOURCE: Eric Clayton,
Jesuits.org/Spirituality

IT'S NOT JUST YOU - PANDEMIC WALL



In recent weeks I have read several articles about people hitting the pandemic wall. Hitting the wall is an expression used by marathon runners and cyclists to describe a condition of sudden fatigue or loss of energy and feeling unable to continue.

Listed below you will find some the key points from . . .

It's Not Just You. A Lot Of Us Are Hitting A Pandemic Wall Right Now.

Huffington Post: Canada Wellness, February 5, 2021

- ★ In recent weeks, many people have been “slammed” with major pandemic fatigue. We’re burnt out. The arrival of vaccines has given us hope but challenges with its rollout, and our feelings of exhaustion and hopefulness are swallowing up any positive emotions.
- ★ We’ve been at this for a year now, and our fight-or-flight system — the emotional reaction to stress that has been otherwise energizing us throughout the pandemic — is totally overloaded. Feeling emotionally zapped, at this stage of the corona virus crisis, is very normal, mental health experts say.
- ★ If you find yourself stuck in a pandemic-fueled rut, first take a moment to pause and acknowledge your feelings. Go easy on yourself as you sit with these dismal emotions — the pandemic’s been brutal, and it’s time we all cut ourselves a break.
- ★ Our stress system has been over-activated. Typically, the brain and body calm down and rest once the stressor is removed. But this has not happened throughout the pandemic.
At this point, even little things that might not have bothered us before can get to us. These feelings build up and can become emotionally exhausting. (Amy Cirbus).
- ★ No clear end is in sight. Every measure or milestone we’ve reached — like the one-year mark of when we first heard about COVID-19 — makes us more aware of how long we’ve been enduring the pandemic and the uncertainty of how much longer it’ll last.(Jessica Gold)

How can we get through this period?

- ★ Many traditional outlets — the gym, a vacation, going out with friends, visiting family — aren't necessarily options right now. We have had to learn new ways of coping with everyday stress since our usual coping skills may not be working.
- ★ Identify the things stressing you out the most — maybe it's the news, a job, or toxic conversations with a friend — and make a plan to address them and set some healthy boundaries. From there, focus on one or two things a day that you can accomplish.
- ★ *"It's the accumulation of those small things over the course of time that are going to make a difference. They do add up,"* she said. Gradually, things will change and you'll eventually feel like you can walk through that wall again.
- ★ It might also be a good time to look for mental health resources that can help. *
- ★ Lastly, cut yourself some slack. No matter how the pandemic has disrupted your life, recognize that this is hard and that hitting a wall is a completely valid response to totally irregular circumstances.
- ★ *"Have compassion for yourself and don't belittle your feelings," "At a certain point, we'll all get through it."*

* ***The website of the Canadian Mental Health Association www.cmha.ca has some wonderful free resources and can also point you in the right direction for further help.***

You can reach the **Newfoundland and Labrador Division** at
website www.cmhanl.ca
e-mail office@cmhanl.ca
phone 753-8550

WORLD DAY OF THE SICK



This special day is held on February 11, the memorial of the Blessed Virgin of Lourdes. It draws special attention to the sick and to those who provide them with care and assistance both in healthcare institutions and within families and communities.

Archbishop Peter Hundt will be celebrating **Mass** on this **Thursday, February 11** at **9:00 am** at the Basilica. This Mass will be livestreamed.

ASH WEDNESDAY MASS



In light of today's update from the Department of Health, we are reviewing our plans for Ash Wednesday Mass. We will let you know of the necessary changes in our bulletin and parish webpage this coming weekend, of February 13 and 14, 2021.



OUR PARISH LENTEN MISSION

These weekly Lenten sessions are designed to help participants move closer to Jesus by praying with scriptures. **Fr. Earl Smith, SJ** and **Fr. Charlie Pottie, SJ**, both seasoned Jesuits and Ignatian spiritual guides, will lead the sessions and help participants to encounter Jesus through prayer forms such as reading of scriptures, reflection, Ignatian imaginative prayer, contemplations, and sharing. Each session will include a short instruction on prayer, reading and pondering scripture, guides imagination, and spiritual conversations. The sessions will focus on the following familiar scripture passages (Shared Common Lectionary for Lent, Year A):

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| 1. | Matthew 4:1-11 | The Temptations |
| 2. | Matthew 17:1-9 | Transfiguration |
| 3. | John 4:5-42 | The Samaritan Woman at the Well |
| 4. | John 9:1-41 | The Man Born Blind |
| 5. | John 11:1-45 | The Raising of Lazarus from the Dead |
| 6. | Matthew 21:1-11 | Jesus Entry to Jerusalem |

The online-sessions will be on **Thursdays** in **Lent**
February 18 and 25 and March 4, 11, 18, and 25 from 7:00 - 8:30 pm NST

If you are interested, contact our dedicated e-mail address experiencingprayer@queenscollegenl.ca . Also, please pass along this information and invitation to others who might be interested in this opportunity and spiritual Lenten journey.

