



Navigating Relationships during Challenging Times

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Navigating Relationships during Challenging Times:

The current realities of global pandemic and social unrest can be personally challenging as we enter the holiday season. We can find ourselves feeling a strain in our relationships: with our loved ones, within ourselves, and even with God. How do we navigate these important relationships during these difficult times? How can we lean on our faith to help us maintain healthy relationships? Join us for a conversation of how-to better care for our relationships going into this important season.

PRAYER

A PRAYER TO GET US STARTED:

Lord, sometimes “the spirit of fear” can dominate our lives. We place before you the self-doubt that questions if we have the necessary ability to deal with the pressures of life.

We embrace your grace that enables us to experience power, love and self-discipline to face the storms of life and navigate them in such a way that we are neither shipwrecked or drowned.

Help us, Lord, not to live small or to settle for routine because we underestimate you. With a heart filled with gratitude, we will live this day for you.

—The [Jesuit Prayer](#) Team

WHAT ARE WE FEELING TONIGHT?

A COUPLE OF QUESTIONS TO HELP CENTER OURSELVES:

1. What is weighing on your heart today? What concerns are you carrying?
2. Who are you thinking about today? Who are you thinking about?
3. Where is God in your life? Where do you experience God's presence? What are you saying / what do you want to say to God?

What we hope to cover

- ❖ Self-Care
- ❖ Relationships with Others
- ❖ The role of our Prayer Life in navigating relationships

Where are we?

- 2020...
 - COVID-19
 - Civil Unrest
 - Division in politics and church
 - Now entering the holiday season

Self-Care: the whole self

- Start by understanding where your fears, anxieties, worries come from – name them
- Naming trauma - something we all experienced this past year
- Acknowledge our losses
- “You can’t give what you don’t have.”
- Mental, physical, spiritual, emotional – each needs different means of care

Self-Care: the whole self

Young people are not meant to become discouraged; they are meant to dream great things, to seek vast horizons, to aim higher, to take on the world, to accept challenges and to offer the best of themselves to the building of something better. That is why I constantly urge young people not to let themselves be robbed of hope; to each of them I repeat: “Let no one despise your youth” ([1 Tim 4:12](#)). ([Christus Vivit 15, Pope Francis](#))

Q. What are you doing to take care of your well-being during this time?

What may you need to start doing to be healthy? Consider all aspects of your being: mental, emotional, spiritual, physical

Relationships with Others

- Strains in our relationships – physical and spiritual distance
- Acknowledging differences in opinions and beliefs
- The challenge of communication in the social media age
- Agreement is not necessary for relationship – but you must still CHOOSE relationships
- Dialogue is key in navigating our relationships
- “We should presume that those with whom we differ are acting in good faith.”
- [Principles of Dialogue](#), Catholic Common Ground Initiative

Relationships with Others

Some people attempt to flee from reality, taking refuge in their own little world; others react to it with destructive violence. Yet “between selfish indifference and violent protest there is always another possible option: that of dialogue. Dialogue between generations; dialogue among our people, for we are that people; readiness to give and receive, while remaining open to the truth.

([Fratelli Tutti 199, Pope Francis](#))

Q. Who do I need to be in relationship with during this time?

What relationships should I be investing time in?

What relationships are “life-giving” for me?

Where is there room for my life to dialogue with others?

Prayer in Navigating Relationships

- Prayer grounds us in our most important relationship – with God
- Our relationship with God impacts all our other relationships
 - It shapes how we see ourselves, which informs the way we treat others
 - “Love your neighbor as yourself.” – The Great Commandment
- Prayer allows us to bring our best into our other relationships
- Prayer should shape our decision making – Discernment

Prayer in Navigating Relationships

Discernment can be a great gift as we make decisions about our relationships that will have an affect on our relationships.

Such discernment, “even though it includes reason and prudence, goes beyond them, for it seeks a glimpse of that unique and mysterious plan that God has for each of us... It has to do with the meaning of my life before the Father who knows and loves me, and with the real purpose of my life, which nobody knows better than he”.

[\(Christus Vivit 280, Pope Francis\)](#)

So what are YOU discerning during this time?

So what are you discerning during this time?

- *Where and how do I celebrate the holidays safely?*
- *How do I interact with family and friends that I disagree with?*
- *What should I be doing with my life (jobs, vocations, school)?*
- *How do I balance my own needs with the needs of others?*
- *With so many things seemingly outside of my control, what decisions can I make?*

Prayer in Navigating Relationships

“Prayer in my opinion is nothing else than an intimate sharing between friends; it means taking time frequently to be alone with God who we know loves us.”

(St. Theresa of Avila)

Q. What is the state of my prayer life? What am I bringing to God in prayer?

Where do I go if I need help in my prayer life? To whom?

How am I depending on God to help me navigate my other relationships?

PRAYER

Prayer of St. Ignatius

Take, Lord, and receive all my liberty, my memory, my understanding and my entire will, all I have and call my own.

You have given all to me. To you, Lord, I return it.
Everything is yours; do with it what you will.
Give me only your love and grace, that is enough for me.

<https://jesuitprayer.org/prayers-card/prayer-of-st-ignatius/>

FOR CONTINUED CONVERSATION...

Thank you

for the conversation and for sharing this evening!

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