



GREAT ENDEAVORS MINED & SHARED

from an International Adult Faith Formation Best Practices Study

#132 – December 15, 2020

A Best Practice: Resources for Our Challenging Time (Part XII)

Since April, in addition to some of our themed issues and/or issues of specific best practices, we have done several issues to look at some resources for this time. Thus far, most of them have been related to these times of COVID and the challenge of working toward an anti-racist society:

- **GEMS #111-114, #116, #118, #119, #121, #126, #129 and #130** have looked at a variety of resources for parishes, faith formation, parents as well as prayer/music ideas and technology hints and suggestions related to these pandemic times.
- **GEMS #115** looked at some of the many resources available to help parishes and all parishioners (children, youth and adults) to study, pray and act for a society free from racism.

This issue is the twelfth one which continues to

- list some of the new resources to assist us during this pandemic time
- contain resources related to other realities of our time – necessities for adult faith formation

Some Practices, Resources and Reflections for Parishes

- [In-Person Church Attendance is Here to Stay \(But 5 ways it's changing in the future\)](#)
- [Mental Health and the Quarantine Holidays](#)
- [9 Fresh Approaches to Innovation that Can Change Everything](#)
- [Becoming/Continuing/Expanding](#)
- [One Mom's Perspective on "Real" vs "Home" Church](#)
- [7 Things that Vanished in 2020 that Make Leadership that Much Harder](#)
- [Gifts That Give: Better Than Santa](#)
- [2021 Church Leader Kit](#)
- [Leadership Feature: Practices of Wellbeing](#)

Gaudete

Because Christmas is almost here
Because dancing fits so well with music
Because inside baby clothes are miracles.

Gaudete

Because some people love you
Because of chocolate
Because pain does not last forever
Because Santa Claus is coming.

Gaudete

Because of laughter
Because there really are angels
Because your fingers fit your hands
Because forgiveness is yours for the asking

Because of children

Because of parents.

Gaudete

Because the blind see.

And the lame walk.

Gaudete

Because lepers are clean

And the deaf hear.

Gaudete

Because the dead will live again
And there is good news for the poor.

Gaudete

Because of Christmas

Because of Jesus

You rejoice.

Brad Reynolds, SJ

<https://www.americamagazine.org/issue/596/poem/gaudete>

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Resources for upcoming feasts/liturgical year

- [Advent Family Faith Resources](#)
- [Crèche Sharing Across the Miles](#)
- [Christmas Family Faith Resources](#)
- [Christmas Resources](#)
- [Christmas for Families](#)

- [Ideas from Ministry Leaders for Christmas During COVID](#)
- [Celebrating the 12 Days of Christmas](#)
- [A Daily Guide to 12 Days of Christmas Joy](#)
- [11+ Catholic Christmas Season Prayers & Activities for Catholics](#)
- [12 Days of Family Fun](#)

- [Intergenerational Epiphany With A “To Go” Bag](#)
- [Chalking the Door: An Epiphany Tradition](#)
- [Three Teaching Points for Epiphany](#)

Reflection Questions

What have you lost during the past year? What/who are you grieving? What do you mourn over?

What have you seen or experienced that has sustained you and given you joy over the past year? What is worth celebrating right now?

What has been renewed in you; something you rediscovered that you thought was gone? A beautiful surprise? A resurrected dream or voice?

~ Adapted from John Pavlovitz

Reflections for Pastoral Leaders/Faith Formation Leaders

- [Self-Compassion: The Antidote to Burnout and Fatigue](#)
- [Healthy Uncertainty](#)
- [Worry.... And Heart](#)
- [Leadership in Times of Change Resources for Faith](#)
- [Being Human in a Pandemic](#)
- [Ideas from Ministry Leaders for Christmas During COVID](#)
- [5 Ways Your Ministry Can Win After the COVID Disruption](#)

For Formation Leaders (children and youth programming)

- [Ideas from Ministry Leaders for Engaging Families](#)
- [Pivoting again: 4 decisions I am glad we made](#)
- [The Hands-On Gospel - 2021 Year B](#)
- [Bringing Home the Gospel - 2021 Year B](#) (Reflections for Parents on the Gospel Readings)

- [Questions of the Week for 2021](#)
- [Putting Parents at the Center of Our Ministry Movement](#)
- [Mike Carotta Offers Expert Advice on Confirmation Prep for Today](#)

- [Whole Family Sessions](#)
- [Study: Increasingly isolated youth connect to faith through relationship](#)

- [The Kids Are All Right](#)
- [5 Ways to Simplify and Encourage Families this Christmas](#)
- [Nurturing the Christian Life: The Essential Role of Parents – Insights from Research](#)

Resources for Faith Formation Leaders (adult faith formation)

- [Vatican II Course](#)
- [Social Justice Resources and Websites](#)
- [Fratelli Tutti Learning Bundle](#)

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- [Bringing *Fratelli Tutti* to your Community](#) (webinar with Bill Huebsch)
- [Weekly Justice Challenges - 2021 Year B](#)
- [Word of the Week - 2021](#)

- [The Sunday Flock - 2021 Year B](#) (Cartoons & questions for bulletins and social media)
- [Breaking Open the Word - 2021 Year B](#) (A Simple Two-Page Per Week Process)

- [The Gospel Stories of Jesus: Sunday Gospel Reflections for Year B](#)
- [Binge Reading the Gospel of Mark](#)

- [Questions of the Week for 2021](#)
- [Grieving the Death of Loved One](#)
- [How do RCIA teams plan for the signing of the senses in the Rite of Acceptance during the pandemic?](#)

- [RCIA blessings in the time of coronavirus](#)
- [The pandemic and three unspoken RCIA assumptions](#)
- [The symbolic importance of the RCIA dismissal](#)

Resources for Reflection and Prayer

- [Julian of Norwich: Wisdom for a Time of Pandemic and Beyond](#)
- [Online Retreats](#)
- [Prayer of the Day](#)

- [Cooking as a Spiritual Practice](#)
- [Spiritual Resources for the COVID-19 Pandemic](#)
- [A Coronavirus Prayer for this Weary Winter](#)
- [Heal Us Now](#)

Music

- [Come to Me](#)
- [You Do Not Walk Alone](#)
- [Morning Has Broken](#)
- [Lord, Come And Save Us](#)

- [One Small Star](#) (for those missing a loved one)
- [On The Day We Are Together Again](#)
- [Litany of the Word](#)

Prayer when Putting on a Mask

Loving God,

I wear this mask to protect others.

I offer you any discomfort it may bring me.

I pray for those who are ill today.

While my face is covered,
may my eyes look upon the world
with your love.

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Catholic Social Teaching

- [Weekly Justice Challenges - 2021 Year B](#)
- [16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence: Advocacy](#)
- [Day's life sets example for today's similarly troubled times](#)

Work toward Anti-Racism

- [Anti-Racist Resources](#)
- [Manhattan church maintains focus on diversity, anti-racism efforts](#)
- [Open Your Heart: A Spiritual Conversation on Race](#)

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The graphic features the Sanctus logo at the top right, a house icon with a fork and knife to its left, and the title "LOCKDOWN TOOL KIT" in large orange letters. Below the title are four orange boxes, each representing a neurotransmitter and its associated activities.

DOPAMINE
The Reward Chemical

- Completing a task
- Doing self-care activities
- Eating food
- Celebrating little wins

OXYTOCIN
The Love Hormone

- Playing with a dog
- Listen to music
- Do something nice for someone
- Give a compliment

SEROTONIN
The Mood Stabilizer

- Meditating
- Running
- Sun exposure
- Walk in nature
- Swimming
- Cycling

ENDORPHIN
The Pain Killer

- Laughter exercise
- Watch a comedy
- Dark chocolate
- Exercising

<https://sanctus.io/a-lockdown-mental-health-toolkit/>

Caring for our Common Home

- [Is your Christmas shopping hurting the planet?](#)
- [Praying for the Earth](#)
- [Poll finds majority of Catholics hold some concern about climate change](#)

Reaching out

- [Generosity: Helping Our Neighbor Flourish](#)
- [True charity calls for more than a parish toy drive](#)
- [Bearing One Another's Burdens](#)

- [Helping Others Can Help You Feel Better During the Pandemic](#)
- [Take the KIND Challenge: Knowing at least 6 neighbors can reduce loneliness](#)

Ideas and Suggestions for Families

- [Movie Reviews](#)
- [Practicing Generosity with Kids](#)
- [Family Gratitude Challenge That Will Transform Your 2020](#)
- [5 Ways to Practice Hospitality With Kids](#)
- [Get wrapped up in family traditions this Christmas](#)

Thoughts and Helps regarding the Use of Technology

- [Digital Citizenship](#)
- [3 Reasons for Information Exhaustion – and What to Do About It](#)
- [How to Engage your People Online: a 5 Step Digital Framework that Works](#)



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Suggestions and Reflections for All of Us

- [Facing Loss during COVID-19: How to Care for Your Whole Self](#)
- [Cultivating a Different Type of Hope This Year](#)
- [10 Ways Your Brain Reacts to Uncertain Times](#)
- [3 Keys to Unlocking the Normal in Abnormal Times](#)
- [Seven Ways to Nourish Your Spirit and Soul](#)
- [The Effects of Prolonged Stress: Taking Care of Yourself](#)
- [Relationships in a Pandemic: Building Resiliency During Unique Challenges](#)
- [Dealing with Loss and Grief in the Midst of a Pandemic](#)
- [10 Ways to Fight Loneliness This Winter](#)
- [When the Passion for Christmas Is Missing](#)
- [Preparing for Christmas in a Pandemic](#)
- [4 simple, kind ways to boost your mental health this winter](#)
- [How to Accept That Holiday Gatherings Are Canceled](#)
- [Ten Lessons for a Post-Pandemic World: An Interview with Fareed Zakaria](#)



“And the people stayed home.
And read books, and listened, and rested, and exercised,
and made art, and played games, and learned new ways of being,
and were still.
And listened more deeply. Some meditated, some prayed,
some danced. Some met their shadows.
And the people began to think differently.
"And the people healed. And, in the absence of people living in
ignorant, dangerous, mindless, and heartless ways,
the earth began to heal.
"And when the danger passed, and the people joined together
again, they grieved their losses, and made new choices, and
dreamed new images, and created new ways to live and heal
the earth fully, as they had been healed."
~Kitty O'Meara



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Past issues of **GEMS** are archived at
www.janetschaeffler.com

Additional ideas for Adult Faith Formation Planning and Best Practices can be found in:

- *Deepening Faith: Adult Faith Formation in the Parish*
<https://www.litpress.org/Products/4652/Deepening-Faith>
- *The Seasons of Adult Faith Formation*
http://www.lifelongfaith.com/store/p25/The_Seasons_of_Adult_Faith_Formation.html and <http://www.lifelongfaith.com/2015-adult-faith-formation-symposium.html>