

Suicide, Depression, and Mental Health

VIDEO LINK

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7JYkRe1sFsY>

GOAL SUMMARY

The goal of this session is to learn what the Catholic Church teaches about spirituality and mental health and what can be done if someone is suffering.

VIDEO SUMMARY

In this video, Libby and Kai talk about the Catholic Church's teaching on mental illness and what you can do if you find that you and others are struggling with it.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What are some types of mental illness?
2. Is mental illness physical or spiritual? How can we tell?
3. Can we "pray away" mental illness? How can we relate to Jesus in our suffering?
4. What should you do if you feel you are suffering from mental illness?
5. What are the three suggestions St. Ignatius of Loyola left us with? What is the fourth that the Church has added?

Additional questions can be found on the attached Catholic Central Activity Guide.

If teens ask for help, you can refer them to the [list of counselors in The Well](#).

SEND

O Father of mercies, God of all comfort and giver of life and health: Comfort and relieve those challenged by serious and chronic mental and emotional illnesses. Give your power of healing to those who minister to their needs, that they may be strengthened in their weakness and have confidence in your loving care, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Good Saint Dymphna, great wonderworker in every affliction of mind and body, I humbly implore your powerful intercession with Jesus through Mary, the Health of the Sick, in my present need. (*Mention it.*) Saint Dymphna, martyr of purity, patroness of those who suffer with nervous and mental afflictions, beloved child of Jesus and Mary, pray to Them for me and obtain my request.

(Pray one Our Father, one Hail Mary and one Glory Be.)

Saint Dymphna, Virgin and Martyr, pray for us.



Catholic Central Activity Guide

Episode 51: Mental Health and Spirituality

Diving Deeper

- ▶ Have you experienced mental illness personally, or do you know someone who has? (Mental illness refers to a wide range of disorders that affect how you feel, think, and act and interfere in the ability to cope with normal demands of life.)
- ▶ What can we learn from the lives of saints who struggled with mental illness, such as St. Teresa of Calcutta (Mother Teresa), St. Ignatius of Loyola, or St. John of the Cross? How did their suffering affect their compassion for others?
- ▶ When a friend comes to you with concerns about mental illness, how can you help him or her? Why is saying “Cheer up,” “Just get over it,” or “Don’t worry about it,” unhelpful in conversations about depression?

Go Forth

- ▶ In the United States, nearly one in five adults lives with a mental illness. Every person is impacted by mental illness, either personally or through a friend or family member.
- ▶ If you find that you struggle with depression, anxiety, or other forms of mental illness, what are some things that you can do or seek out in order to feel better? These can include professional treatment, support from family and friends, and spiritual practices that will help your relationship with God grow.
- ▶ It can be hard to know how to help yourself, friends, or family that struggle with mental illness. Have you tried things in the past that didn’t work or weren’t helpful? Write them down, along with the reason why you think they didn’t work. Make a third column with other ideas of what you can do in the future if the same situations arise.



Resources

- ▶ [National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1-800-273-8255](https://www.suicidalifeline.org/)
- ▶ [Crisis Text Line: Text HELLO to 741741](https://www.crisistextline.com/)
- ▶ [Mayo Clinic: Supporting a family member or friend with Depression](https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/depression/expert-answers/supporting-a-family-member-or-friend-with-depression/faq-2020)
- ▶ [Pope Benedict XVI: Message on Mental Health for the 14th World Day of the Sick](https://www.vatican.va/holy_father_benedict_xvi/messages/messages_synops_20110522_01_en.html)

