

Correspondence

Psychospiritual care for parents during the COVID-19 pandemic

ABSTRACT

In a recent article, energy poverty increases the likelihood of depression in parents. The authors responded that this situation must be given attention because parental well-being can influence child development and outcomes. With this, we propose, in this paper, that an avenue that can be done is by providing a psychospiritual care for parents especially during the COVID-19 pandemic in which anxieties among family members arise.

Keywords psychospiritual, parents, children, COVID-19

The family, as a social institution, is not safe from social changes. One of the issues that social changes engendered is the problem of energy poverty. In a recent article, energy poverty increases the likelihood of depression in parents wherein the authors responded that this situation must be given attention because parental well-being can influence child development and outcomes.¹ Understanding this situation, we propose, in this paper, that an avenue that can be done is by providing a psychospiritual program for parents especially during the COVID-19 pandemic wherein there are increased reports of depression and anxieties among family members.²

In the concluding part of the 1981 Apostolic Exhortation *Familiaris Consortio*, Pope John Paul II states that the future of humanity passes by way of the family.³ Hence, the family should be safeguarded at all times especially in these challenging times. True enough, the family is faced with many challenges. One of the pressing issues that the family needs to cope with is the COVID-19 pandemic. Just like energy poverty, the COVID-19 pandemic has brought massive effects especially in the mental health of families. According to a study, parents of young children are the most vulnerable to these effects.⁴ It shows that the parent's risk factors for mental health during the COVID-19 pandemic are caused by anxiety, depression and stress. Thus, it is important to look into the parents' mental health because it would greatly affect the condition of the family.

Cultivating the inner values of an individual can lead to wealth, success and a healthy individual.⁴ This is why prioritizing the well-being of parents is an important part in parenthood. The challenges given by the COVID-19 pandemic are not typical for parents. The emotional suffering of being locked down and the financial problems that adds to this situation is unbearable. The feeling of hopelessness in the midst of a pandemic is a crisis that needs to be given attention. Understanding this situation, we suggest that we must respond to that challenge by providing a psychospiritual program for parents and children that may arise in the family members. This psychospiritual care is their vessel through which to provide God's calming presence⁵ and at the same time their companion in asking and sharing their difficulties in this pandemic.⁶ Providing a psychospiritual program can help parents in addressing their existential questions that could help them in these trying times. This program can be in collaboration between healthcare institutions and the Catholic Church, or the diocese, wherein they can give online seminars, talks, counselling and other activities. These programs will become instruments in giving them opportunity to share their struggles in this time of pandemic.

Apart from the energy poverty cited in the journal we corresponded, the COVID-19 pandemic surprised every aspect of our life including financial, emotional and spiritual. Everyone is affected, but most specifically the well-being of the

family. With this, psychospiritual care for parents during the COVID-19 pandemic is essential in helping them to cope up with their responsibility in nurturing their children and thrive amidst the pandemic.

Acknowledgement

No funding was received from this paper.

Conflict of interest

None declared.

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doi: [10.1093/pubmed/fdab064](https://doi.org/10.1093/pubmed/fdab064)