

Care and Prayer: Getting through the Holidays (even if you're NOT getting married)

Have patience with all the world, but first of all with yourself. — Francis de Sales

By the time some of you read this, Eyleen and I will have been married and taken off for our wedding trip. We'll return just in time for Thanksgiving. The phrase "holiday stress" will take on new meaning for us this year, because weddings, like other holy occasions, are full of both joy and stress.

In his book *How Will I Get Through the Holidays?: 12 Ideas for Those Whose Loved One Has Died*, **James Miller** shares some wisdom for all of us who are trying to cope with this time of year, even if we have not gotten married or lost a loved one. It's "that most wonderful time of the year," when expectations can easily exceed what is realistic.

I shared this paragraph with you last year, but it bears repeating. Here's part of what Miller says about his Idea # 7 ("Be gentle with yourself."):

*One of the best things you can do is treat yourself lovingly.
The holiday season has stresses and demands all its own. .
.Give yourself plenty of time to rest. Avoid committing to
doing more than you have the physical and psychological
energy to handle. Accept invitations that feel right and
kindly and decline those that don't. Let people know that
just because you choose to forgo their offer today doesn't
mean you'll do the same next time.*

As the holidays come and the weather turns colder, an old song comes to mind. Let me paraphrase it and invite you in the weeks ahead to "button up your overcoat when the wind blows free; take good care of yourself, you belong to...many people - and to God."

— Peace, Tom Momberg