

## **Mental Health Care and the Holidays**

**Submitted by Kim Smith, Guardian Angels Catholic Church**

December can be a stressful month! A mental health challenge. Grief, anxiety and depression can be a part of daily life for many in our Church community. It does not mean that they don't have faith, or they don't want to be happy...it means that they struggle.

Here are some ideas that you might use to help support a friend or a loved one throughout daily life and especially during the holiday season.

- Offer to listen, listening is a precious gift, and some people just simply need to tell someone their story.
- Keep it simple-time and company are great gifts-invite a neighbor or friend over for a cup of tea and cookies or offer to take the tea and cookies to their house. It might be too hard for them to leave their home that day, but they'd love the company.
- Keep gifts simple. The gift of homemade muffins or cookies or going for a walk on a sunny day might be the best gift you can give someone who is struggling.
- Perhaps you play a board game or cards together.
- You can offer to pray together.
- Remember crying is healthy, and tears can be very healing.
- Laughing is ok! Sharing a good memory, a good comedy show can be just what the heart needs!

Merry Christmas  from your Health Ministry