

Living well through Advent

Week One

Thursday 1 December 2022

*Fear Of Missing Out
(FOMO)*

Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.

Philippians 4:6

Whether or not you are familiar with the term FOMO (fear of missing out), you are likely familiar with the uncomfortable feeling it describes. While the experience is not new, the term only entered our vocabulary when the use of social media increased.

Spending too much time on social media can catalyse painful feelings that we are missing out on all the good things and all the good times that others seem to be having. Because people tend to share only the happy highlights of their lives on social media, it is easy to get a misguided idea that we are missing out on so much, which can lead to feelings of FOMO.

Even if we don't spend time on social media, fear of missing out is a common experience during the holiday season. It can be tempting to think that everyone else's families and holiday celebrations are perfect, and that we are the only ones whose lives and families are full of normal human frailties. Feelings of FOMO may cause us to try to do even more in an attempt to create a seemingly more ideal life—the exact opposite of our focus in this devotional on simplicity. Maintaining a focus on gratitude, as we learnt about yesterday, is the perfect antidote for the feelings of FOMO.

When we have such feelings, we are wise to deal with them through prayer and gratitude, as the passage above from Philippians makes clear. The very next verse that follows tells us why: *“And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus” (Philippians 4:7).*

Answer these questions to deal with feeling of FOMO

- ◆ Do you struggle with feelings of FOMO?
- ◆ Are you experiencing these feelings right now around the holidays?
- ◆ How might focusing on prayer and gratitude give you more of the “peace which surpasses all understanding”?

Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.