

Dear Padre,

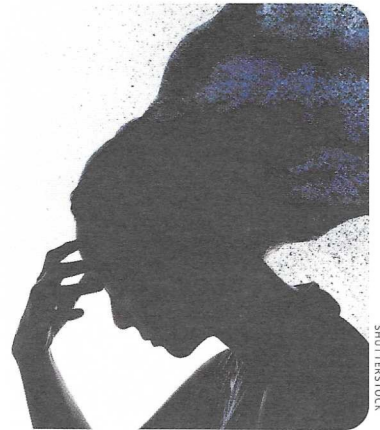
I struggle with depression, and sometimes it gets really bad during the holidays. When is it morally acceptable to use antidepressant medication?

You are not alone. People who struggle with depression often find the holidays especially difficult. To answer your question, it is morally acceptable to use antidepressant medications when a medical professional judges them to be the best response to the condition of the patient. As we learn more about the causes of depression and other disorders that challenge the sense of equilibrium in people, we hope that the most reliable responses may be found and employed to restore a sense of peace to those suffering from these ailments.

Evaluation and treatment of depression must be done within the context of a person's whole life. Depression often involves a chemical imbalance in the brain, and some people respond quite well to antidepressants. For others, the best treatment might be counseling or psychotherapy. Or both medicine and therapy. As each experience of suffering is unique, so, too, must be the response.

Frequently people will be embarrassed to admit to suffering with depression or consider it a sign of weakness or inability to deal with matters in life. Such thinking is of little help in resolving the issue. People who experience depression need the love and support of family and friends to accompany them in the suffering and to assist in their healing. ●

From Life, Death, and Catholic Medical Choices: 50 Questions from the Pews, © 2011 Liguori Publications



SHUTTERSTOCK

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
December 12 <i>Our Lady of Guadalupe</i> Zec 2:14-17 or Rv 11:19a; 12:1-6a, 10ab Lk 1:26-38 or Lk 1:39-47	December 13 <i>St. Lucy, Virgin and Martyr</i> Zep 3:1-2, 9-13 Mt 21:28-32	December 14 <i>St. John of the Cross, Priest and Doctor of the Church</i> Is 45:6c-8, 18, 21c-25 Lk 7:18b-23	December 15 <i>Advent Weekday</i> Is 54:1-10 Lk 7:24-30	December 16 <i>Advent Weekday</i> Is 56:1-3a, 6-8 Jn 5:33-36	December 17 <i>Advent Weekday</i> Gn 49:2, 8-10 Mt 1:1-17	December 18 <i>Fourth Sunday of Advent</i> Is 7:10-14 Rom 1:1-7 Mt 1:18-24



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A WORD FROM POPE FRANCIS

Every yes to God gives rise to stories of salvation for us and for others. Like Mary with her own yes. In this Advent journey, God wishes to visit us and awaits our yes. Let's think: Today, what yes must I say to God?

ANGELUS, DECEMBER 8, 2016