

HEALTH STORY AT CHRISTMAS

December is also known as the month of reflection. We look back at our achievements, missed opportunities, and failed resolutions formulated at the beginning of the year. 2020 has been an unusual year; our lives were disrupted by an unknown virus, COVID-19, affecting our daily functioning. We were consumed by feelings of sorrow, fear, and pain. Some of us even experienced the loss of loved ones. It was and still is a time of such awful turmoil.

Reflecting on the year, I realized how much I depended on my faith in God to navigate through so much uncertainty. I also noticed that the world turned to God as well for resolution and healing during the pandemic. The love for God is essential to our health. He is the great Caretaker of the human body and we must cooperate with Him. Our spirituality keeps us balanced and allows for self-growth with fitness of the mind, body, and soul. "Don't you realize that your body is the temple of

the Holy Spirit, who lives in you?" (1 Corinthians 6:19, NLT). The misuse of our body impedes communion with God. When the body is sick, the mind is distraught. "By allowing ourselves to form wrong habits, by keeping late hours, by gratifying appetite at the expense of health, we lay the foundation for feebleness. By neglecting physical exercise, by overworking mind or body, we unbalance the nervous system."* With our bad practices, we become unfit to educate others on the benefits of good health habits and ultimately deny them the privilege of knowing God, and that is sad and unjust.

Putting the year 2020 in perspective, in the midst of a pandemic, how was your pathway to a healthy lifestyle affected? Were you able to choose behaviors leading to wellness? Maybe you have experienced the loss of a loved one, or an illness. Perhaps you were affected by the virus yourself. Maybe you felt depressed and anxious due to this sudden

interruption. If life has knocked you down this year, whatever the circumstances, I hope that you were able to contact your primary care physician, consult with a psychologist or connect with a friend or a church member to talk with and pray.

Let's evoke the year 2020 on a more positive note, trying to turn the rough experience into something constructive and positive. Our knowledge of a healthy life style did improve. For example, we learned the techniques to proper handwashing, coughing, wearing masks, and the importance of physical distancing in social gatherings, to help prevent and control the spread of Corona Virus as per the Center of Disease Control (CDC). We were also reminded to choose intentional behaviors that will lead to wellness, such as the importance of sleep, proper nutrition to boost our immune system, exercise, a positive attitude or outlook toward ourselves and life in general, and a constant state of gratitude and trust in God.