

Reflections

Our mental health during Covid-19

ACCORDING to the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control, there has so far been half a million deaths and 10-million people infected with Covid-19 globally. The recent statistics indicate the downward slope of the pandemic's peak in the UK, with a total of 43,575 deaths, behind the USA and Brazil which sadly still have increasing infections and death toll.

Many in the mental health

profession, including myself, have observed how the Covid-19 information aired in the mass media can bring momentary relief with news about clinical trials and vaccine trial attempts, but leave the viewers in a prolonged panic and/or depression, especially when hearing about the rapid increase of infection and death toll. In spite of the 17,000 fines for lockdown breaches issued by the police, people are still flocking to beaches in their thousands. This indicates the

difficulty in managing the prolonged panic, loneliness, worry and depression in comparison to suffering from the virus itself.

We seem to be resorting to unhealthy coping mechanisms. Research carried out by Kings College, London reveals that nearly a third of the British public is drinking more alcohol during this pandemic than usual. Alcohol fuels mental health issues, including aggression and violence. The UN reports a 20% increase in domestic abuse and calls this a

'shadow pandemic' alongside Covid-19. Although our police in the UK seem to be coping with the stress of the pandemic relatively well, the reports of police brutality throughout the world are shocking. The killing of George Floyd in the USA and the custodial torture and death of a father and son, Jayaraj and Fenix, by the Indian police, are two of the examples of disproportionate response fuelled generally by mental disorder.

Many of those who have

tuned into our online Zoom Masses have expressed how comforting psychologically it is to be part of the interactive services. We have a backcloth with a virtual tour of the wonders of the world, which I consider to be a very healthy coping strategy at this time in the pandemic. You are most welcome to tune into our Zoom; details at www.stbonifacechurch.co.uk

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