

# 'We're Worried Now, But We Won't Be Worried Long'

Every morning the news from overnight events persuades us to pull up the covers and dive back into bed, even though we won't be comfortable because we have yet to make that needed first trip to the bathroom.

Many don't even need the first news reports of the radio or television or newspapers. Instead, family crises and financial worries compete for immediate and complete attention.

Why do we put ourselves through this regular and torturous ritual? Because we have responsibilities and worries. Parents want to make sure their children have advantages they did not enjoy growing up. Children have peer pressures to either resist or overcome. Seniors have the aches, pains and worries that seem to be unfair rewards of aging, only sometimes overcome by the joys of an extended family — and the concerns that devolve from worrying about that next generation.

Families, health, jobs and economics make for personal worries. They dictate our behavior by requiring us to make plans for negative unknowables. But typically there are actions we can take to address some of our worries:

■ Even for those without much money or property, making a will reduces the worry for the next generation. It does not have to serve as an unpleasant reminder of our own mortality or lack of a Rockefeller-sized estate to pass on.

■ Scheduling and keeping health care appointments when young and following medical advice can remove some health

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## Charitably Speaking



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worries. It's sad to consider that some people have to balance the costs of food or medicine to sustain a comfortable living or life itself.

■ As difficult as non-stop campaigning has

become, listening to candidates and voting keeps the system alive even when not sharing individual agendas. Doing so without cynicism after repeated failures to keep promises to minorities, the poor or the oppressed should spur us to more not less involvement.

■ Working beyond a normal retirement age can help some maintain a particular lifestyle and survive on more than Social Security. We can also work with dedication and good humor to maintain human contact irrespective of whether retirement or employment is the chosen option.

Without adopting *Mad Magazine's* Alfred

E. Neuman's mantra of "What, me worry?" to the extreme, we can also look at the opportunities to serve our communities. That includes contributions of time and ideas, or of helping our favorite humanitarian agency best fulfill our religious or social commitments.

*Spoiler alert:* Catholic Charities' principles,

programs and advocacy will remain focused on service to the poor and marginalized. We can make a difference by relieving some of the worry and burden that others carry just to survive.

For every program we offer or consider, those will remain our priorities. Through service, one day, perhaps, we can sing the old Kingston Trio song, "We're worried now, but we won't be worried long."

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I remember the story of the old man who said on his deathbed that he had had a lot of trouble in his life, most of which never happened.'

— Winston Churchill

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