



FAITH: A *FRESH TAKE*



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CNS/PAUL HARING

Children walk outside the Lutheran cathedral as they prepare to meet Pope Francis in Lund, Sweden, Oct. 31. The pope is making a two-day visit to Sweden to attend events marking the 500th anniversary of the Protestant Reformation.

Make the Most of Weekends

There's an ancient song from the 1980s with the lyric, "Everybody's working for the weekend." If there ever were a better example of truth in art, I can't think of it.



Whether you work Monday to Friday; or Wednesday to Monday; or a random schedule where you often forget whether it's day or night, the one truth that binds us all is the desire to look ahead to moments when we won't be working.

Unfortunately, for many of us, the weekend comes and goes, and we look back and wonder what happened to the plans we had to fill that time. In many cases, those visions of fun and idyllic splendor are replaced with a reality that's nothing more than a bleak emptiness of could've and should've.

In reality, weekends and weekdays have a symbiotic relationship. Your success during one directly impacts your success during the other.

In many ways, weekdays are easier. You're successful if you go to work on time, work hard and earn money in order to afford your life. By the time the weekend arrives, all you want to do is sleep in, do nothing and spend money to have fun.

If you do that, your weekend will always overwhelm your weekdays and you'll return to work more tired than when you left, nothing more than an empty shell always looking ahead to a weekend that's never more than five days away.

How do you break that cycle? How do you have fun, productive weekends that motivate and inspire you to reach increasing levels of success during the week?

As a starting point, learn lessons from your weekday schedule and apply them to the weekend.

No matter the job or the salary, successful people go to work with a plan. If you're a successful business person, that plan may include constantly re-evaluating what you need to do to

reach your goals. For a factory worker, the plan may include a desire to find efficiencies to improve production.

In both cases, having a plan is more important than the plan itself.

So, what should your weekend plan include? Begin with a promise: You'll sleep more than on a weekday, but not so much that the entire weekend disappears behind your eyes.

Sleep in. But then, get up and get moving.

Include your family in your plans in ways that you can't include them during the week. When you're working late on Thursday evening, text messages of love and support may be appropriate. On the weekend, they're unacceptable.

Take time to discover that spending time with your family doesn't have to mean spending money on your family. Go out and do something, or stay in and do something. Just do something.

No one's favorite memory is that time they saw a special text for the first time.

In everything you do, weekday or weekend, enjoy yourself. At work, joy comes when you feel accomplished in your job and ready to move on to the next challenge. During the weekend, joy comes when you can escape thoughts of work to create the memories necessary to fill your fuel tank of inspiration, becoming ready to move on to the next week.

Finally, the most important of your weekend plans: Find time for yourself where you don't have to do anything.

When you accomplish all that and the weekend is over, you'll be tired, but it will be a good tired. In that moment when you're recharged, use the energy found through your new, unforgettable memories to motivate and inspire yourself to an increasing level of success. Take time to prepare your plan for the week ahead.

After all, a weekend is never more than five days away.

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— Erick Rommel

(This column is part of the CNS columns.)

The Homesick Mother

Dropping my first-born off at college was one of the most emotional experiences I have ever had to endure.



While I was concerned about how my daughter would cope, what I have realized during her first month away is that I am homesick, while she is not.

Although it may sound odd to be homesick when I'm standing in my home right now, the empty nest and the memories of the noise in my home makes me emotional and just downright sad. I miss the sound of the blow dryer in the morning. I miss the sound of my daughter banging on her brother's wall to tell him to turn down his video game volume. I miss the way she used to open up the refrigerator stocked full only to proclaim that we had "nothing to eat."

I miss the way it used to be when my house was full of her entire dance team practicing in the garage and the empty water bottles that littered the house long after they left. I miss the nights when I stayed up praying she would make it home safely from a school activity or work.

I even miss our morning quarrels that were inevitable before either one of us had a cup of coffee. And, I miss the pile of wet towels on her bedroom floor that I would gripe about and pick up each morning.

Most of all, I miss having a child who needed to be nurtured, encouraged, cared for and disciplined.

She isn't homesick. In fact, she is finding a happy balance between a full course load, a social life on campus and learning to live on her own with a roommate she met a month ago. She is registering for her second semester, making plans to travel abroad and lining up opportunities to volunteer in the local community as a dance instructor.

As a mother, I am so proud of her efforts and happy that she isn't curled up in a little ball in her tiny dorm room crying because she misses home. As a mother, too, a selfish part of me wanted her to miss this place just a little bit.

Just when I think that she has completely moved on, though, I get a call and she says she misses me ... and needs money. It may not have been exactly what I prayed for, but it is something. I'll take it.

***WHAT'S NEW:** I am part of an exciting new venture with the launch of *The Single Mom's Playbook*, an online parenting resource for single moms. If you would like to contribute to the site, offering expert input or guest posts, please contact me at shphilpott@gmail.com. 'Like' us on Facebook ([facebook.com/singlemomplaybook](https://www.facebook.com/singlemomplaybook) <<http://facebook.com/singlemomplaybook>>) or 'follow' us on Twitter at @momplaybook.

— Shannon Philpott

Shannon Philpott is a freelance writer and college journalism instructor, but most of all a mother of two teens. You can see her work at www.shannonphilpott.com.



CNS/DAVE HRBACEK, The Catholic Spirit

Christelle Hagen, center, a parishioner of St. Michael Catholic Church in Stillwater, Minn., works on baby clothing in late August with her daughter, Emilie-Rose, left, and mother, Marilyn Kallio. Tiny Treasures provides hats for babies as young as 14 weeks' gestation and up to 6 months old who have died. The ministry was started by Hagen in 2013 to help support grieving families.

Fresh Take: a way to look at faith from a different perspective

This is an online-only page dedicated to young adult Catholics, their interests, their needs, their challenges and their faith.

We want to give young adults something to "chew on," to think about when they're looking for something more than an on-line horoscope or the

latest star news.

This page offers columns we believe will interest our young adults. Let us know.

Email us at cathnews@bellevillemessenger.org with questions, suggestions or for more information.

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