Francis, the comic strip
Pope Francis in a Nov. 3, 2021 a video message  (CNS screenshot/Vatican Media)

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People experiencing depression often need someone to talk to, and they can benefit from psychological counseling and reading what Jesus has to say, Pope Francis said.

"Let us pray that people who suffer from depression or burnout will find support and a light that opens them up to life," the pope said.

In a video message released by the Pope's Worldwide Prayer Network Nov. 3, the pope offered his prayer intention for the month of November, which he dedicated to people experiencing depression. November and the start of shorter and colder days for the Northern Hemisphere sometimes trigger "seasonal affective disorder" and depressive symptoms, according to many medical experts.

In his video message, the pope said, "Overwork and work-related stress cause many people to experience extreme exhaustion — mental, emotional, affective and physical exhaustion."

"Sadness, apathy and spiritual tiredness end up dominating the lives of people, who are overloaded due to the rhythm of life today," he added.

The pope said, "Let us try to be close to those who are exhausted, to those who are desperate, without hope."

"Often, we should just simply listen in silence because we cannot go and tell someone, 'No, life's not like that. Listen to me, I'll give you the solution.' There's no solution," he said.

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"And besides, let us not forget that, along with the indispensable psychological counseling, which is useful and effective, Jesus' words also help," he said, such as, "Come to me, all you who labor and are burdened, and I will give you rest" (Mt 11:28).

Pope Francis has spoken candidly in interviews about his own mental health.

He found help from a psychiatrist for how to manage his anxiety and "to avoid rushing when making decisions" when he was a priest in Argentina during the dictatorship, he has said. The stress and anxiety built as he was secretly taking people into hiding to get them out of the country and save their lives, he has said.

"I had to deal with situations I didn't know how to deal with," he recalled.