

A view from the Rectory Window – Do not worry!

When composing these articles, I usually try and be thematic, based on the time/season of the year, or a liturgical event/festival being celebrated. However, for this month I am going to focus on the words of Matthew's gospel chapter 6 verse 25 'therefore do not worry about your life.' The passage was a set reading for a Sunday in February, but as the scripture has such a profound and significant relevance and impact, I wanted to share it with you all.

Let me begin by stressing that anxiousness, dis – ease, and concern when faced with difficult, dangerous, or frightening situations is a normal human reaction. A part of our need as creatures to adopt the 'fight or flight syndrome'. And I am sure Jesus was not asking people of faith to be devoid of all the natural anxiety that the experience of living a human life brings, However, if we look at the definition of the word 'worry' it is more than anxiety or concern, it is **a persistent focus on potential negative outcomes. Or, to put it in simpler terms it is thinking the worst possible outcome of any given situation.**

So, the question that follows from the meaning of the word worry, and the prevalence of 'worrying' among so many people of all ages, is as follows. How does being a Christian and following the words of Jesus, help us avoid the focus on potential negative outcomes, and find instead a sense of peace, trust, and hope alongside our natural human concern and anxiety?

There are two ways that faith allows us to find peace and trust within the unease of our anxiety. Firstly, it is the knowledge and belief that there is always divine love, the Holy Spirit, and the truth of God's Word in all situations. That, always and in all places God is present. Working through his creation, and the cooperation of people who put into practice his love, compassion, and care. Therefore, however difficult or dangerous things are we can know there is always a holy strength, a divine power and a love of God that is able to work on our behalf. So, that in prayer and grace we can entrust those we are concerned for to our father's love.

Secondly, being a Christian allows us to, putting it clearly and simply, know that even if our worst fears are realized, that is not the end of the story. Even if our potential negative outcomes are realized in some shape or form, it is not the end. There is nothing in God's creation that is wasted, there is nothing that God has created that is uncreated. Because as a Christian we know that God created life and life is loving, good and eternal. Hence, when anxious focus on the positive message of Jesus, and find peace and trust, in all things and in all the changing scenes of life.

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