

8th Sunday Ordinary Time A 2017
February 25
Frazee/Callaway

Homily

If you are worried about something, it's usually not helpful for someone to tell you to stop worrying.

- If you have cancer it would be insulting for someone to say, "Oh, don't worry about that."
- If you have teenage and adult children who struggle to make good decisions, naturally you worry.
- If you have an elderly parent, living alone with precarious health, you do worry
- If you have a big test on Monday you will worry about it Sunday night or all weekend

In the gospel Jesus encourages us. He says, "Don't worry about your life.." How is that possible?

In his letter from St. Paul, we learn that the Philippians worried about all the things we worry about *and more*. They had to worry about faith itself and the fact that simply being a Christian could be reason enough to be hunted and killed. For the Philippians St. Paul's solution to all their worry was prayer. It sounds too simple doesn't it? In fact to pray is a simple thing. It is hardly different than children talking to their daddy.

We can take everything to God in prayer. There is nothing too great for God's power, and nothing too small for God's fatherly care. Parents, when you are at your best this is how God is with us all the time! When you are at your best you listen to your children. And anything they bring to you, great or small, you receive with immense interest—and you are not pretending. You are truly interested. From triumphs and disappointments to cuts and bruises parents care about everything that happens in the life of the child. We may, in just the same way, take anything to God, assured of God's interest and concern.

We can bring our prayers, our petitions and our requests to God; we can pray for ourselves. We can pray for forgiveness for the past, for the things we need in the present, and for help and guidance for the future. We can take our own past and present and future into the presence of God. We can pray for others. We can commend to God's care those near and far who are within our memories and our hearts.

As Lent approaches we are ever more conscious of our commitment to daily prayer. I am reminded that thanksgiving must be a portion of every prayer. We must give thanks in everything, in sorrows and in joys alike. There is never a moment in life in which there is not something for which to give thanks even if it be only the opportunity for prayer itself.

When we pray it is good to remember three things. We must remember the love of God—in love God desires only what is best for us. We must remember the wisdom of God—in God's wisdom God alone knows what is best for us. We must remember the power of God—in His power God, alone can bring to pass that which is best for us.

If these things are true—if they are really true—than how can we worry about anything?

I conclude with the words of Jesus, "Your heavenly Father knows [what you need]. But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be given you besides. Don't worry about tomorrow; tomorrow will take care of itself.