

- If we allow ourselves to we can spend our entire life worrying. Think about it.
- When we are young we can worry about school, taking tests, how we look and our popularity. When we get a little older we can worry about what college to go to, what job to take, our relationships, money. And when we get even older we can worry about our health, our children and the list goes on....
- Last week when news came that our churches were reopening many of us started to worry. We worried whether it was safe to be in the church building; we worried about keeping the proper distance from each other; we worried that some of us would not wear face masks; we even worried about receiving Holy Communion !!!
- If we want to, we can fill a whole lifetime – there is never shortage of things we can worry about. Like it or not, being human means we will always have a tendency to worry.
- Worry frustrates us; it can be exhausting. It impacts our relationship with others; with God. It stops us from being who we were made to be, who we really are.
- Wouldn't it be great if Jesus came into the Church today and talked to us about our worries? Gave us advice and encouragement – taught us how not to worry?? He just did. In the Gospel we just read.
- In today's Gospel passage we see that Jesus knows we have a tendency to worry. He knew what his first followers back then were worried about and He knows what we, His followers, are worried about today.
- Jesus assures us we can ask God to help us to stop being preoccupied with fear and worry. The issue or problem may still be there but we can ask for the help to look at the problem differently and not be confused or overwhelmed by worry. We can ask God to show us *how* to proceed
- And if we listen closely, in prayer, Jesus *will* speak to us – about that job, that bill, that illness, that relationship that worries us.
- He will help us get back to church, get back to our community. He will assure us it is *Him* in that Holy Eucharist we may be hesitating

to receive. He will give us advice and courage. It may start with something as simple as wearing a face-mask in church for a while.

- Each one of us knows the particular thing the Lord would speak to us about because we know our personal worries - and so does He!
- In our Gospel today, Jesus challenges those first followers and each of us, to stop worrying and put our trust in God.
- He tells us God is madly in love with us, He cares for us, thinks about us. In our Gospel Jesus reassures us we have tremendous value in God's eyes – God knows us so intimately that “all the hairs on our head are counted”. How great is that!!
- Finally, Jesus tells us in today's Gospel to replace fear and worry with something else – being preoccupied with “acknowledging Him before others”. That starts inwardly, in our hearts and then outwardly by acting upon Jesus' command to love God and love each other.
- Acknowledging Jesus before others involves how we live our lives every day. How we show our faith to others – how we bring God's love to them.
- It involves the work we choose to do, how we spend our free time, the words and tone we use when speaking to others (are we always angry or complaining – or do we speak kindly, do we bring peace and calmness to our workplace, our school, our homes).
- Bringing God's love into the world may be challenging, inconvenient and even difficult at times. Jesus urges us in today's Gospel to keep at it.
- He tells us never be afraid. Never think the smallest act of love is unimportant or goes un-noticed by God. It's all important.
- God watches over even the smallest of sparrows and He knows every hair on our head. What a great comfort to know God cares for us, counts on us and is always close by.

God bless you.