



Worry is a great light-extinguisher. Nothing snuffs out the light of faith quite so fast as worry. While it is natural to worry, it is not healthy to be ruled by worry. We should instead be people of the light. Where do you find the light of Christ shining brightest? This week, focus on that ray of light, wherever it may be, whenever you find yourself about to drown in worry.

Adult to Small Child

Read: [Luke 12:22](#).

Reflect: Jesus said to his disciples, “Do not worry about your life.” Though some parents worry more than others, it seems to me that worry and parenting are like peanut butter and jelly: they go together! We can all learn to worry less, and yet the command “do not worry” is easier said than done. The first step in learning to worry less is to be kind to oneself. After all, if one worries about worrying, it defeats the point! Another way to keep worries at bay is to remember Jesus’ words, “Tomorrow has enough worries of its own.” When we focus on the present moment we are unable to give attention to the burdens of the past or the anxieties of the future.

Respond: Mindfulness in the here and now. Pick a time throughout the day (or perhaps several times) to stop and notice what is around you. More mundane and common moments offer opportunities to stay anchored that can otherwise slip right past. Breathe deep and notice the smells, sights, tastes, sounds and textures all around you. Give thanks to God for each moment. In time you will find that worry and being present are incompatible.

Adult to Elementary Child

Read: [Luke 13:16-21](#).

Reflect: The disciples in Luke’s gospel rather famously don’t “get it.” Jesus is always having to explain things to them. What is the kingdom of God like? How does it grow and how does it spread? The kingdom of God, Jesus tells us, grows like this: from the tiniest seed, into a flourishing tree where birds can build their nests. The kingdom of God is like yeast mixed into flour from which bread dough is made, and the whole loaf rises and becomes something delicious and nourishing. God’s kingdom grows and spreads every day in countless small acts of kindness and generosity. Whenever you help a friend or a stranger, you are part of this work of helping to bring about the kingdom of God.

Respond: See what yeast does to dough *and* help God’s kingdom grow by following this simple recipe to make two loaves of bread, one for dinner and one to share with a neighbor: <https://www.kingarthurflour.com/recipes/hearth-bread-recipe>

Adult to Youth or Young Adult

Read: Luke 11:33-36.

Reflect: Luke 11:33-36 is a familiar passage. Chances are, as you read it, you began to sing in your head, “This little light of mine, I’m gonna let it shine!” Jesus reminds us to care for and honor the light inside each of us that we can share with the world. It’s a common practice for parents to leave a light on on the porch or in the entryway of the house if you will be coming home after dark. Have you ever come home at night and your parent forgot to turn that light on? Do you recognize your house? Does something feel unusual? Light is powerful: it can do everything from sanitize to bleach to burn. It produces sunsets and rainbows and shimmering water. Most often, though, it’s there to allow us to see everyday things: a doorknob so we can enter, a stray item on the floor so we don’t trip, what’s left in the fridge late at night. While we do the looking and seeing, the light is what facilitates that ability.

Respond: Talk about ways God is helping you see things in new ways this Lent. What new doorways or hazards are being enlightened in your life? Then, find the light in your home that is the late-night one, the one that gets left on for after-hours arrivals. Place tape or a sticker on the switch plate in the shape of a cross, and every time you turn it on or off, say a quick breath prayer asking God to enlighten you in this Lenten journey.

Adult to Adult

Read: Luke 11:33-36.

Reflect and Respond: Gather with your family at the dinner table. Beginning with the person on your right, name out loud one word that describes your own eyes. Keep it fun and refrain from negative speech against your body, the temple of God. Remember to be creative. Use words that honor God’s craftsmanship. Have each family member write down on a sheet of paper each of the words spoken. Once all the words have been spoken and written, each family member may write a poem using those words. There are no rules to writing this poetry, only that you write the truth in kindness. Give yourselves a total of 10 minutes to write your poems. Spend your time discussing and celebrating one another through an oral tradition. Read the poems aloud to one another. Discuss what brings light and love to life. Save each of your poems as heirlooms in honor of what is good about the eyes of one another. How can you extend this challenge in your community?

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