

# **Don't Worry, Be Happy.**

**By Father John Catoir, JCD- 9/23/18**

**With Hurricane Florence, the Tariff wars, and life in general, we've all had a lot to worry about in the past few months. I thought a return to the wisdom of Bobby McFerrin might be of help. Remember his little ditty from 1989? "Don't worry, be happy. Every life will have some trouble, but when you worry you make it double."**

**Is this kind of advice unrealistic, or is it a reasonable form of folk wisdom? After all there is a grain of truth in it. By focusing on our fears, we put them on center stage, and keep looking at them. Focus on God's love more. We can we take the words of Jesus seriously when He says, "Be not anxious." Therefore, focus more on the words of Jesus. Even though we may not be able to control our fears completely, but we can control our thinking. The thoughts we allow ourselves to think have a powerful influence on the way we feel.**

**For instance, when we think we're in danger, we feel dread and anguish, but when we think there is no danger we feel safe and sound. If child is reassured that there is no monster lurking under the under the bed, she is reassured and can safely go to sleep. The way you decide to look at life, matters. Admittedly, there are times when serious anguish takes over and fear becomes terribly distressing. When a spouse is dying, or a child is hooked on drugs, or a romance is breaking apart, words seldom bring relief. Sometimes even the words of Jesus cannot penetrate the depth of a person's sorrow.**

**Often, we turn to our faith in God as our last resort. God is last great hope of the human spirit. We turn to prayer because we know instinctively that prayer has worked wonders in the lives of untold millions. St. Paul urged us to pray without ceasing. How is that possible? St. Augustine has some much-needed wisdom to help us answer that question: "The constancy of your desire (for a cure, or a restoration peace, etc.) will itself be the ceaseless voice of your prayer. Your worry itself takes the form of prayer. The desires of your heart, all become your ceaseless prayer before the face of merciful God, who listens to His beloved children with love."**

**So, from St. Augustine's perspective, worry isn't a terrible thing at all, nor a waste. He's telling us that worry is a human, normal part of life. True, we all need relief from unrelenting fear and suffering, but we still have the power to smile through it all, and even to forgive ourselves for not trusting enough.**

**If a song like: "Don't Worry, Be Happy" helps you diffuse the pain, then sing it often. If the anxiety persists, decide to be happy anyway. Make believe your prayer is being answered. Time heals all wounds; and this too will pass. Believe that you have a good chance of having your ceaseless prayers answered by your merciful Father. But in the meantime, carry your cross with courage. Be like Christ, who humbly submitted to His cross. Be assured that He will give you the strength to bear it.**

**May the Lord not only be your strength, but also your joy as you persevere through the trials and tribulations of life.**