



ST. MARY CHURCH
OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION



stj ST. JOHN VIANNEY
CATHOLIC CHURCH

Catholic Atheist

WEEK 3 - March 8 - March 14, 2026

A Disciple Believes . . . WE NEED NOT WORRY!

This is the third week of our Catholic “Atheist” tour! Last week, we explored the times we say we believe in God, but do not pray and the barriers that may keep us from praying: all of which we might overcome by simply admitting what keeps us from prayer and asking for God’s help to pray more often and more consistently. This week, we will consider how our tendency to worry can make us seem that we do not believe in God.

OPENING PRAYER

Heavenly Father, thank You for loving us the way that You do. Forgive us for the times that we do not think or act as though we believe in Your unwavering love and, therefore, do not pray as we’d like to.

We truly want to be Your disciples, disciples who are confident of Your love and Your presence in our lives, who pray regularly with joy ... and who avoid worrying.

We ask You to help us on this journey to become true Believers, full disciples who fulfill Your will. We ask this through Your Son, Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

INSIGHTS FROM WEEKEND’S READINGS

[CLICK HERE TO READ THIS WEEKEND’S READINGS](#)

- First Reading: [Exodus 17:3-7](#)
- Second Reading: [Romans 5:1-2, 5-8](#)
- Responsorial: [Psalm 95:1-2, 6-7, 8-9](#)
- Gospel Reading: [John 4:5-42](#)

Our anxieties about life – whether about family, finances, work, or the future – often reveal a small doubt that God is truly taking care of us. They can also reflect a belief that we must control everything in our lives ourselves.

In our first reading, the Israelites were anxious about their future. They worried that leaving Egypt might have been the wrong decision and feared they would die of hunger and thirst. Their worries caused them to focus on themselves and, at times, to doubt God’s presence— God provides water from the rock, reminding us that even in moments of anxiety and doubt, God is already caring for our needs.

In the Gospel, Jesus meets the Samaritan woman in her worries and longings and offers her living water. He shows that when we place our trust in Him, our deepest fears and anxieties are replaced with lasting peace.

Learning from the Israelites and the Samaritan woman, we can take a different path: we can lift our concerns to God in prayer, trusting that He will guide our steps and provide solutions beyond what we can imagine.

A true disciple knows that worry is unnecessary. By praying often and regularly, and by trusting in God’s love, a disciple grows closer to Him and experiences the true freedom that knowing that God loves us and we can trust in His goodness.

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION AND DIALOGUE

Take some time to reflect on this week's message and discuss with your group:

1. When worry starts to creep in, what is usually your first reaction or coping mechanism?
2. Can you identify a past experience where handing your worries to God brought peace? What did that look like?
3. In Romans 5:5: *"The love of God has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit"*, how does knowing that God loves you so much—even in your weakness—help you let go of a worry and trust Him this week?
4. What's one practical step you could take this week to release a worry instead of carrying it alone?
5. Do you allow God's peace to be with you? Are there ever times you "give away your peace to things of this world" (news, social media, worry)? How can you "let" peace be with you?
6. How can this group support you in trusting God more with your burdens?

SCRIPTURE FOR MEDITATION

"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls" **Matthew 11:28-30**

"Cast all your worries upon him because he cares for you." **1 Peter 5:7**

Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to your life? **Luke 12:25**

"Peace I leave you, my peace I give to you." **John 14:27**

PRAY

- Join us this week for Stations of the Cross on Fridays (6pm at SMIC, 7pm at SJV)
- Pray the Surrender Pray by Fr. Dolindo Ruotolo- "O Jesus, I surrender myself to You; take care of everything."
- Spend an extra few minutes each day in prayer asking for deeper trust.

ACT

- The next time you find yourself worrying, consider that worry as a signal that you need to draw closer to God. Immediately take your concern to God in prayer.
- Mark your calendar - Receive God's love, mercy, and forgiveness at the Parish Reconciliation Liturgy (Priests from our Diocese are invited to hear your confession) on March 16 (St. John Vianney) & March 24 (St. Mary)

INSPIRE

- Invite a friend to the Lenten Hike & Mass 3/14. Bring your intentions with you.
- Share an encouraging bible verse with someone you know who is worried or anxious.
- Be a source of peace to those in your family, friends and those you encounter this week.

INTERCESSIONS FOR THE GROUP

Take some time to pray together for the persons or people on the Hearts of your small group members.

CLOSING PRAYER

Heavenly Father — thank You for this time together as a small group. You know the worries each of us carries. We place them now into Your hands.

Jesus, You invite us in the Gospel of Matthew to come to You when we are burdened. Help us to trust You more and worry less. Fill our hearts with Your peace this week.

Holy Spirit, remind us to turn every anxiety into prayer.
We ask this in Jesus' name. **Amen.**