

*“If you set your heart on God and reach out to Him, if you scrub your hands of sin and refuse to entertain evil in your home, you’ll be able to face the world unashamed and keep a firm grip on life, guiltless and fearless. You’ll forget your troubles, they’ll be like old, faded photographs. Your world will be washed in sunshine, every shadow dispersed by dayspring.”*

*--Job 11:13-17 the Message*

The other day I was sitting in the church gazebo at Albright watching a robin feeding the young in her nest. I had a million troubles running in my mind, worries about the church's finances, how we can reach out to young families and get connected with youth and children ministries. I was worried about Bev's recovery from her surgery as well as those who are in nursing homes and rehabilitation homes. And I was praying for guidance and direction, missing that what God wanted to teach me was happening right in front of me. The little robins were being tended by their mother. And if God would care for the birds of the air, how much more would he care about me and all of you. (Check out Jesus' Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 6:26)

St. Ambros once compared his congregation to fish swimming in a stormy sea, he said: “Be fish!” Instead of being swamped by our troubles, learn to navigate through them. Instead of carrying our burdens and troubles, give them to God and keep moving ahead knowing that he will help you care for each one in turn.

There is the story of two Japanese monks, Tazan and Ekido, who were walking on a muddy road in a pouring rain. As they came around a bend in the road, they saw a very beautiful girl in a silk kimono, unable to cross the intersection. ‘Come on girl’, said Tazan at once. He picked the girl up in his arms and carried her over the mud. Ekido did not speak to Tazan again until they reached the temple. Then he scolded Tazan saying, ‘we monks don’t go near females, especially not young beautiful ones. It is dangerous. Why did you do that?’ ‘I left the girl there’, said Tazan. ‘Are you still carrying her?’”

We must learn to place our cares at the cross as we move through life. Each of our experiences and situations should help to educate us and allow us to grow in our faith. As Jesus tells us, “Can any one of you by worrying add a single hour to your life?” . . .” Therefore, do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.” (Matthew 6:27 and 34)

*Take care of each other and I'll see yinz Sunday,*

*Pastor Steve*