



FATHER RANDY OFFERS

“Learning the Secret to True Peace”

For these four weeks, the Church has been walking with Saint Paul through his Letter to the Philippians. It is often called the “Epistle of Joy,” which is remarkable when we remember where Paul is writing from: prison.

Paul is confined. His future is uncertain. He cannot control the guards around him, his circumstances, or even how his story will end. And yet his words are filled with joy, peace, confidence, and hope.

How is that possible?

Paul has learned something we all need to learn again and again: our circumstances do not have to control our hearts.

That is why I keep returning to this simple line:

The Christian heart is formed by the biblical mind.

Paul is teaching us how to see life through the eyes of faith.

The first week, the question was:
What is the purpose of my life?

It is easy to build our lives around comfort, success, possessions, family, health, or happiness. These are good gifts, but they cannot be the deepest foundation of our lives. For Paul, the answer is simple: My life is for Christ.

Whether life is long or short, easy or difficult, whether I have much or little, my life still has meaning if it is offered for the glory of Jesus.

The second week, Paul invited us to “humbly regard others as more important than yourselves.” He asks us to have the mind and attitude of Christ.

I suggested one simple question that could change almost every relationship:

What can I do to help?

It turns our attention away from ourselves and toward another. But the question matters only if we act upon the answer. Humility notices a need, steps forward, and serves. Imagine what could happen in a marriage, family, classroom, workplace, or parish if that became our first question.

Now, in the third week, Paul speaks directly to the anxieties we carry: **“Have no anxiety at all.”**

That can sound unrealistic—until we remember he is writing from prison. Paul does not have a stress-free life. He has something better: peace in the middle of stress.

Perhaps we can remember his advice with one word:
CALM.

C — Call on God. Bring everything to prayer.

A — Always give thanks. Gratitude reminds us how much God has already given us.

L — Let go. Some burdens were never meant to be carried alone.

M — Mind the good. Think about whatever is true, honorable, just, pure, lovely, gracious, and worthy of praise.

What we continually place before our minds eventually settles into our hearts.

The anxious mind asks, “What if?”

The self-centered mind asks, “What do I want?”

The Christian mind learns to say, “Christ is enough.”

Paul’s prison did not give him peace. Christ did.

And Christ can give us that same peace today.

The Christian heart is formed by the biblical mind.

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Rev. Randy J. Timmerman, D.Min

RECIPE FOR A STRESS - FREE LIFE

5 Ingredients

- 1 - worry about nothing***
- 1 - pray about everything***
- 1 - thank God in advance***
- 1 - think good things***
- 1 - be content with God's providence***

Recipe

Each ingredient is required and no substitutions can be added, altered or adjusted. Combine all ingredients together and you will savor the gift of a "stress-free life."

Phil. 4:4-8

BONUS

If you do these things
"then the peace of God that surpasses all understanding will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus."

Phil. 7

