

Daily Devotional, March 15, 2021 No More Than We Can Bear

Blessed is the one who perseveres under trial because, having stood the test, that person will receive the crown of life that the Lord has promised to those who love him. When tempted, no one should say, "God is tempting me." For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone; James 1:12-13 (NIV)

I have lost count of how many times recently I have heard people say, "The Lord doesn't give you any more than you can handle." Admittedly, there are many of us feeling that sense of weight on our shoulders, that feeling of being overwhelmed. We are weighted down by the daily news, by the isolation. We are overwhelmed with worry for our loved ones, friends, and neighbors. As for ourselves, we are struggling and just trying to make it through the day, with many of you trying to work and teach your children at the same time.

I do believe that God gives us courage and strength and wisdom in times such as these so that we are able to bear much and help others. I don't believe God is piling things on each of us to see how much we can take before we come tumbling down. For God doesn't ever tempt us in this way.

So how do we stay strong and courageous and keep our spirits up while we are socially isolating? How are we not tempted into despair and worry? How do we cope? How do we keep our piles from tumbling over?

I recently came across an article online, written by someone named Brooke Anderson, that suggested 6 Daily Quarantine Questions, to ask yourself each day. I share it with you today as I believe it is a great way to keep our minds and bodies healthy and keep our spirits from being tempted so that we might be able to keep our piles from tumbling over. I share these questions here and add an additional seventh question:

Daily Quarantine Questions:

1. What am I GRATEFUL for today?
2. Who am I CHECKING IN ON or CONNECTING WITH today?
3. What expectations of "normal" am I LETTING GO OF today?
4. How am I GETTING OUTSIDE today?
5. How am I MOVING MY BODY today?
6. What beauty am I either CREATING, CULTIVATING OR LETTING IN today?
7. How am I TURNING TO GOD IN WORD AND PRAYER today?

These questions, when asked daily, focus our energy in a different direction with a hopeful perspective, so that we may prepare ourselves to receive and reflect God's gifts. They help us to cope and to notice the way God continues to lift our burdens.

In the book of James, we read that blessed are those who endure temptation, but that "God cannot be tempted by evil and He Himself tempts no one" (1:13). The Good News this Easter season is that God is not stacking blocks on us to see how much we can handle, in fact He is offering to carry our weighted load for us.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, I can no longer make it alone in this world. Lord, I need you each and every second, and every hour of my life. Continue to walk beside me and mold me as I strive to become a better and stronger person in You. Guide my actions, my thoughts, my words, my deeds. Allow me not to yield to temptation. In Your most Holy Name, O Lor Amen