



# Fireflies in the Dark



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In the town of Willow Creek, nighttime arrived quickly and quietly. The sun slipped behind the hills, porch lights flickered on, and families hurried indoors. The children didn't like the dark very much. "It feels like the whole town goes to sleep at once," Lily said one evening.

That night, Grandpa invited the children into his old red barn. He climbed a ladder and pulled down a dusty glass jar. Inside were tiny bugs with wings like lace. "These are special fireflies," Grandpa said. "They're very shy, but they shine even more when someone prays."

The children laughed. "Bugs don't listen to prayers," Max said.

Grandpa smiled and whispered, "Thank You, God, for my family." At once, one firefly shimmered softly. Then another blinked on, like a tiny star. Soon, the jar glowed with gentle light.

Each child took a turn. Lily prayed for her grandmother, who was sick. A warm yellow glow appeared. Max prayed for help, being patient with his little sister. A bright greenish light joined the others. The more they prayed, the brighter the jar became.

"Jesus said we are the light of the world," Grandpa explained. "Prayer helps God's love shine through us, the way these special fireflies shine through the dark."

*Growing in Prayer with Jesus Series; Inspired by Matthew 5:13-16 – Salt and Light.*

The next day, Grandpa carefully placed these special fireflies into small jars and let the children share them around town. One jar went to the neighbor who lived alone. Another went to the bakery, where the workers prayed together before opening. Wherever these fireflies went, kindness followed. People lingered to talk. Smiles lasted longer. The dark didn't feel so heavy anymore.

After a few days, something surprising happened. Even when fireflies weren't around, Willow Creek felt brighter. Neighbors helped carry groceries. Children invited others to play. People whispered prayers without even thinking about it.

The children ran back to Grandpa. "The fireflies aren't glowing as much," Lily said, worried.

Grandpa looked out over the town and chuckled softly. "That's because you've learned the secret," he said. "You don't need the fireflies anymore. You've learned how to shine on your own."

That night, as the children walked home under the stars, Willow Creek didn't seem dark at all. Prayer had filled their hearts with light, and once light lives inside you, it's meant to be shared.



**The Institute for Catholic Formation**  
Diocese of Bridgeport