

19. June 2021

“Carefree in the Love of God”

Mt 6:24-34

'No one can be the slave of two masters: he will either hate the first and love the second, or be attached to the first and despise the second. You cannot be the slave both of God and of money. That is why I am telling you not to worry about your life and what you are to eat, nor about your body and what you are to wear. Surely life is more than food, and the body more than clothing! Look at the birds in the sky. They do not sow or reap or gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not worth much more than they are? Can any of you, however much you worry, add one single cubit to your span of life? And why worry about clothing? Think of the flowers growing in the fields; they never have to work or spin; yet I assure you that not even Solomon in all his royal robes was clothed like one of these. Now if that is how God clothes the wild flowers growing in the field which are there today and thrown into the furnace tomorrow, will he not much more look after you, you who have so little faith? So do not worry; do not say, "What are we to eat? What are we to drink? What are we to wear?" It is the gentiles who set their hearts on all these things. Your heavenly Father knows you need them all. Set your hearts on his kingdom first, and on God's saving justice, and all these other things will be given you as well. So do not worry about tomorrow: tomorrow will take care of itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.'

First of all, the Lord calls us to store up treasures in heaven; treasures that are not perishable, but remain forever. Everything we do in the love of God is imperishable: every deed, every gesture, every word that the Spirit of the Lord teaches us remains for eternity. If we read, for example, the Sermon on the Mount, we will discover many examples of how we can store up treasures in heaven.

But this is not limited to isolated good works, but goes beyond that. Indeed, we no longer do good works only in view of the treasures we store up in heaven by doing them - although this is a legitimate motivation - but with every good deed we do at the prompting of the Holy Spirit, our heart is anchored in heaven, in God. The Lord Himself is our greatest treasure, and in Him our heart dwells (*cf. Mt 6:21*).

Another wonderful indication that the Lord gives us today is the carefree way in which we can live. It is not a matter of living “lightly”, nor of carelessness, nor of a

merely natural optimism; rather, it is a carefreeness that arises from the knowledge of the goodness of our Father, who takes care of our life. If God cares even for His irrational creatures, how much more will He care for men, whom He has called to be His children!

If we follow this advice and assimilate it in our hearts, it can make a deep impression on us. God wants to take away our fear and constant worry, and instead lead us to a great trust in Him. In fact, He wants us to begin to trust God, or to start trusting Him again, since the original relationship of trust between man and his Creator has been distorted since the fall into original sin. How disfigured the image of God has become! And how often Jesus, by His works and words, tries to reawaken in us trust in the Father!

What a beautiful comparison the Lord uses to make us understand how natural it is for God's love to take care of us: *“Look at the birds in the sky. They do not sow or reap or gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them.”*

Now then: how can our trust in God grow? Certainly trust is also a matter of the heart; and not only of the will. But it is also important to make the decision with the will: “I want to trust God!”

To strengthen our trust, it can help us to meditate on words like those we heard in today's Gospel, which lead us to know God better and better, making love for Him grow in us. Thus, by interiorising His words, we learn to discover God's presence more and more.

Moreover, we should meditate with gratitude on how many times in our lives the Lord has protected us, how He has guided our steps, and with how much love He always surrounds us. For this, it is logically necessary to focus our gaze on the good things, leaving aside any attitude of reproach towards God and towards life. Gratitude is the key to recognising God's love! The more grateful we become, even for the smallest things, the more our love and trust in Him will grow.

Of course we can also ask God to increase our trust. Whenever we perceive a lack of trust in ourselves, let us specifically call upon the Holy Spirit, asking Him to give us trust in God for that situation.

Finally, let us look to the Lord's teaching about the things that truly deserve our concern and our seeking: *“Set your hearts on his kingdom first, and on God's saving justice, and all these other things will be given you as well.”*

If our heart and our will are focused on concern for the Kingdom of God, we will be able to live much more carefree, because we will be focused on the essentials and we will know that God, in His goodness, will give us everything we need for this life, and often even in overabundance!