

31. January 2026

“Don Bosco and trust”

Phil 4:4–9

Reading for the Memorial of St. John Bosco

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. Let all men know your forbearance. The Lord is at hand. Have no anxiety about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which passes all understanding, will keep your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is gracious, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. What you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, do; and the God of peace will be with you.

The carefree attitude that St. Paul exhorts us to in this reading fits perfectly with the story of the saint whom the Church honors on this day.

St. John Bosco, priest and founder, dedicated his life especially to the abandoned youth of Turin. He sought to help them through positive and preventive education based on faith. When he was only nine years old, he had a dream in which his vocation was revealed to him: he saw a crowd of children loitering and swearing in a courtyard. When he wanted to rush in among them to silence them, a man of noble appearance and luminous face told him to stand in front of the group of boys and said, “Not with blows, but with gentleness and charity, you must win them as friends.”

When he objected that what he was being asked to do was impossible, the man gave him a majestic-looking woman—the Virgin Mary—as his teacher. She showed him in his vision how, instead of the crowd of boys, all kinds of animals now appeared: lions, dogs, cats, bears, and other animals, which then turned into lambs that played and danced joyfully around the noble man and woman. When little John Bosco burst into tears and asked for an explanation, the woman said to him, “In time, you will understand everything.”

Indeed, the time came when Don Bosco understood, just as the Virgin had assured him in his dream. In building his work in the service of youth, he placed all his trust in

Divine Providence, thus putting into practice the words of today's reading: *"Have no anxiety about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God."*

This verse reminds us of that passage in the Gospel where Jesus speaks to his disciples about the holy carefreeness in which they should live: *"Do not be anxious about your life, what you shall eat, nor about your body, what you shall put on. For life is more than food, and the body more than clothing. Consider the lilies, how they grow; they neither toil nor spin; yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. But if God so clothes the grass which is alive in the field today and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, how much more will he clothe you, O men of little faith!"* (Luke 12:22–23, 27–28).

We see, then, that carefreeness is a key concept for life with God. When we put it into practice, it gives us a security grounded in trust in God and the strength to accomplish even the greatest works. This was the case with St. John Bosco.

Carefreeness, which should not be confused with negligence or simple human optimism, always goes hand in hand with concern for the Kingdom of God. We could put it this way: if we take care of God's things, He will take care of giving us everything we need for our life and ministry. Don Bosco can certainly attest to this. With great confidence, he took on the work that God had entrusted to him, abandoning himself to Him in all things. In this way, he becomes an example for us to carry out with confidence all the tasks that the Lord entrusts to us. The life of today's saint and the words of Scripture serve as inspiration for us.

The Lord wants to bring us into intimate communion with Him, in which we can firmly count on His care and love. From this communion springs the joy of which today's reading speaks.

Joy in God and because of God becomes an inexhaustible source that floods us and can also reach others through us. St. John Bosco, who was known for his joy, expressed it this way: *"The best thing we can do in this world is to do good, be joyful, and let the sparrows sing."*

Thus, we are invited to put our faith into practice in concrete love, thereby cooperating in the expansion of the Kingdom of God. Every day presents us with opportunities to do so. In this way, we can grow in confidence and acquire this carefree attitude.

But we must also recognize when we are overwhelmed by unnecessary worries, when we

are too anxious to have everything under control and fail to pay attention to God's plans for us and the paths He opens for us. Unnecessary worries cause us to live in inner tension. They rob us of the simplicity and agility of faith that come from true joy.

"Cast all your anxieties on him, for he cares about you" (1 Peter 5:7). Let us put these words into practice. God is waiting for you!