Saturday of the Eleventh Week in Ordinary Time

Gospel text (*Mt* 6:24-34): Jesus said to his disciples: “No one can serve two masters. He will either hate one and love the other, or be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon. “Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink, or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing? Look at the birds in the sky; they do not sow or reap, they gather nothing into barns, yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are not you more important than they? Can any of you by worrying add a single moment to your life-span?

Why are you anxious about clothes? Learn from the way the wild flowers grow. They do not work or spin. But I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was clothed like one of them. If God so clothes the grass of the field, which grows today and is thrown into the oven tomorrow, will he not much more provide for you, O you of little faith? So do not worry and say, ‘What are we to eat?’ or ‘What are we to drink?’ or ‘What are we to wear?’ All these things the pagans seek. Your heavenly Father knows that you need them all. But seek first the Kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be given you besides. Do not worry about tomorrow; tomorrow will take care of itself. Sufficient for a day is its own evil.”

“Seek first the Kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be given you besides”

Fr. Jacques PHILIPPE
(Cordes sur Ciel, France)

Today, the Gospel clearly speaks of living the "present moment": not to keep thinking about yesterday, but abandon yourself to God and His mercy. Not to torture yourself about tomorrow, but to entrust it all to His Providence. Saint Therese of the Child Jesus said: “the spirit of self-abandonment is my sole guide – I have no other compass!”

Preoccupation has never solved any problem. What solves problems is confidence, faith. Jesus says “If God so clothes the grass of the field, which grows today and is thrown into the oven tomorrow, will he not much more provide for you, O you of little faith?” (Mt 6:30).

Life per-se is not too problematic; it is man who lacks in faith... Existence is not always easy, it can be stressful at times; we frequently feel injured and shocked by what happens in our life or in that of others.

But let us face it with faith and let us try to live, day by day, by trusting God will fulfill His promises. Faith will lead us to salvation.

“Do not worry about tomorrow; tomorrow will take care of itself. Sufficient for a day is its own evil.” (Mt 6:34). What does that mean? Today, try to live fair life, according to the logic of the Kingdom, with trust, simplicity and abandonment, seeking God. And God will take care of everything else...

Live day by day, it is very important. What wears us down so often are all those comebacks to the past and our fear of the future; whereas, when we just live in the present moment, we mysteriously find the strength. What I have to live today, I have God’s grace to live it. If tomorrow I must deal with more difficult situations, God will increase His grace. God's grace is given at the moment, day by day. Living the present moment means to accept weaknesses: to renounce redoing the past or dominating the future, being happy with the present.

Thoughts on Today's Gospel

- “Hence because we are born for the present and reborn for the future, let us not give ourselves up to temporal goods, but to eternal.” (Saint Leo the Great)

- ‘No, no, no more than one child, no! Because then we can't go on vacation, we can't go here, we can't buy a house’, ‘It is all fine and good to follow Jesus but only to a certain point’. Well-being prevent us from moving forward, it takes our courage to follow Jesus closely.” (Francis)

- “The Lord grieves over the rich, because they find their consolation in the abundance of goods. ‘Let the proud seek and love earthly kingdoms, but blessed are the poor in spirit for theirs is the Kingdom of heaven’ (Saint Augustine). Abandonment to the providence of the Father in heaven frees us from anxiety about tomorrow (...)" (Catechism of the Catholic Church, Nº 2547)

Other comments

”Do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink... Do not worry about tomorrow”

Fr. Carles ELÍAS i Cao
(Barcelona, Spain)

Today, Jesus tells us: “You cannot serve God and mammon” (Mt 6:24). With these words He confronts us with our own uncertainty, which we try to alleviate by leaning on the conviction that we have, not only what we need, but also what we want, which, in turn, leads us into consumerism and waste.

“Let the avaricious hear these words; let the Christian who thinks he can serve both Christ and money, hear them too. For, He did not say: he who has riches but he who serves riches; nor he who is enslaved by riches and keeps them like a slave; but he who has cast off the yoke of slavery and distributes his wealth in a lordly manner” (St Jerome).

Today, as in the beatitudes —or in the key passage of the new commandment (Jn 13:34-35)—, the Lord urges us to settle for an unlimited confidence in the Father, who offers Himself to us as the Divine Providence, for our quest for the Kingdom of justice, peace and joy, and for a true simplicity of our soul, that turns round, time and again, “with inexpressible groanings” (Rm 8:26), to the Only One who can fill to the brim our longing for plenitude and eternity. While conscious of the temporality of our existence, through our own self-denial, we must be certain of our desire to follow the Christ.

Seeking God's forgiveness for past sins and throwing away any fears and worries for a future yet to come, Jesus invites us to live the present day, which is the only thing we can be more or less sure of. And this “today” is given to us as our daily bread. “We only own the present, while the hope for the future is uncertain (...). Each day has enough trouble of his own. So why worry about?” (St. Gregory of Nyssa).