

XV Trinity 2020

Sermon – Saint Joseph Parish

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Galatians 6.11-18 St. Matthew 6.24-34

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Jesus tells us we shouldn't worry so much about the food or drink we need to stay alive, or about the clothes we need for work or school. What he is really talking about is anxiety worry...and the way it keeps us from being effective Disciples.

A certain amount of "worry" can be beneficial. If we have a test tomorrow, it can prompt us to spend some more time studying tonight, so we don't have to worry about it tomorrow morning. This morning's Gospel from the Sermon on the Mount deals with a more debilitating kind of worry.

Anxiety worry is the kind of worry that takes over our lives and keeps us from functioning. It's a foolish kind of worry...mostly about things over which we have absolutely no control. Anxiety worry...especially over material things...is foolish because it means we really don't trust God to provide us with what we need.

To make his point, Jesus asks us to look at the birds flying around. God takes care of their needs because he loves what he has created. Jesus tells us we need to learn a lesson from the birds flying in the air. We are more important than the birds...God love us and will take care of our needs. Anxiety worry about our material needs can...in fact...lead to health issues that can shorten our lives.

Jesus tells us to look at how wild flowers grow. They don't work or make clothes...but God provides them with rich soil and the right amount of sun and water they need to grow. Jesus wants us to more than just look at pretty flowers...he wants us to learn from them. If flowers are important to God and he provides what they need...how much more important are we? In fact, King Solomon, the 10th century BC ruler of a united Israel, even with all his fabulous wealth and clothes, couldn't have looked any better than the wild flowers.

Jesus tells us we cannot serve two masters...we cannot serve both God and **mammon**...one or the other has to give. Jesus says we will hate one and love the other. The word **mammon** comes from a Greek word

that means **wealth, money** or **material possessions**. **Mammon** may also mean **that in which we place our trust**. Money and material possessions are not bad things. They are gifts from God. The question Jesus asks us to consider in today's Gospel is in whom...or what...do we place our trust.

When we spend an inordinate amount of time worrying about things...we're showing we don't trust God to take care of our needs? God provides us with jobs and retirement plans so we don't have to worry about things now or in the future.

Jesus found himself in this position while he was in the desert praying. He was hungry...he wanted food...the Devil told him to turn stones into bread. We know the way the story turns out...Jesus told the Devil to go away and quit bothering him...he would not test God by doing magic. He trusted God to take care of his needs.

What about people who are navigating through these difficult times without jobs or unemployment benefits or have used retirement funds to survive. What about the homeless? Can we tell them to trust in God to provide what they need? That might be a hard sell. Better than telling them...we can take action by contributing to organizations that provide food, clothing and shelter. That can give them less to worry about!

Jesus tells us we shouldn't even start worrying about where our food or clothes or other material things will come from. God is our loving Father and like our own parents knew what we needed and took care of us...he knows what we need and will take care of us. What God wants is for us to trust him.

Planning for a business meeting, or a school project, or a vacation or putting money aside for our retirement are good things. When we do these things we are wise stewards of God's many gifts.

We should not waste time worrying about things over which we have no control. The time to place our trust in God is now. Yesterday is gone...and it's too soon to worry about tomorrow! We have enough work to do today!

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