

XV Trinity 2023

Sermon – Saint Joseph Parish

Father Craig Looney

Galatians 6.11-18 St. Matthew 6.24-34



Do not worry about tomorrow...Jesus tells us...it will have enough worries of its own. There is no need to add to the troubles each day brings. Most of us would agree that is sometimes easier said than done.

A recent study shows the average lifespan for American men and women is now about equal...79 years. That's almost 30,000 days...30,000 days to worry about 30,000 tomorrows. That sounds like a lot of hard work...a lot of wasted time and energy.

Jesus tells us we spend too much time worrying about things over which we have no control. We won't live any longer being anxious about tomorrow. In fact, worry and the anxiety it can produce can cut our lives short. The only moment in time we have any control over is right now. That's where we should devote our time and energy.

There is, of course, nothing wrong with planning for the future. Many companies offer retirement plans that can help alleviate stress about money when we retire. Many of us have special funds for that once-in-a-lifetime vacation or for home improvement.

We have all heard the saying "Money is the root of all evil." Although attributed to the Bible, this is misquoting Paul's First Letter to Timothy. What Paul actually says is "The *LOVE* of money is the root of all evil." Paul is talking about our failure to be good stewards of God's gift of material things.

This morning's Gospel is from the Sermon on the Mount. Jesus tells us we cannot serve two masters...we cannot serve both God and **mammon**...one or the other has to give way and become the most important thing in our lives. 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**. Neither Jesus nor the Apostles ever said money and material possessions are bad things. The question Jesus asks is in what or in whom do we place our trust.

The natural beauty of the world is proof of God's awesome power and gift of nature. Jesus tells the story of King Solomon, the 10th Century BC ruler of the United Kingdom of Israel. He was known for his immense wealth...and for his wisdom.

The Book of Ecclesiastes tells us Solomon observed the person who hoarded money for the sake of amassing wealth would always worry about losing it. Solomon goes on to state the person who loves money will never have enough, so he will never be satisfied. The love of money becomes an addiction that destroys. The love of money (material possessions or power or fame) like any addiction can become an idol causing us to not trust God.

Jesus tells us all of Solomon's wealth, expensive clothes and fine food can't compare to God's care for the trees and flowers he created. If he takes care of them by providing the right amount of sun and rain for them to grow, how much more is his love for us! We should not repay his love and care for us with worry and anxiety! We should trust him to provide us with what we **need**.

What do we mean when we say we trust in God to take care of our needs? It means using the resources God has provided for us...like income from our work or retirement plans...wisely and correctly...to take care of our obligations so we don't have to worry. It means being good stewards of the gifts God has given us. And it means not spending money we don't have.

In 1988, American jazz singer and songwriter Bobby McFerrin wrote a song called "Don't Worry. Be Happy". The song is not a commentary on today's Gospel but one line of the lyrics goes..."In every life we have some trouble, but when you worry you make it double".

Do not worry about tomorrow...Jesus tells us...it will have enough worries of its own. There is no need to make tomorrow a day of double trouble.

Jesus is asking us to do what he does...trust God to take care of our needs today...and tomorrow...and all of the tomorrows that follow.

