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**MATTHEW 6: 30-34**

For the Catholic Church, God's Revelation is found in Sacred Tradition, understood as God's Revealed Word handed down by the Living Teaching Authority established by Christ in the Church. That includes both Written Tradition (Scripture) and Unwritten Tradition received from Christ and handed down Orally by the Apostles and their Successors. The Church founded by Christ on Peter, and only that Church, has been Empowered by Christ to 'Interpret' His Teaching Authoritatively in His Name.

Scripture is *Inspired*; *Inspiration* really means that God Himself is the Chief Author of the Scriptures. He uses a Human Agent, in so marvelous a way that the Human writes what the Holy Spirit wants him to write, does so without Error, yet the Human Writer is Free, and keeps his own Style of Language. It is only because God is *Transcendent* that He can do this - insure Freedom from Error, while leaving the Human Free. To say He is Transcendent means that He is above and beyond all our Human Classifications and Categories.

Matthew writes his gospel account to give us the view of Jesus as the King. He records Jesus' authority in calling the disciples: "Follow me" (Matthew 4:19), and he also records more than any of the others about Jesus' teaching concerning God's kingdom and heavenly rule.

Considered one of the most important Catholic theologians and Bible commentators, Cornelius à Lapse's, S.J. writings on the Bible, created a Scripture Commentary so complete and scholarly that it was practically the universal commentary in use by Catholics for over 400 years. Fr. Lapse's most excellent commentaries have been widely known for successfully combining piety and practicality. Written during the time of the Counter Reformation, it includes plenty of apologetics. His vast knowledge is only equaled by his piety and holiness.

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### **Continuation of Matthew 6: 30-34**

**Verse 30-** *For if God so clothe, &c.* To the beautiful lilies he adds the humble grass and hay for greater emphasis. The Greek is *χότρον*, *herb* or *grass*. "If God clothe the grass in the fields with such greenness, with such fair blades and germs, which to-day is green and to-morrow is cut down and dry, and becomes hay, and is cast into the oven or furnace to heat it that it may bake bread, how much more will He clothe you, who are believing men, and His own sons and friends? You, I say, who, without any reason, are of little faith in the providence of God?" Observe that by this rebuke Christ shows that the common anxiety about food, and raiment is born of distrust in Divine providence. For if men thoroughly trusted in it they would not be so anxious, but would securely rest upon it. And then, with moderate labour and trusting in Him, God would provide them with all needful things.

**Verse 31.**—*For after all these things do the Gentiles seek.* This is the fifth argument,

that anxiety about these earthly things is the mark of a Pagan, and does not become Christians, who believe in the providence of God, yea, who feel and experience it every day.

**Verse 32-** *For your heavenly Father knoweth, &c.* The sixth argument. God truly knows what ye have need of in the way of food and clothes; He sees and beholds your wants, because He is God. Therefore He will provide for them, because He loves you as His children, for He is your Father, and He is able to provide, because He is your Heavenly and Almighty Father. Why then do ye not roll off all your care upon Him? For He both knows and is willing and able to succour your necessity. Christ adds in Luke xi. 29, *Neither be ye of doubtful mind.* Gr. *μη μετεωριζετε*, on which see what I have there said. Whence S. Francis was wont to give his brethren no other provision for a journey than the words of the Psalmist, “Cast thy care upon the Lord, and he will nourish thee.” (Ps. lv. 22.) Where for *care* the Hebrew has *jehabcha*, which the Chaldee renders, *thy hope*; S. Jerome, *thy love*; Vatablus, *thy weight, thy burden, i.e., thy solitudes, thine anxieties, thy troubles, thy poverty, and whatever burdens thee and weighs thee down.* The Roman Psalter has, *thy cogitation.* The root of the word is *בַּיָּהָב*, signifying *the desire of one who asks, whatever stirs and draws out thy anxious prayer.* And He shall nourish thee. The Hebrew is, *shall sustain, shall perfect, shalt take care of thee.* S. Peter says, “Casting all your care upon Him, for He careth for you.” And S. Paul writes to the Philippians, “Be careful for nothing, but in all prayer and supplication with giving of thanks, let your requests be made known unto God.” See what is there said. We have a narrow mind, slender shoulders, a little strength. But God has the far-reaching eyes of His providence, and corresponding shoulders. For He is the true Atlas, who sustains heaven and earth upon His shoulders.

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**Ver. 33.**—*Seek ye therefore . . . all those things shall be added.* Gr. *προσθήσεται*, shall be set before you, as SS. Cyprian and Augustine read, as bread and meat are set before a hungry beggar in a rich man’s house. *First*, not so much in time as in dignity says S. Augustine, in estimation and appreciation. Seek chiefly and above all things the kingdom of God, esteem it above all other things, count it as of highest value, but count temporal goods of small worth, and as only to be sought after in subordination to the kingdom of God, as things which are added by God, overweight, so to say, so far, that is, as they conduce to our real good.

Wherefore they err who say:—

“O citizens, O citizens, first money get,  
Then, after that, on virtue’s crown your hearts be set.”

Such is the error of those who at this day seek after and procure rich appointments, benefices, dignities, bishoprics, with all diligence, but think little of the responsibility and their own capabilities, and little of their own eternal salvation. *The kingdom of God, i.e., His heavenly kingdom, eternal glory and happiness, and His righteousness, viz., the means which lead us to the kingdom of God, such as God's grace, virtue, good and righteous works, by which we become righteous, or more just before God, works which God has prescribed and commanded that we should do them.*

*All these things shall be added.*

Therefore they are not the reward of good works, for this is wholly kept for us in heaven, says S. Augustine, but they shall be added as overweight, a little trifling addition to the infinite reward.

**Verse 34-** *Take therefore no thought for the morrow, i.e., for time future.*

The seventh argument, Leave for the morrow, *i.e., for the time to come, the care and anxiety of the morrow. Why do ye wish to be anxious and wretched before the time? For even though to-day ye summon to you to-morrow's cares, to-morrow will, on that account, bring you not one care the less. Let therefore each care be kept for its own time, to-day's for to-day, to-morrow's for tomorrow; thus solicitude being divided into parts will be diminished, will become lighter, and will be borne more easily. Verily if a soul when it enters a human body could see all the poverty, pain and trouble and anguish, which in a lifetime, day after day, minute after minute, it would suffer, it would shudder and despair, and would not enter the body. Wherefore God hides from us the afflictions which we shall have to undergo, that we may take them day by day, and so sustain them. Wisely does S. Chrysostom say in this passage, "Far be it from us that the cares of another day should bruise us. For thou knowest not that thou shalt behold the dawning of that day on account of which thou tormentest thyself with anxiety." And "What does it profit to care about future contingencies which, it may be, will never happen?"*

Similarly the poet sings—

*"Thou knowest not what the late eventide may bring."*

And the Psalmist says, "Day unto day uttereth a word, and night unto night showeth knowledge." (Ps. xix. 3, Vulg.)

Christ here does not forbid all provision for future time, as for instance storing up the harvests of corn and wine and oil: for prudence and economy require this to be done: and this is what Joseph did so prudently in Egypt. (Gen. xli. 35.) Whence S. Anthony (*apud Cassian. Collat. 2*) says, that some who would keep nothing for tomorrow were deceived, and could not bring the task they had begun to a suitable end. Christ only forbids useless anxieties about the future, unseasonable cares, as when a man is anxious about those things the care of which does not, according to right reason, pertain to present but to future time.

Solicitude then is of two kinds, the first moderate and business-like, such as right reason dictates ought to be employed for such or such an affair or business: this is laudable and needful, with all prudence and virtue. The other is immoderate, vain, and unbecoming, by which a timid or covetous man vainly torments himself about future events which are altogether uncertain, and can neither be foreseen nor delayed. This sort of care which the Greeks call *μεριμνα* is *anxious care, worry*; and it is this which Christ forbids. Whence the *Gloss* says, "Not labour, or provident care, is forbidden, but anxiety which chokes the mind."

*Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.*

That, is the day's trouble, care, affliction. Every day brings to man its own trouble and solicitude. The Greek is *κακία, evil, badness*. It is put here for *κακώσεις* the bringing of evil, or afflicting. Thus Jacob said to Pharaoh, "Few and evel," that is, miserable, "have been the days of the years of my pilgrimage." (Gen. xlvii. 9.) So, on the other hand, goodness or good, is to be taken for joyful, glad, pleasant, as Ps. cxxxiii., "Behold how good and joyful a thing it is, brethren, to dwell together in unity." Thus SS. Jerome, Chrysostom, Augustine, &c. S. Chrysostom gives the reason, "That He may rebuke them more sharply, He has almost personified time itself, and introduced it as though itself afflicted by men, as though it cried out against them on account of the superfluous affliction which they impose upon it." Hear also S. Augustine: "Necessity He calls evil, because it is for a punishment: it pertains to mortality, which we have deserved by sin. When we see the servant of God providing for necessary things, we do not think he is acting contrary to the commandment of God. For the Lord, as an example, kept a bag. And in the Acts of the Apostles we read, that necessary things were provided for the future on account of the threatened famine. We are therefore not forbidden to provide, but to fight on account of those things."