

Homily based on the readings from June 20, 2026 (2 Chronicles 24.17-25; Matthew 6.24-34)

Many of the challenges we face in this life amount to finding a balance between two dangerous extremes. For example, we are required to avoid the sin of gluttony, but we are also not permitted to starve ourselves. We are commanded not to fixate on our physical appearance, but we also must avoid “look[ing] gloomy like the hypocrites.” We need to be sincerely sorry for our sins, but we cannot allow ourselves to be paralyzed by scrupulosity. Perhaps the example with the deepest impact is the one that is discussed in today’s Gospel:

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.

Jesus, of course, is warning us against becoming obsessed with our material needs. He is telling us not to worry, that God will grant us everything we require:

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?

On the other hand, Jesus is *not* telling us to stop performing the necessary tasks to support ourselves and our families. In other words, we should not come home from Mass, sit on the couch for ten hours, and expect somebody *miraculously* to show up at our doorstep with a five-course dinner. On the contrary, we are expected to work, inasmuch as we can – to earn money, to purchase food, to prepare meals, to do the dishes. Relying on God does not mean that we give up on doing things ourselves. Saint Paul is remarkably blunt about this point: “if anyone [is] unwilling to work, neither should that one eat.”

Today's Gospel is specifically cautioning against one extreme – allowing ourselves to be overwhelmed with anxiety. Nevertheless, the opposite extreme, which can be described as *sloth*, is just as damaging. The middle path that we, as Christians, are required to walk is disconcertingly narrow. On the one hand, we must surrender ourselves *unconditionally* to God's providence. On the other, we must diligently fulfill whatever obligations have been entrusted to us – remembering that, in many cases, *we* are the tools by which God accomplishes his will. This delicate equilibrium can best be summarized by a single word: *humility*. While this term is often associated with sackcloth and ashes, a more helpful perspective is that we need to focus on our *own* work, while – at the same time – trusting in God to do *his*. To put it simply: we need to recognize that *God is God and we are not*.

And so, as we head home in a few minutes – to take care of whatever tasks await us this weekend – we can rest assured that, as long as we approach our responsibilities with patience and humility, our loving Lord will never fail to provide for all his faithful children.