

6th Sunday of Easter – May 16/17, 2020

– Reflection

People are always telling people not to worry: "Don't worry, I got this;" "Don't worry, I'll take care of it;" "Don't worry, you're in good hands;" "Don't worry, it'll all work out;" "Don't worry, we're gonna beat this;" "Don't worry about it!" Even Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount told us not to worry: "Can any of you by worrying add a single hour to your span of life?"

Don't worry. Safe to say, I think, that over the span of the last couple of months, people have been doing lotsa worrying ... what's gonna happen to my job? ... who's gonna look out for my elderly Mom, Dad? ... what's school gonna look like? ... what if I go to the store, will I catch the virus? ... is that cough from allergies? ... how're we gonna pay the bills? ... will I even be able to say goodbye to the ones I love? ... is life gonna be lonely like this forever? ... why do they take away Jesus now when I need Him most? ... is this the end of the world? ... will I ever be able to shut my brain down and sleep through the night?

And, I don't think we're being overly dramatic ... crybabies ... weaklings! These are legitimate, big things to worry about. And yet, Jesus tells us not to worry ... how can He say that??

Just recently, in our state and in other states around the country, golf courses were opened and people began walking the fairways ... and into the woods ... hitting that little white ball while maintaining safe distance from other hackers ... and, usually, from the hole as well! When golfers spray their shots all over the course, some self-styled

pro will always pipe up and say, "Keep your head down, keep your eye on the ball," which is actually pretty good advice and can help straighten out your shots.

When Jesus tells us not to worry, He gives the same tip, "Keep your eye on the prize."

"Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will 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 of the air; they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? ... Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they neither toil nor spin, yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not clothed like one of these. But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will He not much more clothe you?" As Jesus reflects about worry and birds and lilies and grass, His musings come as a follow-up to His teaching His followers how to pray ... "Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread ... do not bring us to the time of trial, but rescue us from the evil one."

I doubt, very much, that looking at birds of the air or considering lilies of the field or counting sheep, for that matter, is gonna take away our worries. But, if we keep our eye on the prize ... when we're tossing and turning in the night, when we're gasping for air, when we're looking at our dwindling bank account, when we can't visit the ones we love, when we're lonely and starving for companionship ... if we keep our eye on the prize ... if we keep our eyes on God and turn, in our worries, to God in

prayer, Our Father, who knows what we need before we ask, will be with us, comfort us, and calm us in our fears, and open our eyes to see a way forward, to see the Way to the prize, life eternal with Him.

But, "Only in God will my soul be at rest!"