

"For our deliverance from all... necessity"

Among the series of prayers that we address to God in the beginning of the Holy Liturgy and other divine services we add the following request: "*For our deliverance from all... necessity*".

When creating man, the Creator placed him in "the Garden of Eden" (Genesis 2,15). There man enjoyed all the good things that God made available to him, in order to be happy, but due to the envy of the devil, Adam and Eve were deprived of Paradise with all its good things, and since then man has been obliged to work hard and sweat – often in great agony – in his endeavor to acquire the necessities of life.

To these difficulties is often added the greed of oppressors, who oppress not only individuals, but also entire peoples. The powerful of the earth exploit either the weak, making them slaves, or the mineral wealth and energy reserves of their land (gold, precious stones, ores, etc.), resulting, on the one hand, in the deprivation of the basic necessities of life of the weak and, on the other hand, in the growth of the exploiters huge fortunes. This exploitation of the weak by the strong takes place in almost every country, even in the so-called "developed countries".

Since we Christians live in such societies, it is natural, that we along many of our fellow human beings have to strive to acquire the basic needs for our own survival. When societies are hit by economic crises, pandemics – such as recently - and other social misfortunes, unemployment rises, incomes fall and our needs increase. That is why the Church, as a loving Mother, prays to the One who can help her children, to save us from the deprivation of basic needs in order to survive.

We need to strive, naturally, with God's help to do what we can in order to meet both our own needs as well as those of our loved ones, as is our responsibility. Whatever difficulties we may encounter, we need to try with the help of Divine Grace to overcome them. However, let us now focus on something very important, I mean the fact that we need to fight on without anxiety, without worry. Our Lord tells us the following: "Do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear" (Matthew 6:25). The Lord does not exhort us not to take care of our needs or not to work, but not to be consumed by worries and anxiety. In order to protect us from painful situations, he brings us the example of birds and wildflowers as we heard in today's Gospel reading. At the end of the reading he comforts us in the most beautiful way: "your heavenly Father feeds them, Are you not much more valuable than they?" (Verse 26). In other words: if your Father feeds the birds, will he not care for You, His children, who are of far greater value than these?

A second thought worth noting is this: in our effort to obtain the necessities of our living, we ought not to go to extremes. There is a risk that we will not be satisfied with what we have acquired and with which we ensure a comfortable living. Because, seeing that others have acquired more, we are tempted by the spirit of greed and we begin desire to acquire those things, even if we are not in need of them. We get tired while trying to obtain more, even to the point that we are no longer able to go to church, to rejoice with our family, to keep ourselves healthy and finally to not rejoice in what God has given us, but grieve for what others have acquired and still not acquiring those things! That is why the divinely inspired Apostle Paul urges us: "But if we have food and clothing, we will be content with that. Those who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction."(1 Tim. 6: 8-9).

According to these words, our Church has formulated the request we mentioned: "For the deliverance from all necessity". As to not be in lack of the necessities of our lives, Let us thus rejoice in our lives without worry as the Apostle Paul yet again writes: "God is able to bless you abundantly, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work" (2 Corinthians 9:8).

My beloved brothers and sisters.

As human beings, being endowed with self-control, let us not be seduced by the constant advertisement of the consumer society, which tries to convince us that we are constantly lacking in something in order for us to buy it quickly, even with "discount"! Let us make choices that are connected to the genuine needs of our lives. And let us not forget that limiting our desires to the few and necessary is a great virtue. Confessing internally that "this is enough for me, I do not need anything more" will calm you down and free you from unnecessary pursuits. Only then can you find joy in what you have acquired.

In these difficult times may the Lord listen to our prayers and with His affection and love give to all of us and to the whole world the necessities for a peaceful human life. Amen.

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