



Scripture nugget – Worries, regrets, distractions fritter away our graces for the Present moment
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. But seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things will be given you besides (Matthew 6:31-33).

I came so that they might have life and have it more abundantly (cf. John 10:10). Jesus teaches us clearly about God’s protection and providence. He said: *Are not two sparrows sold for a small coin? Yet not one of them falls to the ground without your Father’s knowledge. Even all the hairs of your head are counted (Matthew 10:29-30).* Certainly, we are more precious to God than the sparrows. We are worth Christ’s precious Blood shed on Mount Calvary. If we can understand God’s care for the sparrows, we would not have any doubts that He will care for us even in ways we cannot perceive. In times of adversity, we can draw comfort and security from the reality of God’s protection and providence. God is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine as St Paul tells us (cf. Ephesians 3:20). God manifested His power and care when He took care of the Israelites when they were in the desert for 40 years. Scripture tells us that the post-exodus Israelite army alone numbered above 600,000 men (cf. Numbers 1:17-46)! Says the Lord: *I led you for forty years in the wilderness. Your clothes did not fall from you in tatters nor your sandals from your feet (Deuteronomy 29:4).* When we trust in God, He is unencumbered to do the rest.

Graces are what we need to live an abundant life, a life blessed and approved by God. God will only provide graces for the present moment. Satan knows this and tries his best to fritter away the graces God provides for the present moment by encouraging worries, anxieties, regrets, distractions and procrastination. God exhorts us not to worry (cf. Mt 6:31) and to let go of the sad past (cf. Isaiah 43:18-19). Stuck in the past agonizing over the wickedness of our past behaviour or that of others, we are unable to open our hardened hearts to receive the grace of repentance or forgiveness given in the present moment. This mirrors the case of Judas Iscariot who killed himself after betraying Jesus, forgetting that Jesus can forgive him if he asked for it. Unlike Judas, St Peter was able to receive the grace of repentance after he denied the Lord not once but three times and not in private but in public. However, in the storm at sea when St Peter was walking on the waters towards Jesus, he lost his trust in the Lord when he turned his focus on the stormy waters, allowing these distractions to fritter away the grace of trust in the Lord given to him at that moment.

Conversation with Jesus. Precious Lord, You are always in charge no matter what the situation is. Without fail, You provide Your graces for me to deal with the present situation. My life is made up of a string of present moments. The past is surrendered to You and the future is secure in Your hands. The present moment is entirely mine, and how I deal with it will depend on whether I can receive Your grace for that moment. Strengthen my faith and give me wisdom so that I have no fear or worries about anything. Purify my heart so that I can receive all the graces I need to deal with the situation of the present moment. With Your grace, help me face my problems squarely, live each present moment fully, and never be trapped in the past or future mired in regrets or anxiety. Mary, Mother of Salvation, pray for me. Thank You, Jesus. Praise You, Jesus.