



Our Future is in God's Hands

by Bro FRANCESCO DILEO OFM Cap.

At the beginning of each year, people's thoughts inevitably turn to the future. Some people, paradoxically, in this era ruled by science, technology and critical thinking, still visit the astrologers, as the pagans once did, to forecast their future fortune from the alignment of the stars. Others instead, those more pragmatic in nature, conjure up new ways to become more wealthy, powerful and successful convinced that this is the key to happiness. In response to these two kinds of "temptation," I would like to recall, this month, Jesus' words of wisdom He answered Satan when tempted by him, before us and in every way like us, in the wilderness. To the Angel of Darkness' promise of wealth, power and glory if He bowed down and worshiped him as people today bow down and serve the goddess Fortune, the Messiah answered: "Be off, Satan! For Scripture says: 'You must worship the Lord Your God, and serve Him alone' (Mt 4,10). And to Satan's temptation to sacrifice spiritual for physical nourishment, He replied: "Scripture says: 'Man does not

live on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of God'" (Mt 4,4). And to all those who at the beginning of this new year can conceive of nothing greater than material prosperity I would like to especially recall the Master's parable in which He warns us of a "place and time," that He does not specify but which each and every one of us from every place and every time will one day encounter: "There was once a rich man who, having had a good harvest from his land, thought to himself, 'What am I to do? I have not enough room to store my crops.' Then he said, 'This is what I will do: I will pull down my barns and build bigger ones, and store all my grain and my goods in them, and I will say to my soul: 'My soul, you have plenty of good things laid by for many years to come; take things easy, eat, drink, have a good time'. But God said to him, 'Fool! This very night the demand will be made for your soul; and this hoard of yours, whose will it be then?'. So it is when a man stores up treasure for himself in place of making himself rich in the sight of God.'" Then he said: "That is why I am telling you not to worry about your life and

what you are to eat, nor about your body and how you are to clothe it. For life means more than food, and the body more than clothing. Think of the ravens. They do not sow or reap; they have no storehouses and no barns; yet God feeds them. And how much more are you worth than the birds! Can any of you, for all his worrying, add a single cubit to his span of life? If the smallest things, therefore, are outside your control, why worry about the rest? Think of the flowers; they never have to spin or weave; yet, I assure you, not even Solomon in all his regalia was robed like one of these. Now if that is how God clothes the grass in the field which is there today and thrown into the furnace tomorrow, how much more will He look after you, you men of little faith!" (Lk 12, 16-28).

Let's not be foolish. Let's put order into our lives so that we may find true happiness. Let's ask Our Lord to strengthen our faith and fill us with hope, which is real wealth and which does not let us down. Our future is not in the hands of the stars, but in the One who created them.

A Happy New Year to everyone.♥

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