

It is clear that not our diligence, but the providence of God,

It is not of him that willeth,

even where we seem to be active, effects all.

*Except the Lord build the house,
in vain do they labour that build it.*

So that, were He to forsake us,

Nor of him that runneth,

no care, nor anxiety, nor toil, nor any other such thing,

*Except the Lord guard the city,
in vain doth he watch that guardeth her.*

will ever appear to come to anything, but all will utterly pass away.

But of God that showeth mercy.

St John Chrysostom, Homily XXI on the Gospel of Saint Matthew, p. 149.

Pearls from the Holy Fathers, Week after Nativity 2008