**MARCH 2017**

## FIRST DECADE OF MARCH

### Your almsgiving may be secret

### Jl 2,12-18; Ps 50,3-6.12-14.17; 2Cor 5,20-6,2; Mt 6,1-6.16-18.

### 1 MARCH – ASH WEDNESDAY

The Heavenly Father gives his commandments. He imposes his order to the life of man on earth. Stealing is not a theft against society, but against the Lord. Bearing false witness is not speaking evil of man, but it is very seriously offending the Lord. So even committing adultery. It is not the wife or the man that are betrayed. Who is betrayed is the Lord. One uses the body not according to his will. So it is for every other Commandment. It is God who is despised in his truth, according to which he made his creation. God is the great offended. This supernatural vision today has disappeared and also the Commandments, the divine Law, has disappeared.

Jesus came to give a dimension of eternal truth not only to the Law of Sinai, but to every man's relationship with man, of man with himself and of man with God. Everything that man work of goo, he must do it for the Lord, to the Lord. If it does it to the Lord, the Lord is invisible, invisible must be his work. If it he does good works he must do them invisibly, in the greatest silence and so must also be his prayer and his fast. God does not want that man puts himself on a tower and from it he shouts what he does to others, the prayers that he raises to Heaven, the forms for the mortification of his body, so that it may always obey to his soul.

Without this supernatural dimension every work is lost. It is made for the glory of man, the fleeting, sinful and lying glory that receives from the earth will be his reward. It is right that the man is paid by the person for whom he works. If you work for the world, certainly the Lord cannot pay us. If you work for the Lord, then the works must be done according to his will, in the silence, in the shadows and in the invisibility. Someone might object: *"But does not Jesus say perhaps: may the world see your works and glorify your Father who is in heaven"?* Who must see the works is only the one who receives them. This is the one that must thank and bless and praise the Lord. The benefactor must disappear, wrapped in the greatest silence around him.

*"(But) take care not to perform righteous deeds in order that people may see them; otherwise, you will have no recompense from your heavenly Father. When you give alms, do not blow a trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets to win the praise of others. Amen, I say to you, they have received their reward. But when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right is doing, so that your almsgiving may be secret. And your Father who sees in secret will repay you.*

*"When you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, who love to stand and pray in the synagogues and on street corners so that others may see them. Amen, I say to you, they have received their reward. But when you pray, go to your inner room, close the door, and pray to your Father in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will repay you.*

*"When you fast, do not look gloomy like the hypocrites. They neglect their appearance, so that they may appear to others to be fasting. Amen, I say to you, they have received their reward. But when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, so that you may not appear to be fasting, except to your Father who is hidden. And your Father who sees what is hidden will repay you.*

Jesus does not ask to give alms. He asks to give it well, to give it to God. So he does not even ask to pray or fast. He asks you to do well the one and the other thing. Why does not Jesus ask to pray, to fast, to give alms, but to do all things well? He asks this, because our life is always interwoven with alms, prayers and fasts. The man is inserted in a religious structure. It is not, however, the inclusion in the religious structure that saves him, that leads him to eternal life, but in this structure doing all things for the Lord, according to the Law of the Lord. Jesus wants truth to be given to the structure. Even today Jesus asks us to give truth to his Word, to his Gospel, to his grace, to his Church, to his servants and to the very Christian. The real danger is one: it is being all these things, but without their truth.

Virgin Mary, Mother of the Redemption, Angels and Saints make us true in everything.

### He said, "The Son of Man must suffer greatly

### Dt 30,15-20; Ps 1,1-4.6; Lk 9,22-25.

### 2 MARCH

In itself, the Son of Man must not suffer. According to the prophecy of Daniel the Son of man reaches the throne of God and from God receives honour, glory and eternal power. This truth is confirmed also by the Apocalypse of St. John the Apostle.

*As I watched, Thrones were set up and the Ancient One took his throne. His clothing was snow bright, and the hair on his head as white as wool; His throne was flames of fire, with wheels of burning fire. A surging stream of fire flowed out from where he sat; Thousands upon thousands were ministering to him, and myriads upon myriads attended him. The court was convened, and the books were opened.  As the visions during the night continued, I saw One like a son of man coming, on the clouds of heaven; When he reached the Ancient One and was presented before him, He received dominion, glory, and kingship; nations and peoples of every language serve him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that shall not be taken away, his kingship shall not be destroyed (Dn 7,9-10.13-14).*

*I saw a scroll in the right hand of the one who sat on the throne. It had writing on both sides and was sealed with seven seals. Then I saw a mighty angel who proclaimed in a loud voice, "Who is worthy to open the scroll and break its seals?" But no one in heaven or on earth or under the earth was able to open the scroll or to examine it. I shed many tears because no one was found worthy to open the scroll or to examine it. One of the elders said to me, "Do not weep. The lion of the tribe of Judah, the root of David, has triumphed, enabling him to open the scroll with its seven seals." Then I saw standing in the midst of the throne and the four living creatures and the elders, a Lamb that seemed to have been slain. He had seven horns and seven eyes; these are the (seven) spirits of God sent out into the whole world. He came and received the scroll from the right hand of the one who sat on the throne. When he took it, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb. Each of the elders held a harp and gold bowls filled with incense, which are the prayers of the holy ones. They sang a new hymn: "Worthy are you to receive the scroll and to break open its seals, for you were slain and with your blood you purchased for God those from every tribe and tongue, people and nation. You made them a kingdom and priests for our God, and they will reign on earth." I looked again and heard the voices of many angels who surrounded the throne and the living creatures and the elders. They were countless in number, and they cried out in a loud voice: "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power and riches, wisdom and strength, honour and glory and blessing." Then I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and in the sea, everything in the universe, cry out: "To the one who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be blessing and honour, glory and might, forever and ever." The four living creatures answered, "Amen," and the elders fell down and worshiped (Rev 5,1-14).*

Behind this figure - the Son of Man - there are other figures which Jesus unifies all. Among these there is not only that of the Righteous Sufferer, but also that of the Suffering Servant. If the figures of the Righteous Sufferer describe all the suffering of the Just One, that of the Suffering Servant reveals the great love of God that has put on the shoulders of his servant for the great atonement all the sins of the world. He suffers for love. He suffers in expiation. He suffers in place of. His is the true vicarious atonement.

*He said, "The Son of Man must suffer greatly and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed and on the third day be raised." Then he said to all, "If anyone wishes to come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me. For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will save it. What profit is there for one to gain the whole world yet lose or forfeit himself?*

The Son of man must suffer much, not because he is the Son of man, but because the Son of Man is the Lord's Christ. Suffering is of the Messiah who is also the Suffering Servant. Suffering is the way, just as the cross is the ladder, so that the Son of Man comes before God and receives honour, power and eternal glory from Him. One prophecy does not say the whole truth on the Messiah, Jesus. All the prophecies reveal who the Christ is. Today Jesus shows us that there is unity between the Son of Man and the Suffering Servant of the Lord. The Apostle John attests us that the Son of Man, the slain Lamb, is constituted Lord of Heaven and earth. The seals of history are in his hands.

Virgin Mary, Mother of the Redemption, Angels and Saints, give us the full truth of Jesus.

### Days will come when the bridegroom is taken away from them

### Is 58,1-9a; Ps 50,3-6.18-19; Mt 9,14-15.

### 3 MARCH

In Ancient Israel fasting was not an individual, but a community matter. When one appeared to the Lord, he approached Him fasting before him awaiting his Word, his decision, his command or disposal.

*The Benjaminites came out of the city and felled twenty-two thousand men of Israel. Then the Israelites went up and wept before the Lord until evening. "Shall I again engage my brother Benjamin in battle?" they asked the Lord; and the Lord answered that they should. But though the Israelite soldiers took courage and again drew up for combat in the same place as on the previous day, when they met the Benjaminites for the second time, once again the Benjaminites who came out of Gibeah against them felled eighteen thousand Israelites, all of them swordsmen. So the entire Israelite army went up to Bethel, where they wept and remained fasting before the Lord until evening of that day, besides offering holocausts and peace offerings before the Lord. When the Israelites consulted the Lord (for the ark of the covenant of God was there in those days, and Phinehas, son of Eleazar, son of Aaron, was ministering to him in those days), and asked, "Shall I go out again to battle with Benjamin, my brother, or shall I desist?" the Lord said, "Attack! for tomorrow I will deliver him into your power" (Jdg 20,21-28).*

 Even the early Church lives fasting as a community event. The spirit is that. You want something from the Lord, or you have to give the Spirit of God for the mission. Fasting is always lived in relation to the Lord, as a preparation of the soul, the spirit and the body to get in tune with the divine will.

*Now there were in the church at Antioch prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Symeon who was called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen who was a close friend of Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the holy Spirit said, "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them." Then, completing their fasting and prayer, they laid hands on them and sent them off (At 13,1-3). They appointed presbyters for them in each church and, with prayer and fasting, commended them to the Lord in whom they had put their faith. Then they travelled through Pisidia and reached Pamphylia. After proclaiming the word at Perga they went down to Attalia. From there they sailed to Antioch, where they had been commended to the grace of God for the work they had now accomplished (At 14,23-26).*

St. Paul speaks of fasts only in the Second Letter to the Corinthians, but as food deprivation because of the historical conditions in which he came to be. In this sense, he gives full meaning to the words of Jesus: *"Then they will fast."* The Acts of the Apostles speak also of the long fast of all passengers of the vessel during the storm.

*Beatings, imprisonments, riots, labors, vigils, fasts (2Cor 6, 5). in toil and hardship, through many sleepless nights, through hunger and thirst, through frequent fastings, through cold and exposure (2Cor 11, 27). Until the day began to dawn, Paul kept urging all to take some food. He said, "Today is the fourteenth day that you have been waiting, going hungry and eating nothing (At 27, 33).*

Jesus respected the ancient form of fasting. He fasted forty days and forty nights before beginning the work of salvation that the Father had entrusted to him.

*Then the disciples of John approached him and said, "Why do we and the Pharisees fast (much), but your disciples do not fast?" Jesus answered them, "Can the wedding guests mourn as long as the bridegroom is with them? The days will come when the bridegroom is taken away from them, and then they will fast.*

So seen fasting is not a relationship with the personal body. Instead, it is preparing soul, spirit and body to accept the will of God to be done. It's also a great spirit of deprivation and sobriety in the absence of nourishment. Does not St. Paul say to the Philippians that he is accustomed to hunger and satiety? Another truth of fasting demands that those who have give up something to help those without. In this sense with the virtue of sobriety one lives of essential things and the excess is given to the poor. Fasting, God, charity!

Virgin Mary, Mother of the Redemption, Angels and Saints make us live the truth of things.

### Those who are healthy do not need a physician

### Is 58,9b-14; Ps 85,1-6; Lk 5,27-32.

### 4 MARCH

Jesus cannot respond to Pharisees and scribes according to the truth of his mission. We know that He is the Good Shepherd and it is his particular obligation to treat every sick, ill and frail sheep. It is also his duty to look for the lost and scattered sheep.

*For thus says the Lord God: I myself will look after and tend my sheep. As a shepherd tends his flock when he finds himself among his scattered sheep, so will I tend my sheep. I will rescue them from every place where they were scattered when it was cloudy and dark. I will lead them out from among the peoples and gather them from the foreign lands; I will bring them back to their own country and pasture them upon the mountains of Israel (in the land's ravines and all its inhabited places). In good pastures will I pasture them, and on the mountain heights of Israel shall be their grazing ground. There they shall lie down on good grazing ground, and in rich pastures shall they be pastured on the mountains of Israel. I myself will pasture my sheep; I myself will give them rest, says the Lord God. The lost I will seek out, the strayed I will bring back, the injured I will bind up, the sick I will heal (but the sleek and the strong I will destroy), shepherding them rightly.*

*As for you, my sheep, says the Lord God, I will judge between one sheep and another, between rams and goats. Was it not enough for you to graze on the best pasture, that you had to trample the rest of your pastures with your feet? Was it not enough for you to drink the clearest water, that you had to foul the remainder with your feet? Thus my sheep had to graze on what your feet had trampled and drink what your feet had fouled. Therefore thus says the Lord God: Now will I judge between the fat and the lean sheep. Because you push with side and shoulder, and butt all the weak sheep with your horns until you have driven them out, I will save my sheep so that they may no longer be despoiled, and I will judge between one sheep and another. I will appoint one shepherd over them to pasture them, my servant David; he shall pasture them and be their shepherd. I, the Lord, will be their God, and my servant David shall be prince among them. I, the Lord, have spoken. I will make a covenant of peace with them, and rid the country of ravenous beasts, that they may dwell securely in the desert and sleep in the forests (Ez 34,11-25).*

 If Jesus had answered: *"I am the shepherd according to the prophecy of Ezekiel"*, certainly they would have stoned him instantly. How do you respond according to Scripture to those who reduced to lie the Word of God? Jesus is always enlightened, comforted, inspired by the Holy Spirit and we know that his intelligence is infinite. That of the scribes and Pharisees is only darkness. In the Holy Spirit he responds by using the mode of life of men. A doctor studies medicine to look after ill. The healthy do not need him. If a doctor were to take care of the healthy and neglected the sick, he certainly would be a bad doctor. Jesus is not revealed as the Shepherd of Israel, he is manifested as a prophet. Now it is precisely of prophets to call sinners to conversion. A prophet is sent for the righteous but for sinners. This is his mission and he must operate according to the mandate received from God.

*After this he went out and saw a tax collector named Levi sitting at the customs post. He said to him, "Follow me." And leaving everything behind, he got up and followed him. Then Levi gave a great banquet for him in his house, and a large crowd of tax collectors and others were at table with them. The Pharisees and their scribes complained to his disciples, saying, "Why do you eat and drink with tax collectors and sinners?" Jesus said to them in reply, "Those who are healthy do not need a physician, but the sick do. I have not come to call the righteous to repentance but sinners."*

Jesus is the wise, intelligent Master also in answers. He is not intelligent by human nature, even if most holy. He is intelligent and wise through a constant growth in the Holy Spirit and by dwelling in him of the Spirit of the Lord. Who wants to be learned, intelligent and wise in the Spirit of God, must be detached from sin, disobedience and transgression, has to walk from virtue to virtue, must pray without ceasing, asking the Holy Spirit to take all of him: soul, spirit and body. The more he will grow in holiness and the more the Spirit of God might suggest him the right answer from time to time. Without the Spirit what we do is deprived of wisdom.

Virgin Mary, Mother of the Redemption, Angels and Saints, fill us of the Holy Spirit.

# To be tempted by the devil

# Gen 2,7-9;3,1-7; Ps 50.3-6.12-15.17; Rm 5,12-19; Mt 4,1-11.

**5 MARCH – I SUNDAY OF LENT**

As a good soldier prepares his body for combat, so Jesus prepares his soul, his spirit and his body to the great battle against Satan. We know that Moses before the Lord, having to prepare to receive the tablets of the Law did not eat for forty nights and forty days. What the Lord is about to give him is so great that it requires such a strong preparation on the part of Moses. To receive the second two tablets he did not eat also for the big pain.

*"Bear in mind and do not forget how you angered the Lord, your God, in the desert. From the day you left the land of Egypt until you arrived in this place, you have been rebellious toward the Lord. At Horeb you so provoked the Lord that he was angry enough to destroy you, when I had gone up the mountain to receive the stone tablets of the covenant which the Lord made with you. Meanwhile I stayed on the mountain forty days and forty nights without eating or drinking, till the Lord gave me the two tablets of stone inscribed, by God's own finger, with a copy of all the words that the Lord spoke to you on the mountain from the midst of the fire on the day of the assembly. Then, at the end of the forty days and forty nights, when the Lord had given me the two stone tablets of the covenant, he said to me, 'Go down from here now, quickly, for your people whom you have brought out of Egypt have become depraved; they have already turned aside from the way I pointed out to them and have made for themselves a molten idol.*

*I have seen now how stiff-necked this people is,' the Lord said to me. 'Let me be, that I may destroy them and blot out their name from under the heavens. I will then make of you a nation mightier and greater than they.' "When I had come down again from the blazing, fiery mountain, with the two tablets of the covenant in both my hands, I saw how you had sinned against the Lord, your God: you had already turned aside from the way which the Lord had pointed out to you by making for yourselves a molten calf! Raising the two tablets with both hands I threw them from me and broke them before your eyes. Then, as before, I lay prostrate before the Lord for forty days and forty nights without eating or drinking, because of all the sin you had committed in the sight of the Lord and the evil you had done to provoke him. For I dreaded the fierce anger of the Lord against you: his wrath would destroy you. Yet once again the Lord listened to me (Dt 9,7-19).*

 In the wilderness Christ Jesus must accomplish what so far humanity has never achieved: defeating the devil overcoming every temptation. Like Moses, more than Moses, he prepares assisted by the Holy Spirit and almost annihilating himself in Him. The devil must be defeated.

*Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil. He fasted for forty days and forty nights, and afterwards he was hungry. The tempter approached and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command that these stones become loaves of bread." He said in reply, "It is written: 'One does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes forth from the mouth of God.'" Then the devil took him to the holy city, and made him stand on the parapet of the temple, and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down. For it is written: 'He will command his angels concerning you and 'with their hands they will support you, lest you dash your foot against a stone.'" Jesus answered him, "Again it is written, 'You shall not put the Lord, your God, to the test.'" Then the devil took him up to a very high mountain, and showed him all the kingdoms of the world in their magnificence, and he said to him, "All these I shall give to you, if you will prostrate yourself and worship me." At this, Jesus said to him, "Get away, Satan! It is written: 'The Lord, your God, shall you worship and him alone shall you serve.'" Then the devil left him and, behold, angels came and ministered to him.*

Even in the Christian, everything: prayer, growth in virtues, listening to the Word, celebration of the sacraments, the Eucharist itself, must have as its goal the defeat of Satan and the victory over every temptation. This requires the disciple of Jesus a tempered, moderate, sober, careful, prudent, wise and strong life, full of the Holy Spirit. Having we today married sin as an essential component of our lives, what is done is seen as an end in itself, including the celebration of the Eucharist. Christ had another heart, another mind, another spirit and another wish. He lived to win over Satan, to defeat him and to remove all power to him. He tied him. The disciples are the ones who go to stroke him in order to be bitten.

Virgin Mary, Mother of the Redemption, Angels and Saints make us victorious over Satan.

### When the Son of Man comes in his glory

### Lv 19,1-2.11-18; Ps 18,8-10.15; Mt 25,31-46.

### 6 MARCH

It is faith revealed by Canonical Scriptures. Jesus will come a second time. The Letter to the Hebrews warns us that he will not come for the atonement of sins. Instead, he will come for judgment. Knowing this, everyone is invited to go meet him bearing His disgrace.

*Therefore, it was necessary for the copies of the heavenly things to be purified by these rites, but the heavenly things themselves by better sacrifices than these. For Christ did not enter into a sanctuary made by hands, a copy of the true one, but heaven itself, that he might now appear before God on our behalf. Not that he might offer himself repeatedly, as the high priest enters each year into the sanctuary with blood that is not his own; if that were so, he would have had to suffer repeatedly from the foundation of the world. But now once for all he has appeared at the end of the ages to take away sin by his sacrifice. Just as it is appointed that human beings die once, and after this the judgment, so also Christ, offered once to take away the sins of many, will appear a second time, not to take away sin but to bring salvation to those who eagerly await him (Heb 9,3-28). Therefore, Jesus also suffered outside the gate, to consecrate the people by his own blood. Let us then go to him outside the camp, bearing the reproach that he bore. For here we have no lasting city, but we seek the one that is to come. Through him (then) let us continually offer God a sacrifice of praise, that is, the fruit of lips that confess his name (Heb 13,12-15).*

Today this faith is as if it had been erased from the mind and heart of the Christian. It is taught that there is no more eternal judgment. Those who still have some remorse concerning the revealed truth, at best announce a temporary and finite sanction. Those who have severed ties with the Holy Scripture, shout from the rooftops that there is no judgment, there is no eternal hell, there is no sanction after death. Others even claim the judgment after death, but they say that the Lord gives freedom to every heart to choose where to go. But no one would be so foolish as to refuse Paradise to descend into the darkness of hell. Since our faith is founded on the Word of Him who is the Judge of the eternal judgment and not on that of those who will be judged, but will not judge, we believe in the truth of the righteous judgment of God.

*"When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit upon his glorious throne, and all the nations will be assembled before him. And he will separate them one from another, as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. He will place the sheep on his right and the goats on his left. Then the king will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father. Inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, a stranger and you welcomed me, naked and you clothed me, ill and you cared for me, in prison and you visited me.' Then the righteous will answer him and say, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? When did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? When did we see you ill or in prison, and visit you?' And the king will say to them in reply, 'Amen, I say to you, whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me.'*

*Then he will say to those on his left, 'Depart from me, you accursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. For I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me no drink, a stranger and you gave me no welcome, naked and you gave me no clothing, ill and in prison, and you did not care for me.' Then they will answer and say, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or ill or in prison, and not minister to your needs?' He will answer them, 'Amen, I say to you, what you did not do for one of these least ones, you did not do for me.' And these will go off to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life."*

Jesus speaks with divine clarity. Do we know Him in time? He will know us in eternity. We do not know Him? He will not know us. We welcome Him and He welcomes us. We will do him good in time and He will do us good for eternity. Who grows, receives Christ and is welcomed by Christ. Who does not believe, will not be accepted.

Virgin Mary, Mother of the Redemption, Angels and Saints make us of most pure faith.

### In praying, do not babble like the pagans

### Is 55,10-11; Ps 33,4-7.16-19; Mt 6,7-15.

### 7 MARCH

Through the prophet Isaiah, the Lord reveals all the disgust he feels when his people gathers in the temple to praise, pray and offer him sacrifices. It is not these things that He desires. He wants only one thing: obedience to His Word. If his people wants to him pray, it must turn to Him only for this: so that he cleans it from its sin, so that he to it all grace and strength for a perfect obedience.

*What care I for the number of your sacrifices? says the Lord. I have had enough of whole-burnt rams and fat of fatlings; In the blood of calves, lambs and goats I find no pleasure. When you come in to visit me, who asks these things of you? Trample my courts no more! Bring no more worthless offerings; your incense is loathsome to me. New moon and Sabbath, calling of assemblies, octaves with wickedness: these I cannot bear. Your new moons and festivals I detest; they weigh me down, I tire of the load. When you spread out your hands, I close my eyes to you; Though you pray the more, I will not listen. Your hands are full of blood! Wash yourselves clean! Put away your misdeeds from before my eyes; cease doing evil; learn to do good. Make justice your aim: redress the wronged, hear the orphan's plea, defend the widow (Is 1,11-17).*

Through the prophet Malachi, the Lord shows us that his altar is covered with tears of women who are abandoned by those who repudiate them. The man has repudiated his own wife, God repudiates the repudiator. He does not look, does not accept any offers from him. There is a sin that prevents him that. What would the Lord say today? Yesterday he said these things. Was his thought changed, today? Is his revelation different?

*This also you do: the altar of the Lord you cover with tears, weeping and groaning, Because he no longer regards your sacrifice nor accepts it favourably from your hand; And you say, "Why is it?" -  Because the Lord is witness between you and the wife of your youth, With whom you have broken faith though she is your companion, your betrothed wife. Did he not make one being, with flesh and spirit: and what does that one require but godly offspring? You must then safeguard life that is your own, and not break faith with the wife of your youth. For I hate divorce, says the Lord, the God of Israel, And covering one's garment with injustice, says the Lord of hosts; You must then safeguard life that is your own, and not break faith. You have wearied the Lord with your words, yet you say, "How have we wearied him?" By your saying, "Every evildoer is good in the sight of the Lord, And he is pleased with him"; or else, "Where is the just God?" (Mal 2,13-17).*

What does Jesus suggest to ask the Father in prayer? Nothing more than what the Lord already revealed through His prophets. Doing his will, manifesting his kingdom, praising His name, forgiving, overcoming temptation, delivering us from the evil one. He also taught us to ask for the daily bread as one of his gifts of love.

*In praying, do not babble like the pagans, who think that they will be heard because of their many words. Do not be like them. Your Father knows what you need before you ask him. "This is how you are to pray: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread; and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors; and do not subject us to the final test, but deliver us from the evil one. If you forgive others their transgressions, your heavenly Father will forgive you. But if you do not forgive others, neither will your Father forgive your transgressions.*

Jesus also teaches not to pray only for us. We pray as a people of the New Covenant, as one Body of Christ, as one family. Selfishness has no place in prayer. Another sublime truth is this: since prayer is made by the community for the community, it would be a grave sin of omission to listen to a brother who asks God for a piece of bread and then not provide for him by those who have been blessed by the Lord. The blessing of God put in the service of brothers becomes infinite source of other blessing. The blessing shared fructifies blessing upon blessing. The more it is shared the more it multiplies for us. It's a matter of faith!

Virgin Mary, Mother of the Redemption, Angels and Saints, free us from all selfishness.

### This generation is an evil generation

### Gn 3,1-10; Ps 50,3-4.12-13.18-19; Lk 11,29-32.

**8 MARCH**

To understand the meaning of Jesus' words: *"This generation is an evil generation"*, we must let ourselves be helped by the words of Moses. The generation is evil because it did not respond to the love of the Lord with the same love. God has worked hard for his people. How did his people answer him? With idolatry, immorality and worship of demons. The Lord breaks through the Red Sea to deliver Israel from the hard bondage and how does Israel respond? With an endless gossip, with continued refusal to obey and with a desire not to follow his ways.

*Give ear, O heavens, while I speak; let the earth hearken to the words of my mouth! May my instruction soak in like the rain, and my discourse permeate like the dew, Like a downpour upon the grass, like a shower upon the crops. For I will sing the Lord's renown. Oh, proclaim the greatness of our God! The Rock - how faultless are his deeds, how right all his ways! A faithful God, without deceit, how just and upright he is! Yet basely has he been treated by his degenerate children, a perverse and crooked race! Is the Lord to be thus repaid by you, O stupid and foolish people? Is he not your father who created you? Has he not made you and established you? Think back on the days of old, reflect on the years of age upon age. Ask your father and he will inform you, ask your elders and they will tell you: When the Most High assigned the nations their heritage, when he parcelled out the descendants of Adam, He set up the boundaries of the peoples after the number of the sons of God; While the Lord's own portion was Jacob, His hereditary share was Israel. He found them in a wilderness, a wasteland of howling desert. He shielded them and cared for them, guarding them as the apple of his eye. As an eagle incites its nestlings forth by hovering over its brood, So he spread his wings to receive them and bore them up on his pinions. The Lord alone was their leader, no strange god was with him.*

*He had them ride triumphant over the summits of the land and live off the products of its fields, Giving them honey to suck from its rocks and olive oil from its hard, stony ground; Butter from its cows and milk from its sheep, with the fat of its lambs and rams; Its Bashan bulls and its goats, with the cream of its finest wheat; and the foaming blood of its grapes you drank. (So Jacob ate his fill,) the darling grew fat and frisky; you became fat and gross and gorged. They spurned the God who made them and scorned their saving Rock. They provoked him with strange gods and angered him with abominable idols. They offered sacrifice to demons, to "no-gods," to gods whom they had not known before, To newcomers just arrived, of whom their fathers had never stood in awe. You were unmindful of the Rock that begot you, You forgot the God who gave you birth. For they are a people devoid of reason, having no understanding. If they had insight they would realize what happened, they would understand their future and say, "How could one man rout a thousand, or two men put ten thousand to flight, Unless it was because their Rock sold them and the Lord delivered them up?" Indeed, their "rock" is not like our Rock, and our foes are under condemnation. They are a branch of Sodom's vinestock, from the vineyards of Gomorrah. Poisonous are their grapes and bitter their clusters. Their wine is the venom of dragons and the cruel poison of cobras" (Cf. Dt 32,1-43).*

Jesus comes in the midst of his people, fills it to the brim with every grace, accomplishes miracles miraculous for it. How does his people respond to Jesus Christ? With no faith, disbelief and a satanic desire to kill him. It responds him with a constant temptation. His people wants to wear out Jesus so that he falls in some contradiction with the Law of Moses, always read and interpreted by their evil heart, to be able this way to legally stone him. It is not a sinful evilness. It is a diabolical evilness against Jesus.

*While still more people gathered in the crowd, he said to them, "This generation is an evil generation; it seeks a sign, but no sign will be given it, except the sign of Jonah. Just as Jonah became a sign to the Ninevites, so will the Son of Man be to this generation. At the judgment the queen of the south will rise with the men of this generation and she will condemn them, because she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and there is something greater than Solomon here. At the judgment the men of Nineveh will arise with this generation and condemn it, because at the preaching of Jonah they repented, and there is something greater than Jonah here.*

Jesus does not let himself be tempted by them. He does not fall into their traps armed with care in his path. He knows how to avoid them all. They will be judged for each grace rejected.

Virgin Mary, Mother of the Redemption, Angels and Saints make us confess Christ Jesus.

### Whatever you would have them do to you

### Est 4,17n.p-r.aa-bb.gg-hh; Ps 137,1-8; Mt 7,7-12.

**9 MARCH**

God always bestows His mercy in sight, in anticipation of our mercy. This truth is revealed by Christ Jesus in the parable of the unmerciful servant.

*Then Peter approaching asked him, "Lord, if my brother sins against me, how often must I forgive him? As many as seven times?" Jesus answered, "I say to you, not seven times but seventy-seven times. That is why the kingdom of heaven may be likened to a king who decided to settle accounts with his servants. When he began the accounting, a debtor was brought before him who owed him a huge amount. Since he had no way of paying it back, his master ordered him to be sold, along with his wife, his children, and all his property, in payment of the debt. At that, the servant fell down, did him homage, and said, 'Be patient with me, and I will pay you back in full.' Moved with compassion the master of that servant let him go and forgave him the loan.*

*When that servant had left, he found one of his fellow servants who owed him a much smaller amount. He seized him and started to choke him, demanding, 'Pay back what you owe.' Falling to his knees, his fellow servant begged him, 'Be patient with me, and I will pay you back.' But he refused. Instead, he had him put in prison until he paid back the debt. Now when his fellow servants saw what had happened, they were deeply disturbed, and went to their master and reported the whole affair. His master summoned him and said to him, 'You wicked servant! I forgave you your entire debt because you begged me to. Should you not have had pity on your fellow servant, as I had pity on you?' Then in anger his master handed him over to the torturers until he should pay back the whole debt. So will my heavenly Father do to you, unless each of you forgives his brother from his heart" (Mt 18,21-35).*

 Jesus reveals to us that God's mercy is great, infinite and immeasurable. Who is this mercy given to? To whoever lives his mercy, in proportion to the mercy received. It is an eternal truth. The Lord gives us his mercy just in anticipation of our own. His is conditioned to ours. The king condones an "infinite" debt in anticipation of a condoning of a "finite" debt. Since the "finite" debt was not condoned, the king withdraws his condone, his mercy, his forgiveness and then you go the way of the strictest justice. You asked for justice to the last penny, I ask for justice to the last penny.

Even the golden rule is founded on mercy in anticipation. However, this time it is the man that must foresee the mercy that he will need tomorrow and according to the forecast he will have to build mercy both for remote and near future. Since the future is always uncertain. What today you have, tomorrow may disappear, our forecasts must always be great. Even if we are in the highest holiness, we must live a great forgiveness in anticipation. Tomorrow we could be great sinners and certainly we will need both the mercy of God that of that of the neighbour. But if we were ruthless judges, who will use us mercy?

*"Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks, receives; and the one who seeks, finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened. Which one of you would hand his son a stone when he asks for a loaf of bread, or a snake when he asks for a fish? If you then, who are wicked, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give good things to those who ask him. "Do to others whatever you would have them do to you. This is the law and the prophets.*

The law of the Lord is perfect: mercy for mercy, justice for justice, clemency for clemency, rigor with rigor, pity for pity. You want the forgiveness of your sins, forgive the sins of the brothers. You want to be helped, help your brothers. You want to be appraised, appraise those beside you. You want God to use a great measure toward you, use a large measure toward the whole world. You want to be heard by the Lord, hear your brothers. It is an eternal truth: there is no mercy for those who are without mercy. In anticipation that we will remain without eternal mercy, we all must put the heart, mind, will to be great administrators of all mercy, both for the body and the spirit. From mercy, mercy is born.

Virgin Mary, Mother of the Redemption, Angels and Saints make us mercy operators.

### Settle with your opponent quickly

### Ez 18,21-28; Ps 129,1-8; Mt 5,20-26.

### 10 MARCH

The first agreement that we find in Holy Scripture is the one proposed by Abraham to his nephew Lot. He offered him to choose the land pleasing to him, the one more useful for his herds.

*From Egypt Abram went up to the Negeb with his wife and all that belonged to him, and Lot accompanied him. Now Abram was very rich in livestock, silver, and gold. From the Negeb he traveled by stages toward Bethel, to the place between Bethel and Ai where his tent had formerly stood, the site where he had first built the altar; and there he invoked the Lord by name. Lot, who went with Abram, also had flocks and herds and tents, so that the land could not support them if they stayed together; their possessions were so great that they could not dwell together. There were quarrels between the herdsmen of Abram's livestock and those of Lot's. (At this time the Canaanites and the Perizzites were occupying the land.) So Abram said to Lot: "Let there be no strife between you and me, or between your herdsmen and mine, for we are kinsmen. Is not the whole land at your disposal? Please separate from me. If you prefer the left, I will go to the right; if you prefer the right, I will go to the left." Lot looked about and saw how well watered the whole Jordan Plain was as far as Zoar, like the Lord 's own garden, or like Egypt. (This was before the Lord had destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah.) Lot, therefore, chose for himself the whole Jordan Plain and set out eastward. Thus they separated from each other; Abram stayed in the land of Canaan, while Lot settled among the cities of the Plain, pitching his tents near Sodom. Now the inhabitants of Sodom were very wicked in the sins they committed against the Lord (Gen 13,1-13).*

 The agreement made by Abraham reveals two very high truths: his great freedom before the things of this world, the great faith that moves his spirit. Abraham knows that his life is all from the Lord's blessing. The Lord is over all things of the earth. The land adds nothing to the blessing of his God. Peace for Him is the greatest good. He wants peace. He gets peace. But there is no pursuit of peace if you are not free from earthly things and you do not have in your hearts a great faith in God. Jesus wants his disciples to be always peace, forgiveness, reconciliation and mercy makers. He does not love his disciples quarrelsome, warmongering, stubborn and obstinate in the defence of the things of this world. St. James urges Christians to be always of submissive, gentle and peaceful wisdom. Never of devilish and satanic wisdom.

*Who among you is wise and understanding? Let him show his works by a good life in the humility that comes from wisdom. But if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast and be false to the truth. Wisdom of this kind does not come down from above but is earthly, unspiritual, demonic. For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there is disorder and every foul practice. But the wisdom from above is first of all pure, then peaceable, gentle, compliant, full of mercy and good fruits, without inconstancy or insincerity. And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace for those who cultivate peace (Jm 3,1-13-18).*

The agreement begins with the surrender of our language. Before a wrong of one of our brothers, we must always respond with kind, wise, gentle and friendly words.

*I tell you, unless your righteousness surpasses that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will not enter into the kingdom of heaven. "You have heard that it was said to your ancestors, 'You shall not kill; and whoever kills will be liable to judgment.' But I say to you, whoever is angry with his brother will be liable to judgment, and whoever says to his brother, 'Raqa,' will be answerable to the Sanhedrin, and whoever says, 'You fool,' will be liable to fiery Gehenna. Therefore, if you bring your gift to the altar, and there recall that your brother has anything against you, leave your gift there at the altar, go first and be reconciled with your brother, and then come and offer your gift. Settle with your opponent quickly while on the way to court with him. Otherwise your opponent will hand you over to the judge, and the judge will hand you over to the guard, and you will be thrown into prison. Amen, I say to you, you will not be released until you have paid the last penny.*

What is the principle emphasized by Jesus? He wants to nip any dispute, conflict, dispute, war in the first place where these things pop up and this place is the heart. When the heart is pure, everything becomes pure for the disciple and sees God in all things. But if the heart is impure, it will be a source of every fight.

Virgin Mary, Mother of the Redemption, Angels and Saints, always make us pure at heart.

**MARCH 2017**

## SECOND DECADE MARCH

### That you may be children of your heavenly Father

### Dt 26,16-19; Ps 118,1-2.4-5.7-8; Mt 5,43-48.

**11 MARCH**

How does a child of God live? St. Paul shows us the crucified Christ and urges Christians to have the same feelings: meekness, humility and total surrender to the Father.

*So then, my beloved, obedient as you have always been, not only when I am present but all the more now when I am absent, work out your salvation with fear and trembling. For God is the one who, for his good purpose, works in you both to desire and to work. Do everything without grumbling or questioning, that you may be blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine like lights in the world, as you hold on to the word of life, so that my boast for the day of Christ may be that I did not run in vain or labour in vain. But, even if I am poured out as a libation upon the sacrificial service of your faith, I rejoice and share my joy with all of you. In the same way you also should rejoice and share your joy with me* *(Phil 2,12-18).*

To the Apostle John God's children must not know sin. They must observe the Commandments, consecrating themselves to the love of the neighbour or brothers.

*See what love the Father has bestowed on us that we may be called the children of God. Yet so we are. The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him. Beloved, we are God's children now; what we shall be has not yet been revealed. We do know that when it is revealed we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. Everyone who has this hope based on him makes himself pure, as he is pure. Everyone who commits sin commits lawlessness, for sin is lawlessness. You know that he was revealed to take away sins, and in him there is no sin. No one who remains in him sins; no one who sins has seen him or known him.*

*Children, let no one deceive you. The person who acts in righteousness is righteous, just as he is righteous. Whoever sins belongs to the devil, because the devil has sinned from the beginning. Indeed, the Son of God was revealed to destroy the works of the devil. No one who is begotten by God commits sin, because God's seed remains in him; he cannot sin because he is begotten by God. In this way, the children of God and the children of the devil are made plain; no one who fails to act in righteousness belongs to God, nor anyone who does not love his brother. For this is the message you have heard from the beginning: we should love one another, unlike Cain who belonged to the evil one and slaughtered his brother. Why did he slaughter him? Because his own works were evil, and those of his brother righteous (1Jn 3,1-12).*

*Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ is begotten by God, and everyone who loves the father loves (also) the one begotten by him. In this way we know that we love the children of God when we love God and obey his commandments. For the love of God is this, that we keep his commandments. And his commandments are not burdensome, for whoever is begotten by God conquers the world. And the victory that conquers the world is our faith (1Jn 5,1-4).*

Lord Jesus, the source and principle of all truth, teaches that God's children must live the same merciful love of the Father. The Father gave his Son for the salvation of every man. The Christian loves letting himself be made by the Father a sacrifice of reconciliation and salvation. He gives all of himself to the Father so that through him the Father loves the world with the same love with which he has been able to love it through Christ and in Christ.

*"You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbour and hate your enemy.' But I say to you, love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be children of your heavenly Father, for he makes his sun rise on the bad and the good, and causes rain to fall on the just and the unjust. For if you love those who love you, what recompense will you have? Do not the tax collectors do the same? And if you greet your brothers only, what is unusual about that? Do not the pagans do the same? So be perfect, just as your heavenly Father is perfect.*

Christian, an instrument in the hands of the Father, loves all, without any distinction, good, bad, rich, poor, learned, ignorant, powerful, fragile, weak, sinners, saints, pious and impious. His life is given to the Father so that He pours all his love in the world through a man's heart. If the father cannot love for us, we are not his children yet.

Virgin Mary, Mother of the Redemption, Angels and Saints make us real instruments of love.

### And he was transfigured before them

### Gen 12,1-4a; Ps 32,4-5.18-20.22; 2 Tm 1,8b-10; Mt 17,1-9.

**12 MARCH – II SUNDAY OF LENT**

Never, to anyone before this moment, such a great grace has been granted. Moses asked the Lord to see his glory and saw only his back. He did not see his face.

*The Lord said to Moses, "This request, too, which you have just made, I will carry out, because you have found favour with me and you are my intimate friend." Then Moses said, "Do let me see your glory!" He answered, "I will make all my beauty pass before you, and in your presence I will pronounce my name, 'Lord'; I who show favours to whom I will, I who grant mercy to whom I will. But my face you cannot see, for no man sees me and still lives. Here," continued the Lord, "is a place near me where you shall station yourself on the rock. When my glory passes I will set you in the hollow of the rock and will cover you with my hand until I have passed by. Then I will remove my hand, so that you may see my back; but my face is not to be seen" (Ex 33,17-23).*

In the temple Isaiah feels the presence of the Lord, sees some Angels, but does not see the Lord. The invisible God still has not shown his face.

*In the year King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord seated on a high and lofty throne, with the train of his garment filling the temple. Seraphim were stationed above; each of them had six wings: with two they veiled their faces, with two they veiled their feet, and with two they hovered aloft. "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts!" they cried one to the other. "All the earth is filled with his glory!" At the sound of that cry, the frame of the door shook and the house was filled with smoke. Then I said, "Woe is me, I am doomed! For I am a man of unclean lips, living among a people of unclean lips; yet my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts!" (Is 6,1-5).*

The most sublime vision is the one told by Ezekiel. However, he describes the divine chariot. But even he does not see the face of God. He sees the signs of his presence.

*Over the heads of the living creatures, something like a firmament could be seen, seeming like glittering crystal, stretched straight out above their heads. Beneath the firmament their wings were stretched out, one toward the other. (Each of them had two covering his body.) Then I heard the sound of their wings, like the roaring of mighty waters, like the voice of the Almighty. When they moved, the sound of the tumult was like the din of an army. (And when they stood still, they lowered their wings.) Above the firmament over their heads something like a throne could be seen, looking like sapphire. Upon it was seated, up above, one who had the appearance of a man. Upward from what resembled his waist I saw what gleamed like electrum; downward from what resembled his waist I saw what looked like fire; he was surrounded with splendour. Like the bow which appears in the clouds on a rainy day was the splendour that surrounded him. Such was the vision of the likeness of the glory of the Lord. When I had seen it, I fell upon my face and heard a voice that said to me (Ez 1,22-28).*

Peter, John, James, have so high a mission to live tomorrow in the world as to require the contemplation of the eternal glory of Christ while he is still alive.

*After six days Jesus took Peter, James, and John his brother, and led them up a high mountain by themselves. And he was transfigured before them; his face shone like the sun and his clothes became white as light. And behold, Moses and Elijah appeared to them, conversing with him. Then Peter said to Jesus in reply, "Lord, it is good that we are here. If you wish, I will make three tents here, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah." While he was still speaking, behold, a bright cloud cast a shadow over them, then from the cloud came a voice that said, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to him." When the disciples heard this, they fell prostrate and were very much afraid. But Jesus came and touched them, saying, "Rise, and do not be afraid." And when the disciples raised their eyes, they saw no one else but Jesus alone. As they were coming down from the mountain, Jesus charged them, "Do not tell the vision to anyone until the Son of Man has been raised from the dead."*

The greater is the mission, and the higher is the revelation of the glory of the Lord. Was not St. Paul comforted first with the vision of light and then with his kidnapping in God's Heaven? Does not St. John see the whole history ruled by the Lord Jesus? Is there anything greater than his Revelation? Is not the Church history plastered with visions?

Virgin Mary, Mother of the Redemption, Angels and Saints make us true missionaries of Jesus.

### As (also) your Father is merciful

### Dn 9,4b-10; Ps 78,8-9.11.13; Lk 6,36-38.

### 13 MARCH

The mercy of the Lord in Scripture is characterized as a series with no interruption of infinite goodness works. After the fall of Adam in the Garden of Eden, every intervention of the Lord in history was a great proof of piety, compassion and love. It is for this punctuality of the Lord that salvation always comes on our earth. Even today, as yesterday, salvation is the fruit of this continuous manifestation of the Lord's mercy. We can truly say that we are saved by the love of our God. So the Psalm.

*Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good, For His loving kindness is everlasting. Give thanks to the God of gods, For His loving kindness is everlasting.**Give thanks to the Lord of lords, For His loving kindness is everlasting.**To Him who alone does great wonders, For His loving kindness is everlasting;**To Him who made the heavens with skill, For His loving kindness is everlasting;**To Him who spread out the earth above the waters, For His loving kindness is everlasting;**To Him who made the great lights, For His loving kindness is everlasting: The sun to rule by day, For His loving kindness is everlasting,**The moon and stars to rule by night, For His loving kindness is everlasting.* *To Him who smote the Egyptians in their firstborn, For His loving kindness is everlasting,**And brought Israel out from their midst, For His loving kindness is everlasting,**With a strong hand and an outstretched arm, For His loving kindness is everlasting. To Him who divided the Red Sea asunder, For His loving kindness is everlasting,*

*And made Israel pass through the midst of it, For His loving kindness is everlasting;**But He overthrew Pharaoh and his army in the Red Sea, For His loving kindness is everlasting.**To Him who led His people through the wilderness, For His loving kindness is everlasting;**To Him who smote great kings, For His loving kindness is everlasting, And slew mighty kings, For His loving kindness is everlasting:**Sihon, king of the Amorites, For His loving kindness is everlasting,**And Og, king of Bashan, For His loving kindness is everlasting,**And gave their land as a heritage, For His loving kindness is everlasting,**Even a heritage to Israel His servant, For His loving kindness is everlasting.* *Who remembered us in our low estate, For His loving kindness is everlasting,**And has rescued us from our adversaries, For His loving kindness is everlasting;**Who gives food to all flesh, For His loving kindness is everlasting.**Give thanks to the God of heaven, For His loving kindness is everlasting (Ps 136 (135) 1-26).*

Even Jesus' life on our earth is an uninterrupted work of mercy, pity, compassion and goodness. This work finds its culmination on Golgotha. Here Jesus is sacrificed for the redemption of the world in obedience to the command of the Father's eternal love. If God lives to express his love, if Christ Jesus in his humanity was entirely a work of charity, can a Christian act differently than the Father and the Son? Since he is a son in the Son, he, too, must live by transforming his whole life on earth into a work of charity, without any interruption. He lives to love, acts to save, works to do every good according to his talents, his charismas and his ministry. He is not asked to act as God, but as a man of God, filled with the Holy Spirit, rich with every grace and heavenly blessing. He must love according to the gifts received.

*Be merciful, just as (also) your Father is merciful. "Stop judging and you will not be judged. Stop condemning and you will not be condemned. Forgive and you will be forgiven. Give and gifts will be given to you; a good measure, packed together, shaken down, and overflowing, will be poured into your lap. For the measure with which you measure will in return be measured out to you."*

It is right that on the works of mercy a word of evangelical clarity is told. It is truth. Never has the mercy of the Christian to come from the heart of the Christian. It must always spring from the Holy Spirit that bestows his gifts according to his will, assigns the ministries according to the wishes of the Father, indicates and reveals to whom, where, when he must bear the comfort of his mercy. If mercy is not wholly governed by the Holy Spirit, it will never turn into love of salvation. If it comes from the heart of man, it will produce neither truth, nor charity, nor conversion in the hearts, because the Christian has separated himself from the source of true salvation which is the Spirit of God. From the beginning we know that we do not operate salvation if we give to our ministry tasks that do not belong to it. For example: A priest must take care of the things of God.

Virgin Mary, Mother of the Redemption, Angels and Saints make us mercy operators.

### The greatest among you must be your servant

### Is 1,10.16-20; Ps 49,8-9.16-17.21.23; Mt 23,1-12.

**14 MARCH**

Chapter XXIII of the Gospel according to Matthew does not speak to the Pharisees and scribes of Judaism, to the opponents of Christ Jesus, eager for his death, because according to their judgment Jesus had come to ruin them. The cavernous and hellish voice of the evil spirits who were opposed to Jesus because they did not want to leave the bodies of men is the same voice of the scribes and Pharisees, who do not want to get out of the body of the religion and faith they have invaded. Like Satan occupies the bodies, so they occupy Scriptures and all religion. Jesus could do nothing for their exorcism. It was they who took him out of history, hanging him on the tree of the cross.

This is history. Jesus does not want that in his kingdom one lives and acts in the manner of the scribes and Pharisees and chief priests. He does not want that his Gospel is occupied by hearts who live in the flesh, think according to the flesh, fighting the Spirit of God who is light, truth, righteousness, holiness, love, mercy, compassion, piety, perennial listening and total obedience. Jesus wants his Word to occupy the heart, not the heart to invade his Word. It is the Word that needs to transform the heart of stone into a heart according to the Spirit, not the heart to turn into stone the Word of the Spirit. This danger is always latent and hidden. It's easy to make the Gospel of stone.

Every true "revolution" that you want to work in the Church must take place in the heart. We can change all the facilities, but if the heart is of stone, walks according to the flesh, it will occupy the new facilities and invade them, turning them into new stone structures. It is easy to turn the Gospel into a stone structure. Instead, the heart is changed and instantly the stone structures, even older ones, will become structures according to the Holy Spirit. They are no longer occupied by the thought according to the flesh, but by that according to the Spirit of God. But only one can change the heart: the Spirit of the Lord that bursts with all his divine and eternal omnipotence of grace. The Church history attests us that the Spirit of God was always the one that transformed what was stone into spirit, transforming many hearts of stone into hearts of spirit. Without his powerful action, the Church would be a fossil or a ruin.

*Then Jesus spoke to the crowds and to his disciples, saying, "The scribes and the Pharisees have taken their seat on the chair of Moses. Therefore, do and observe all things whatsoever they tell you, but do not follow their example. For they preach but they do not practice. They tie up heavy burdens (hard to carry) and lay them on people's shoulders, but they will not lift a finger to move them. All their works are performed to be seen. They widen their phylacteries and lengthen their tassels. They love places of honour at banquets, seats of honour in synagogues, greetings in marketplaces, and the salutation 'Rabbi.' As for you, do not be called 'Rabbi.' You have but one teacher, and you are all brothers. Call no one on earth your father; you have but one Father in heaven. Do not be called 'Master'; you have but one master, the Messiah. The greatest among you must be your servant. Whoever exalts himself will be humbled; but whoever humbles himself will be exalted.*

The first rule to give perennial vitality to the Church of Jesus is a perennial obedience to the shepherds, to those who in the name of Jesus cure the flock. Obedience must be the same one that Jesus gave Caiaphas and the Sanhedrin, letting himself be delivered by them to the power of Rome. It must be the same one that Jesus gave to Pilate, lowering himself to him who has placed him in the hands of the soldiers to be crucified. Without this obedience, the Church will never be according to the Spirit of God, she will live according to the flesh. But never might a Church that lives according to the flesh, give salvation. Salvation is generated by the Church that lives according to the Spirit of the Lord.

The second rule is that no one is raised above the others, is proclaimed leader of others. This means giving the Holy Spirit always the first place. It is He who must inspire, give gifts, create ministries, assign seats, point the way forward to every heart to manifest the splendour of the Gospel to every heart.

Virgin Mary, Mother of the Redemption, Angels and Saints make us true Church of Jesus.

### Just so, the Son of Man

### Jer 18,18-20; Ps 30,5-6.14-15a.16; Mt 20,17-28.

### 15 MARCH

Jesus reveals his disciples the substantial difference between the kingdom of God and that of men. Today he reveals it with words, tomorrow he will reveal it with life, entering Jerusalem riding on a humble donkey and then declaring to Pilate that his kingdom is not of this world. His is not a kingdom of bodies, but of spirits and of souls.

*When they drew near Jerusalem and came to Bethphage on the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples, saying to them, "Go into the village opposite you, and immediately you will find an ass tethered, and a colt with her. Untie them and bring them here to me. And if anyone should say anything to you, reply, 'The master has need of them.' Then he will send them at once." This happened so that what had been spoken through the prophet might be fulfilled: "Say to daughter Zion, 'Behold, your king comes to you, meek and riding on an ass, and on a colt, the foal of a beast of burden.'" The disciples went and did as Jesus had ordered them. They brought the ass and the colt and laid their cloaks over them, and he sat upon them. The very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, while others cut branches from the trees and strewed them on the road. The crowds preceding him and those following kept crying out and saying: "Hosanna to the Son of David; blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord; hosanna in the highest." And when he entered Jerusalem the whole city was shaken and asked, "Who is this?" And the crowds replied, "This is Jesus the prophet, from Nazareth in Galilee" (Mt 21,1-11).*

*So Pilate went back into the praetorium and summoned Jesus and said to him, "Are you the King of the Jews?" Jesus answered, "Do you say this on your own or have others told you about me?" Pilate answered, "I am not a Jew, am I? Your own nation and the chief priests handed you over to me. What have you done?" Jesus answered, "My kingdom does not belong to this world. If my kingdom did belong to this world, my attendants (would) be fighting to keep me from being handed over to the Jews. But as it is, my kingdom is not here." So Pilate said to him, "Then you are a king?" Jesus answered, "You say I am a king. For this I was born and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who belongs to the truth listens to my voice." Pilate said to him, "What is truth?" (Jn 18,33-38).*

In the kingdom of Jesus one does not command, he serves love, justice, truth, mercy, grace, redemption, salvation and eternal life. One is not above others, but he takes the last place. One does not live by contrast, envy, jealousy, but of communion, union and unity. The heights of power are not climbed, one sinks into the lowest of the lowest, reaching the edge of invisibility for love. Not thrones but crosses are occupied. In the kingdom of Christ Jesus one stays well only on the cross of the greatest love and on the altar of the purest and holiest holocaust. One does not go in search of glory, but of shame and humiliation.

*As Jesus was going up to Jerusalem, he took the twelve (disciples) aside by themselves, and said to them on the way, "Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be handed over to the chief priests and the scribes, and they will condemn him to death, and hand him over to the Gentiles to be mocked and scourged and crucified, and he will be raised on the third day." Then the mother of the sons of Zebedee approached him with her sons and did him homage, wishing to ask him for something. He said to her, "What do you wish?" She answered him, "Command that these two sons of mine sit, one at your right and the other at your left, in your kingdom." Jesus said in reply, "You do not know what you are asking. Can you drink the cup that I am going to drink?" They said to him, "We can." He replied, "My cup you will indeed drink, but to sit at my right and at my left (, this) is not mine to give but is for those for whom it has been prepared by my Father." When the ten heard this, they became indignant at the two brothers. But Jesus summoned them and said, "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and the great ones make their authority over them felt. But it shall not be so among you. Rather, whoever wishes to be great among you shall be your servant; whoever wishes to be first among you shall be your slave. Just so, the Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many."*

The disciples of Jesus still have a very worldly vision of the kingdom of Jesus Christ. But one will always have a worldly idea of the Kingdom of God if he remains in the flesh. The flesh thinks from the flesh, the spirit thinks from the Spirit. To think according to the Holy Spirit we have to be transformed into spiritual beings and that requires a long path of asceticism. If the disciple remains in the flesh, he will think and see the Kingdom of God from the flesh.

Virgin Mary, Mother of the Redemption, Angels and Saints make us be spiritual beings.

### From the netherworld, where he was in torment

### Jer 17,5-10; Ps 1,1-4.6; Lk 16,19-31.

**16 MARCH**

In Scripture the damned also talk to those who are still on earth, showing their miserable eternal fate, so that others do not follow them in their folly and ignorance. In the Book of Wisdom, they proclaim the brevity of life in the body, while the life that comes after is eternal. What good is a shortness of abuses and being damned forever? What good is it enjoying yourself in evilness for a moment and then ending up in eternal torment?

*Then shall the just one with great assurance confront his oppressors who set at nought his labours. Seeing this, they shall be shaken with dreadful fear, and amazed at the unlooked-for salvation. They shall say among themselves, rueful and groaning through anguish of spirit: "This is he whom once we held as a laughingstock and as a type for mockery, fools that we were! His life we accounted madness, and his death dishonoured. See how he is accounted among the sons of God; how his lot is with the saints! We, then, have strayed from the way of truth, and the light of justice did not shine for us, and the sun did not rise for us. We had our fill of the ways of mischief and of ruin; we journeyed through impassable deserts, but the way of the Lord we knew not. What did our pride avail us? What have wealth and its boastfulness afforded us?*

*All of them passed like a shadow and like a fleeting rumour; Like a ship traversing the heaving water, of which, when it has passed, no trace can be found, no path of its keel in the waves. Or like a bird flying through the air; no evidence of its course is to be found - But the fluid air, lashed by the beat of pinions, and cleft by the rushing force Of speeding wings, is traversed: and afterward no mark of passage can be found in it. Or as, when an arrow has been shot at a mark, the parted air straightway flows together again so that none discerns the way it went through - Even so we, once born, abruptly came to nought and held no sign of virtue to display, but were consumed in our wickedness." Yes, the hope of the wicked is like thistledown borne on the wind, and like fine, tempest-driven foam; Like smoke scattered by the wind, and like the passing memory of the nomad camping for a single day. But the just live forever, and in the Lord is their recompense, and the thought of them is with the Most High. Therefore shall they receive the splendid crown, the beauteous diadem, from the hand of the Lord - For he shall shelter them with his right hand, and protect them with his arm (Wis 5,1-16).*

The Gospel also gives voice to a rich damned. What does he care about? That his brothers do not join him in that place of torments. That is why he wishes that Abraham sent someone to warn, admonish them severely so that they change their lives. Abraham's response is dry. The Lord has already taken steps to warn the man. He did this by means of the Law and the Prophets. This is the way of truth and life.

*"There was a rich man who dressed in purple garments and fine linen and dined sumptuously each day. And lying at his door was a poor man named Lazarus, covered with sores, who would gladly have eaten his fill of the scraps that fell from the rich man's table. Dogs even used to come and lick his sores. When the poor man died, he was carried away by angels to the bosom of Abraham. The rich man also died and was buried, and from the netherworld, where he was in torment, he raised his eyes and saw Abraham far off and Lazarus at his side. And he cried out, 'Father Abraham, have pity on me. Send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, for I am suffering torment in these flames.' Abraham replied, 'My child, remember that you received what was good during your lifetime while Lazarus likewise received what was bad; but now he is comforted here, whereas you are tormented. Moreover, between us and you a great chasm is established to prevent anyone from crossing who might wish to go from our side to yours or from your side to ours.' He said, 'Then I beg you, father, send him to my father's house, for I have five brothers, so that he may warn them, lest they too come to this place of torment.' But Abraham replied, 'They have Moses and the prophets. Let them listen to them.' He said, 'Oh no, father Abraham, but if someone from the dead goes to them, they will repent.' Then Abraham said, 'If they will not listen to Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded if someone should rise from the dead.'"*

We have the Gospel. But who believes today that it is the Word of eternal truth? Is not hell for many lovers of the Gospel a literary genre, a way of saying, without any objective truth? We have the Gospel. But do we believe in the Gospel?

Virgin Mary, Mother of the Redemption, Angels and Saints make us believe in the Gospel.

### The stone that the builders rejected

### Gen 37,3-4.12-13a.17b-28; Ps 104,16-21; Mt 21,33-43.45-46.

### 17 MARCH

Christ Jesus is the rejected stone. The builders have a false science, a false discernment and a false technique, because they have a bad conscience. They recognize the stone. They discard it, because otherwise they should have given the house of God a new structure. But God decided to give stability, truth, news, novelty to his house only through this stone, rather only this stone is the House of God. Every other stone must comply with it, be inserted into it, become with it a single stone if it wants to be the stone of the building of God. The builders themselves are discarded, declared unfit to build God's building. The house will be given to builders who follow the Divine Engineer.

*Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good; For His loving kindness is everlasting.**Oh let Israel say, “His loving kindness is everlasting.”**Oh let the house of Aaron say, “His loving kindness is everlasting.”**Oh let those who fear the Lord say, “His loving kindness is everlasting.”* *From my distress I called upon the Lord; The Lord answered me and set me in a large place.**The Lord is for me; I will not fear; What can man do to me?**The Lord is for me among those who help me; Therefore I will look with satisfaction on those who hate me.**It is better to take refuge in the Lord Than to trust in man.**It is better to take refuge in the Lord Than to trust in princes.**All nations surrounded me; In the name of the Lord I will surely cut them off.* *They surrounded me, yes, they surrounded me; In the name of the Lord I will surely cut them off.**They surrounded me like bees; They were extinguished as a fire of thorns; In the name of the Lord I will surely cut them off.**You pushed me violently so that I was falling, But the Lord helped me.**The Lord is my strength and song, And He has become my salvation.**The sound of joyful shouting and salvation is in the tents of the righteous; The right hand of the Lord does valiantly.**The right hand of the Lord is exalted; The right hand of the Lord does valiantly.**I will not die, but live, And tell of the works of the Lord.*

*The Lord has disciplined me severely, But He has not given me over to death.**Open to me the gates of righteousness; I shall enter through them, I shall give thanks to the Lord.**This is the gate of the Lord; The righteous will enter through it.**I shall give thanks to You, for You have answered me, And You have become my salvation. The stone which the builders rejected Has become the chief corner stone.**This is the Lord’s doing; It is marvellous in our eyes.**This is the day which the Lord has made; Let us rejoice and be glad in it.**O Lord, do save, we beseech You; O Lord, we beseech You, do send prosperity!**Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord; We have blessed you from the house of the Lord.**The Lord is God, and He has given us light; Bind the festival sacrifice with cords to the horns of the altar.**You are my God, and I give thanks to You; You are my God, I extol You.**Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good; For His loving kindness is everlasting (Ps 118 (117) 1-29).*

The history of salvation is placed entirely in the hands of the Lord. Man can also discard. He can also lead out of the vineyard and kill. God comes, takes the stone and builds his house with it, rather this stone, in this stone his house is.

*"Hear another parable. There was a landowner who planted a vineyard, put a hedge around it, dug a wine press in it, and built a tower. Then he leased it to tenants and went on a journey. When vintage time drew near, he sent his servants to the tenants to obtain his produce. But the tenants seized the servants and one they beat, another they killed, and a third they stoned. Again he sent other servants, more numerous than the first ones, but they treated them in the same way. Finally, he sent his son to them, thinking, 'They will respect my son.' But when the tenants saw the son, they said to one another, 'This is the heir. Come, let us kill him and acquire his inheritance.' They seized him, threw him out of the vineyard, and killed him. What will the owner of the vineyard do to those tenants when he comes?" They answered him, "He will put those wretched men to a wretched death and lease his vineyard to other tenants who will give him the produce at the proper times." Jesus said to them, "Did you never read in the scriptures: 'The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone; by the Lord has this been done, and it is wonderful in our eyes'? Therefore, I say to you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people that will produce its fruit. When the chief priests and the Pharisees heard his parables, they knew that he was speaking about them. And although they were attempting to arrest him, they feared the crowds, for they regarded him as a prophet.*

They are greatly mistaken, because they are bad builders those who today, are working to discard Christ as God's only home, presenting hovels as divine palaces.

Virgin Mary, Mother of the Redemption, Angels and Saints make us live stone in Christ.

### He got up and went back to his father

### Mi 7,14-15.18-20; Ps 102,1-4.9-12; Lk 15,1-3.11-32.

### 18 MARCH

In the parable of the Prodigal son, or the merciful Father, all the love with which the Father welcomes the son who returns to his home, is revealed. The teaching of Jesus is clear. There is not only the obligation for the shepherd to look for the lost sheep, or the need for the woman to find the coin she lost. There is still a greater obligation that wants that whoever repented goes back to the house of God, which is his Church and his community, is accepted. Welcoming is the supreme law of love. The Lord had already announced this truth through the prophet Ezekiel. God does not want the death of the sinner, but that he be gets converted and lives. He is the God of life, not death.

He can have the desires of the Father and His divine sensibility of love, mercy and pity whoever is in the heart of the Father. He is in the heart of the Father who from a man according to the flesh lets himself be transformed into a man by the Holy Spirit according to the Spirit of God. Without this step from the flesh to the Spirit, one acts according to the flesh, thinks after the flesh and welcomes according to the flesh. Never might he welcome according to the Spirit. The eldest son testifies of being in the flesh and not the spirit. This is revealed by his thought which is a thought of flesh and not of the Holy Spirit. He thinks of a kid to be eaten with friends. He does not have the Father's heart in his chest. His heart is of stone.

*The tax collectors and sinners were all drawing near to listen to him, but the Pharisees and scribes began to complain, saying, "This man welcomes sinners and eats with them." So to them he addressed this parable. Then he said, "A man had two sons, and the younger son said to his father, 'Father, give me the share of your estate that should come to me.' So the father divided the property between them. After a few days, the younger son collected all his belongings and set off to a distant country where he squandered his inheritance on a life of dissipation. When he had freely spent everything, a severe famine struck that country, and he found himself in dire need. So he hired himself out to one of the local citizens who sent him to his farm to tend the swine. And he longed to eat his fill of the pods on which the swine fed, but nobody gave him any. Coming to his senses he thought, 'How many of my father's hired workers have more than enough food to eat, but here am I, dying from hunger. I shall get up and go to my father and I shall say to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I no longer deserve to be called your son; treat me as you would treat one of your hired workers."' So he got up and went back to his father.*

*While he was still a long way off, his father caught sight of him, and was filled with compassion. He ran to his son, embraced him and kissed him. His son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you; I no longer deserve to be called your son.' But his father ordered his servants, 'Quickly bring the finest robe and put it on him; put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. Take the fattened calf and slaughter it. Then let us celebrate with a feast, because this son of mine was dead, and has come to life again; he was lost, and has been found.' Then the celebration began. Now the older son had been out in the field and, on his way back, as he neared the house, he heard the sound of music and dancing. He called one of the servants and asked what this might mean. The servant said to him, 'Your brother has returned and your father has slaughtered the fattened calf because he has him back safe and sound.' He became angry, and when he refused to enter the house, his father came out and pleaded with him. He said to his father in reply, 'Look, all these years I served you and not once did I disobey your orders; yet you never gave me even a young goat to feast on with my friends. But when your son returns who swallowed up your property with prostitutes, for him you slaughter the fattened calf.' He said to him, 'My son, you are here with me always; everything I have is yours. But now we must celebrate and rejoice, because your brother was dead and has come to life again; he was lost and has been found.'"*

We can write a thousand programs, devise a thousand projects and a thousand pastorals, determine that the reception must be the only standard of our relations, but a dog will always welcome as a dog, a lion as a lion, a tiger as a tiger, a snake as a snake, a man with a heart of stone as a man with a heart of stone. The ministry of the Church is not that of writing programs, but that of making hearts new with the power of the Spirits that pours from her breast. The Father's heart is in the heart of Christ, Christ welcomes. The heart of Satan is in the heart of the scribes and Pharisees, never might they welcome. Not only do they lack the heart of the Father, they are with the evil heart.

Virgin Mary, Mother of the Redemption, Angels and Saints make us with a new heart in Christ.

### My food is to do the will of the one who sent me

### Ex 17,3-7; Ps 94,1-2.6.8-9; Rm 5,1-2.5-8; Jn 4,5-42.

**19 MARCH – III SUNDAY OF LENT**

Today, Jesus reveals to his Church how the mission of salvation is fulfilled. If a missionary of Christ wants to succeed in his work of redemption of the world, he has to imitate in all his Master and Lord. As He, he has to feed himself only on the Heavenly Father's will. The will of God must be the one and only food of his life. Who does not do the will of God, he might never teach, give, preach and proclaim it to the world. He does not know it, because he does not live it in his heart, in his spirit and in his body. Being he out of the Father's Word, he might never lead a single a heart into it. To the will of God one leads from the will of God, to the Gospel from the Gospel.

From the will of the Father, from the Gospel, from obedience to the Word, he must always speak with the power of the Holy Spirit. a profound humility is needed. Conversion is not the work of a man, but of the Spirit. Only the Spirit knows what word touches a heart and only He can say it. If the missionary does not ask with timely prayer, elevated case to case, soul to soul, heart to heart, to the Spirit of God the right word, no man ever will be converted. He might also say many words, but none will enter the heart of who is before him. The Spirit knows the heart and the Spirit must speak to it. The Holy Spirit in Jesus touches the heart of the woman with a single word. Then everything becomes easier. If we looked in the Gospel with what words Jesus touches hearts, we would be surprised and full of wonder. They are often simple words!

*The woman said to him, "Sir, I can see that you are a prophet. Our ancestors worshiped on this mountain; but you people say that the place to worship is in Jerusalem." Jesus said to her, "Believe me, woman, the hour is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. You people worship what you do not understand; we worship what we understand, because salvation is from the Jews. But the hour is coming, and is now here, when true worshipers will worship the Father in Spirit and truth; and indeed the Father seeks such people to worship him. God is Spirit, and those who worship him must worship in Spirit and truth." The woman said to him, "I know that the Messiah is coming, the one called the Anointed; when he comes, he will tell us everything." Jesus said to her, "I am he, the one who is speaking with you." At that moment his disciples returned, and were amazed that he was talking with a woman, but still no one said, "What are you looking for?" or "Why are you talking with her?" The woman left her water jar and went into the town and said to the people, "Come see a man who told me everything I have done. Could he possibly be the Messiah?" They went out of the town and came to him.*

*Meanwhile, the disciples urged him, "Rabbi, eat." But he said to them, "I have food to eat of which you do not know." So the disciples said to one another, "Could someone have brought him something to eat?" Jesus said to them, "My food is to do the will of the one who sent me and to finish his work. Do you not say, 'In four months the harvest will be here'? I tell you, look up and see the fields ripe for the harvest. The reaper is already receiving his payment and gathering crops for eternal life, so that the sower and reaper can rejoice together. For here the saying is verified that 'One sows and another reaps.' I sent you to reap what you have not worked for; others have done the work, and you are sharing the fruits of their work." Many of the Samaritans of that town began to believe in him because of the word of the woman who testified, "He told me everything I have done." When the Samaritans came to him, they invited him to stay with them; and he stayed there two days. Many more began to believe in him because of his word, and they said to the woman, "We no longer believe because of your word; for we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this is truly the saviour of the world."*

The mission consists of two more truths: the communion between sower and gatherer. Not all sow, not all gather, not all reap, not all store in barns. One begins and the other completes. One hoes the land, the other sows, another reaps, the other threshes, the other brings the good wheat into the barn. Communion is everything. The other truth wants that everyone gets delivered to Christ. The missionary is only a carrier. He takes the hearts, leads them to Christ and delivers them to Him. His mission ends. You must retreat. The hearts now have to walk with their spouse and Lord.

Virgin Mary, Mother of the Redemption, Angels and Saints make us true missionaries of Jesus.

### She will bear a son and you are to name him Jesus

### 2 Sam 7,4-5a.12-14a.16; Ps 88,2-5.27.29; Rm 4,13.16-18.22; Mt 1,16.18-21.24a.

### 20 MARCH

The Son of God and not the Son of David is born from the Virgin Mary. But Jesus is the true Son of God and must be true Son of David. Who will give the true Son of God, the true seed, the true descent of David? The Lord chose Joseph, a righteous and God-fearing man, so that he constitutes His Eternal Son, now become the Son of man, so that he becomes the Son of David. If Joseph had taken in marriage the Virgin Mary, in a natural way, Jesus would have remained only the Son of God made a man's son. The Lord puts an uncertainty in the heart of Joseph and for it he decides to send Mary back in secret. He wants to stand out of the life of the Mother of God.

Now we can move on from the purely natural fact to the supernatural event. The Angel of the Lord comes. He orders Joseph to take Mary as his wife. He reveals him who the child that Mary carries in her womb is from: it is through the work of the Holy Spirit. Mary is Mother but also Virgin. She is all of her God, so he too must be all of his Lord. He too will have to be a father and a virgin. He will be a father by a spiritual conception. In Mary, the Holy Spirit conceived the Word of God in her womb. In Joseph always the Spirit of God conceives Jesus in his spirit, in his heart and in his soul. Jesus, through the work of the Holy Spirit, will be a fruit of his heart, his spirit and his soul. He will be his true son. He will adopt him, will make him his, because he is already his by reason of heart and soul. He will give him a name. For him the Son of God also becomes the Son of David. As a true son of David is the Messiah. He can fulfil the salvation of humanity. He can fulfill all prophecies of the Father.

That of Joseph is not legal, formal, juridical and moral adoption. It is a true spiritual generation by the work of the Holy Spirit in his heart and in his soul. Even if in a totally different way, what the Holy Spirit works in the bosom of Mother of God, he also operates it in the heart and soul of Joseph. After this powerful action of the Holy Spirit in him, Joseph does not see Jesus as a stranger. He sees him as his true son. He receives him as his true son, recognizes him, gives him the name, nourishes, protects and takes care of him. Like Joseph is true husband of Mary, even if she is a virgin forever, because both he and she were only of the Lord, so Jesus is the true son of Joseph. It is the Spirit of the Lord that has done this wonder. It is not Joseph that generates Jesus in Mary so that he becomes father. It is the Holy Spirit that generates Jesus in Joseph in a new, spiritual and divine way. God is infinitely beyond the laws of nature. Nothing is really impossible with God.

*Jacob the father of Joseph, the husband of Mary. Of her was born Jesus who is called the Messiah. Now this is how the birth of Jesus Christ came about. When his mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found with child through the holy Spirit. Joseph her husband, since he was a righteous man, yet unwilling to expose her to shame, decided to divorce her quietly. Such was his intention when, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary your wife into your home. For it is through the holy Spirit that this child has been conceived in her. She will bear a son and you are to name him Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins." All this took place to fulfil what the Lord had said through the prophet: "Behold, the virgin shall be with child and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel," which means "God is with us." When Joseph awoke, he did as the angel of the Lord had commanded him.*

For God to be able to create the wonders of his love, obedience is required. As the Son of God becomes the Son of Man by the obedience of Mary, so the Son of Man becomes the Son of David by the obedience of Joseph. He is roused from sleep and performs the order received. He is totally made available and at the service of his God. He also, like the Virgin Mary, says, "Behold the servant of the Lord; let it be to me according to the word that has been communicated me. That you want and that I want. That you ask of me and that I do." I am yours forever, virgin forever.

Virgin Mary, Mother of the Redemption, Angels and Saints make us true servants of the Lord.

**MARCH 2017**

## THIRD DECADE OF MARCH

### In anger his master handed him over to the torturers

### Dn 3,25.34-43; Ps 24,4.9a; Mt 18,21-35.

### 21 MARCH

The mercy of God is not only conditioned to our mercy, but it is also given in prevision, in view of our mercy. The servant with un-payable debt was released from all his obligations in anticipation that he would have absolved of all debt those who were servants like him and equal to him. He has not forgiven the debt of the servant and his un-payable debt was back on his shoulders. This truth must be for all a stern warning. God's forgiveness is not absolute. Once given, it is given. It is always given *"under condition"*. I forgive you if you forgive all your debtors. But we also, when we ask for forgiveness, we say to the Lord: *"Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors."* We give God the quantify, the measure, the plenty of his mercy. If our lot is empty, even that of God empties.

Another law of mercy has it that before you enter the justice. And the full observance of each commandment is justice, that forces you to give back what has been defrauded to God and to men, taken to God and to men, with an adequate reparation. A thief, to enter the mercy of forgiveness, must return what he stole. One that said slander, false witness, must remedy any vicious rumour he spread in the hearts. One that took away his day to God, this also is right to be donated to the Lord. What is the other might never be ours. Let us take away from our home and our hearts that which is the other’s; let us give the other what is his, and God will give us the abundance of his mercy, his forgiveness and his piety. These obligations concerning mercy are not preached anymore. It is a great evil!

*Then Peter approaching asked him, "Lord, if my brother sins against me, how often must I forgive him? As many as seven times?" Jesus answered, "I say to you, not seven times but seventy-seven times. That is why the kingdom of heaven may be likened to a king who decided to settle accounts with his servants. When he began the accounting, a debtor was brought before him who owed him a huge amount. Since he had no way of paying it back, his master ordered him to be sold, along with his wife, his children, and all his property, in payment of the debt. At that, the servant fell down, did him homage, and said, 'Be patient with me, and I will pay you back in full.' Moved with compassion the master of that servant let him go and forgave him the loan.*

*When that servant had left, he found one of his fellow servants who owed him a much smaller amount. He seized him and started to choke him, demanding, 'Pay back what you owe.' Falling to his knees, his fellow servant begged him, 'Be patient with me, and I will pay you back.' But he refused. Instead, he had him put in prison until he paid back the debt. Now when his fellow servants saw what had happened, they were deeply disturbed, and went to their master and reported the whole affair. His master summoned him and said to him, 'You wicked servant! I forgave you your entire debt because you begged me to. Should you not have had pity on your fellow servant, as I had pity on you?' Then in anger his master handed him over to the torturers until he should pay back the whole debt. So will my heavenly Father do to you, unless each of you forgives his brother from his heart."*

Regardless if the other gives, does not give, wants, does not want forgiveness, the Word of Jesus is clear. We are always asked to forgive. As it depends on us, we must always be instruments of God's peace. Indeed, Jesus invites us to be the ones to offer forgiveness and reconciliation. He wants us like his Father. It is the Father who sent Jesus to be the victim of atonement for the sins of the world. The man can accept Christ and even reject him. But the Lord will be right in the eyes of the damned. No one might accuse him of little love, a little mercy and a little piety.

This is our sin that consumes and destroys the whole Gospel: we no longer believe that the Lord will also put us in the hands of the torturers if we will not have heartily forgiven our brothers, we will not have entered into the greatest justice. Our sin has reduced to lie to the Word of Jesus. Against the Gospel we say that God does not judge, that there is no perdition, no judgment of eternal death and no demand of justice. Reducing the Gospel to falsehood, all of human life becomes falsity.

Virgin Mary, Mother of the Redemption, Angels and Saints, give us the truth of the Gospel.

### Will be called greatest in the kingdom of heaven

### Dt 4,1.5-9; Ps 147,12-13.15-16.19-20; Mt 5,17-19.

**22 MARCH**

In the Old Testament there is no distinction between large and small precepts. We know in it the great Psalm which is a very long prayer all aimed at contemplation, meditation and manifestation to the Lord to observe his every precept. Man's life is in the law. The Law is in the precepts.

*You have ordained Your precepts, That we should keep them diligently. With all my heart I have sought You; Do not let me wander from Your commandments. I shall [*[*r*](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+119&version=NASB#fen-NASB-15946r)*]delight in Your commandments, Which I love.* *And I shall lift up my hands to Your commandments, Which I love; And I will meditate on Your statutes. I am a companion of all those who fear You, And of those who keep Your precepts.* *The earth is full of Your loving kindness, O Lord; Teach me Your statutes. The arrogant have forged a lie against me; With all my heart I will observe Your precepts. They almost destroyed me on earth, But as for me, I did not forsake Your precepts.* *Revive me according to Your loving kindness, So that I may keep the testimony of Your mouth. I will never forget Your precepts, For by them You have revived me. I understand more than the aged, Because I have observed Your precepts.**I have restrained my feet from every evil way, That I may keep Your word. The wicked have laid a snare for me, Yet I have not gone astray from Your precepts.**I have inherited Your testimonies forever, For they are the joy of my heart. Do not leave me to my oppressors. Be surety for Your servant for good; Do not let the arrogant oppress me. I am small and despised, Yet I do not forget Your precepts. I cried with all my heart; answer me, O Lord! I will observe Your statutes. You are near, O Lord, And all Your commandments are truth. For I have chosen Your precepts.* *I long for Your salvation, O Lord, And Your law is my delight (Ps 118, 4-173).*

Deuteronomy, other Psalms, the Book of Proverbs, Sirach, Malachi speak of the precepts of the Lord. The Law is in the precepts. Life is in their observance.

*Take to heart these words which I enjoin on you today (Dt 6, 6). All the paths of the Lord are loving kindness and truth To those who keep His covenant and His testimonies (Ps 25, 10). To those who keep His covenant And remember His precepts to do them (Sal 103, 18). “If your sons will keep My covenant And My testimony which I will teach them, Their sons also shall sit upon your throne forever” (Sal 132, 12). My son, if you receive my words and treasure my commands (Pr 2, 1).  My son, forget not my teaching, keep in mind my commands (Pr 3, 1). He taught me, and said to me: "Let your heart hold fast my words: keep my commands, that you may live! (Pr 4, 4). My son, keep my words, and treasure my commands (Pr 7, 1). Keep my commands and live, my teaching as the apple of your eye (Pr 7, 2).* *Reflect on the precepts of the Lord, let his commandments be your constant meditation; Then he will enlighten your mind, and the wisdom you desire he will grant (Sir 6, 37). He says to them, "Avoid all evil"; each of them he gives precepts about his fellow men (Sir 17, 12). Since the days of your fathers you have turned aside from my statutes, and have not kept them. Return to me, and I will return to you, says the Lord of hosts. Yet you say, "How must we return?" (Ml 3, 7).*

Why then does the Holy Spirit reintroduce in the Gospel precepts and even the smallest precept? He reintroduces them because in the religion of Jesus you can easily fall into the temptation of thinking to be able to love without Law, without commandments, without precepts and without rules. Love is all with precepts, because it is all obedience.

*"Do not think that I have come to abolish the law or the prophets. I have come not to abolish but to fulfil. Amen, I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or the smallest part of a letter will pass from the law, until all things have taken place. Therefore, whoever breaks one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do so will be called least in the kingdom of heaven. But whoever obeys and teaches these commandments will be called greatest in the kingdom of heaven.*

A love without precepts does not exist. As there is no love that is not obedience to the Law of the Lord. A love that is only essential option exists only in the mind of men and not in the heart of God. The love of God is the precept.

Virgin Mary, Mother of the Redemption, Angels and Saints, teach us true love.

### Then the kingdom of God has come upon you

### Jer 7,23-28; Ps 94,1-2.6-9; Lk 11,14-23.

### 23 MARCH

When did the reign of Satan begin and when does the kingdom of God start? The first reign started with the temptation and fall of Eve. From that moment the kingdom of death starts. It is a kingdom of division, envy, death, immorality, idolatry and false worship of God. It is a realm in which man is a prisoner and a slave of man himself.

*Now the serpent was the most cunning of all the animals that the Lord God had made. The serpent asked the woman, "Did God really tell you not to eat from any of the trees in the garden?" The woman answered the serpent: "We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden; it is only about the fruit of the tree in the middle of the garden that God said, 'You shall not eat it or even touch it, lest you die.'" But the serpent said to the woman: "You certainly will not die! No, God knows well that the moment you eat of it your eyes will be opened and you will be like gods who know what is good and what is bad." The woman saw that the tree was good for food, pleasing to the eyes, and desirable for gaining wisdom. So she took some of its fruit and ate it; and she also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it. Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized that they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made loincloths for themselves (Gen 3,1-7).*

 The kingdom of God begins with Christ Jesus. It starts with Him because only He has won all the temptations of Satan in works, thoughts, words, omissions and desires. The fall in one temptation makes us belong to the kingdom of Satan. Jesus' victory is full.

*Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil. He fasted for forty days and forty nights, and afterwards he was hungry. The tempter approached and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command that these stones become loaves of bread." He said in reply, "It is written: 'One does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes forth from the mouth of God.'" Then the devil took him to the holy city, and made him stand on the parapet of the temple, and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down. For it is written: 'He will command his angels concerning you and 'with their hands they will support you, lest you dash your foot against a stone.'" Jesus answered him, "Again it is written, 'You shall not put the Lord, your God, to the test.'" Then the devil took him up to a very high mountain, and showed him all the kingdoms of the world in their magnificence, and he said to him, "All these I shall give to you, if you will prostrate yourself and worship me." At this, Jesus said to him, "Get away, Satan! It is written: 'The Lord, your God, shall you worship and him alone shall you serve.'" Then the devil left him and, behold, angels came and ministered to him (Mt 4,1-11).*

 Jesus can drive out demons from the body of a man, because he was successful, succeeds, will succeed to keep him always away from his heart, from his mind, from his thoughts and desires. Even in the smallest of things, those almost invisible to the human spirit, but not to the spirit of God, he is the winner over Satan. As he commanded him to leave his heart, with the same strength and determination he can order to leave each body. The kingdom of God is at hand because Christ is all, entirely the kingdom of God in our midst.

*He was driving out a demon (that was) mute, and when the demon had gone out, the mute person spoke and the crowds were amazed. Some of them said, "By the power of Beelzebul, the prince of demons, he drives out demons." Others, to test him, asked him for a sign from heaven. But he knew their thoughts and said to them, "Every kingdom divided against itself will be laid waste and house will fall against house. And if Satan is divided against himself, how will his kingdom stand? For you say that it is by Beelzebul that I drive out demons. If I, then, drive out demons by Beelzebul, by whom do your own people drive them out? Therefore they will be your judges. But if it is by the finger of God that (I) drive out demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you. When a strong man fully armed guards his palace, his possessions are safe. But when one stronger than he attacks and overcomes him, he takes away the armour on which he relied and distributes the spoils. Whoever is not with me is against me, and whoever does not gather with me scatters.*

Jesus is the strong man. But he is strong because he has not allowed that Satan placed himself inside him, lurked in his heart and built his filthy bed in his soul. Those who say that Jesus works through Satan, do not know Satan, because they do not know God. For it is only by knowing God that one knows Satan. Only by living in the eternal light you see the darkness of evil that flood the earth.

Virgin Mary, Mother of the Redemption, Angels and Saints, illuminate us of eternal light.

### You are not far from the kingdom of God

### Hos 14,2-10; Ps 80,6b-11.14.17; Mk 12,28b-34.

### 24 MARCH

Jesus is very pure presence of the kingdom of God among men. For Him, in Him, with Him, entering his obedience one becomes the kingdom of God. That is how this sublime truth is revealed and presented to us by Paul in his Letter to the Romans.

*Therefore, just as through one person sin entered the world, and through sin, death, and thus death came to all, inasmuch as all sinned - for up to the time of the law, sin was in the world, though sin is not accounted when there is no law. But death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those who did not sin after the pattern of the trespass of Adam, who is the type of the one who was to come. But the gift is not like the transgression. For if by that one person's transgression the many died, how much more did the grace of God and the gracious gift of the one person Jesus Christ overflow for the many. And the gift is not like the result of the one person's sinning. For after one sin there was the judgment that brought condemnation; but the gift, after many transgressions, brought acquittal.*

*For if, by the transgression of one person, death came to reign through that one, how much more will those who receive the abundance of grace and of the gift of justification come to reign in life through the one person Jesus Christ. In conclusion, just as through one transgression condemnation came upon all, so through one righteous act acquittal and life came to all. For just as through the disobedience of one person the many were made sinners, so through the obedience of one the many will be made righteous. The law entered in so that transgression might increase but, where sin increased, grace overflowed all the more, so that, as sin reigned in death, grace also might reign through justification for eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord (Rm 5,12-21).*

You get closer to the kingdom of God, approaching the Word of God. The Divine Word is the door of the kingdom. It is the path on which to walk to enter the heart of Christ, in whom the heart of the Father lives in the communion of the Holy Spirit. The scribe is not far from the kingdom of God because he is in the Old Testament Word. He needs to take a further step. From the ancient Word he has to go to the new one, which is that of Christ Jesus. It is the new word, the one proffered by the Church in the Holy Spirit, that creates him the kingdom of God, because it regenerates him as a true child of adoption and enables him to share in the divine nature. The Word that makes us the kingdom of God is both preached and celebrated Word, the Word proclaimed and Word creative of a new reality. This Word that creates the new reality is only in the one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church, because only in her the Holy Spirit works with all the power of his grace and truth.

*One of the scribes, when he came forward and heard them disputing and saw how well he had answered them, asked him, "Which is the first of all the commandments?" Jesus replied, "The first is this: 'Hear, O Israel! The Lord our God is Lord alone! You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.' The second is this: 'You shall love your neighbour as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these." The scribe said to him, "Well said, teacher. You are right in saying, 'He is One and there is no other than he.' And 'to love him with all your heart, with all your understanding, with all your strength, and to love your neighbour as yourself' is worth more than all burnt offerings and sacrifices." And when Jesus saw that (he) answered with understanding, he said to him, "You are not far from the kingdom of God." And no one dared to ask him any more questions.*

If the scribe must pass from the ancient Word to the new Word that is both preached and celebrated, to the Christian of today another step is required that must never be left out: from the celebrated Word to the preached Word. Today we celebrate the Word, but no one believes in the preached Word. Often the true Word of God is not even preached anymore. And even when it is preached, it is covered with countless falsehoods or inaccuracies. So it is difficult to separate what is God's word and the word of man. The confusion is great. The chaos that is generated in the hearts is complete bewilderment, even because the falsity of a preacher are falsehoods of the other and vice versa. But the Word must be preached.

Virgin Mary, Mother of the Redemption, Angels and Saints make us heralds of the Word.

### Will be called holy, the Son of God

### Is 7,10-14; 8,10c; Ps 39,7-11; Heb 10,4-10; Lk 1,26-38.

**25 MARCH**

Guided with an invisible hand by the Creator of the universe, history walks towards the fulfilment of every word, promise, oracle and oath of the Lord of heaven and earth. When it seems that the infernal powers give history a direction towards its full destruction and annihilation under the weight of idolatry and immorality, the Lord intervenes with his powerful arm and gives it the right direction. Neither on earth nor in hell, nor in heaven there are powers that can prevent the realization of a single word uttered by the Lord of man.

The Word of God does not take place according to the expectations, thoughts, desires and interpretations of men, but according to the truth placed in it by the Holy Spirit. Since the serpent tempted Eve in the Garden of Eden in the heart of man there is a lie that always makes you think that man is God. History attests us that this temptation always overwhelms the man. It overwhelms kings, emperors, princes, presidents, heads of governments and nations, but it also overwhelms the simplest people. Each in his own way, believes to be a God. Do not today, all those who are distorting the very nature of man, think they are Gods? Have not they made themselves equal to God? Do not they decide the new creation of man? Have not they determined that the old creation is to be scrapped?

Difficult, if not impossible, is to think instead that God can be made man and even more difficult to believe in a God crucified by man. Yet today, on this day, in the house of Nazareth this happens. The angel announces to a young virgin that in her womb the Son of God would have become man, if she had agreed to the realization of this unique event in history. But by becoming Man, God is also made crucified, because the Messiah promised by God is his Suffering Servant, is the God Nailed by man on the wood, is the Sentenced for our iniquities, is the Great Atoner of our sins. From the yes of this humble woman who for history is the absolute nothingness, because it has other parameters of greatness - for history the men that are made gods are worthy and this woman is the most humble servant of the Lord - the incarnate God is born from whom blessing, redemption, salvation and eternal life, are.

*In the sixth month, the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a town of Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man named Joseph, of the house of David, and the virgin's name was Mary. And coming to her, he said, "Hail, favoured one! The Lord is with you."*

*But she was greatly troubled at what was said and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. Then the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favour with God. Behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give him the throne of David his father, and he will rule over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end."*

*But Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I have no relations with a man?" And the angel said to her in reply, "The holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. Therefore the child to be born will be called holy, the Son of God. And behold, Elizabeth, your relative, has also conceived a son in her old age, and this is the sixth month for her who was called barren; for nothing will be impossible for God." Mary said, "Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord. May it be done to me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her.*

With the yes of the Virgin Mary, if history walks from sin to sin, it has no more excuses. In the Son of the Virgin, Crucified and Risen, the Lord has taken away the ancient serpent all authority and all power. The man, accepting Christ and becoming one with Him, can overcome evil with good. He can get rid of every disobedience. He can walk towards the light, but for this he has to imitate his crucified God. He also must be annihilated of his false divinity - Jesus Christ humbled himself in the true one - and start the journey for the acquisition of true humanity, which consists in the complete, total and universal submission of his will to that of his Lord and God. Mary gives us the example: *"Behold the handmaid of the Lord: may it be done to me according to his Word."*

Virgin Mary, Mother of the Redemption, Angels and Saints make us according to the Word of God.

### If you were blind, you would have no sin

### 1Sam 16,1b.4.6-7.10-13; Ps 22,1-6; Eph 5,8-14; Jn 9,1-41.

### 26 MARCH – IV SUNDAY OF LENT

If there is one truth that might never be denied is what happens, comes about and takes place before our eyes. I believe that in the Holy Scripture the most honest, truest, most sincere men before history were the magicians of Egypt. They bow before history and say to Pharaoh, that they stand before the finger of God that is working through Moses. They surrender. They do not want to compete with God. They will be defeated, annihilated and struck by Him in their science and art of magic.

The Jews of Jesus' time instead in order not to admit the divine and supernatural omnipotence of Christ first claim that he drives out demons by virtue of Beelzebub, now they want to deny that the blind from birth was truly blind, tomorrow not to openly confess the historical truth of the resurrection they buy the false testimony of the soldiers with a large sum of money. Will whoever denies the events that can and are ascertainable, leave anything true and pure in that which does not fall directly under the eyes, hearing and touch? Everything can be misrepresented, altered.

When history is trampled, then there are no objective reasons that can justify the denial of the truth from which our salvation is. Ours are only reason of will, reasons without any real foundation. The foundation is just "ideal" and comes from the hardness of our hearts and the blindness of our minds, able to *"create the historical truth"* transforming imagination, our will into concreteness. Hardness of heart convinces us to the point of actually believing that what we say is truth. This is the conviction of sin in our hearts.

When you reach this point it is a sign that there is no salvation. The mind is capable of creating any *"truth"*, any *"reality"* and any *"event."* Any *"history"*. The Jews really believe that Jesus is acting for satanic influence, that the blind man was not blind, that Jesus never resurrected. It is corruption with no turning back. Why does Jesus say that their sin remains, they are blind and truly say they see. Blind man is Jesus and those who go after him. When you reach this limit, the only thing left is to cross the gate of hell and live in eternal darkness.

*They brought the one who was once blind to the Pharisees. Now Jesus had made clay and opened his eyes on a Sabbath. So then the Pharisees also asked him how he was able to see. He said to them, "He put clay on my eyes, and I washed, and now I can see." So some of the Pharisees said, "This man is not from God, because he does not keep the Sabbath." (But) others said, "How can a sinful man do such signs?" And there was a division among them. So they said to the blind man again, "What do you have to say about him, since he opened your eyes?" He said, "He is a prophet."*

*"Give God the praise! We know that this man is a sinner." He replied, "If he is a sinner, I do not know. One thing I do know is that I was blind and now I see." So they said to him, "What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?" He answered them, "I told you already and you did not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you want to become his disciples, too?" They ridiculed him and said, "You are that man's disciple; we are disciples of Moses! We know that God spoke to Moses, but we do not know where this one is from." The man answered and said to them, "This is what is so amazing, that you do not know where he is from, yet he opened my eyes. We know that God does not listen to sinners, but if one is devout and does his will, he listens to him. It is unheard of that anyone ever opened the eyes of a person born blind. If this man were not from God, he would not be able to do anything." They answered and said to him, "You were born totally in sin, and are you trying to teach us?" Then they threw him out.*

To every man is asked to be especially mindful to never overstep the limits of evil. When these are exceeded heart and mind create themselves the *"truth"*, immorality becomes morality, sin virtue, evil good, death progress and destruction gain. Our society has already gone far beyond the limits of evil. It came to propose the annihilation of nature as the supreme good for man.

Virgin Mary, Mother of the Redemption, Angels and Saints always make us honest.

### Unless you people see signs and wonders, you will not believe

### Is 65,17-21; Ps 29,2.4-6.11-12a.13; Jn 4,43-54.

### 27 MARCH

With sublime clarity Psalm reveals that the effects of the miracle concerning faith last only the time of the miracle. After one sinks into the non faith of before, if not even into an even deeper abyss. Then, is it worth doing miracles?

*Come, let us sing for joy to the Lord, Let us shout joyfully to the rock of our salvation.**Let us come before His presence with thanksgiving, Let us shout joyfully to Him with psalms.**For the Lord is a great God And a great King above all gods,**In whose hand are the depths of the earth, The peaks of the mountains are His also.**The sea is His, for it was He who made it, And His hands formed the dry land. Come, let us worship and bow down, Let us kneel before he Lord our Maker.**For He is our God, And we are the people of His pasture and the sheep of His hand. Today, if you would hear His voice,**Do not harden your hearts, as at Meribah, As in the day of Massah in the ilderness,**“When your fathers tested Me, They tried Me, though they had seen My work.* *“For forty years I loathed that generation, And said they are a people who err in their heart, And they do not know My ways.**“Therefore I swore in My anger, Truly they shall not enter into My rest” (Ps 95 (94) 1-11).*

Must Jesus work miracles or must he refrain from working them? With what criterion must He work them and with what instead he must not work them? Jesus always works miracles. When a man knocks at his heart, never the doors remain closed. He opens them and gives what a man asks him. He always works miracles, but with two truths that are always repeated. The first states that every miracle received not turned into true faith and true following the man will have to account to our Heavenly Father in the day of judgment. Nineveh, Sodom, the pagan cities will be treated less harshly than those cities that having received so many miracles by Jesus, remained in their insensitivity.

The second truth tells us that Jesus often before working the miracle has denounced the non faith of his generation, calling it evil and adulterous. The generation is adulterous because it has denied, betrayed, sold its God. It is evil because it is delivered to evil and refuses to open up to the light that comes from Christ the Lord. The reproach to men and cities is needed to reveal explicitly that the mission of Jesus is not that of working wonders. They are an act of love, compassion, an obligation of divine omnipotence to which his human nature can always resort to experience the real mercy toward man, an effectively mercy and not only made up of empty words. Jesus is obligated to work the miracle by his love. If he did not do it he would not love. From the truth of his mission he is obliged to shout both the eternal responsibility for every miracle received and the other truth that his mandate is not to work miracles but to free man from the power of the devil he is a slave of since ancient days.

*After the two days, he left there for Galilee. For Jesus himself testified that a prophet has no honour in his native place. When he came into Galilee, the Galileans welcomed him, since they had seen all he had done in Jerusalem at the feast; for they themselves had gone to the feast. Then he returned to Cana in Galilee, where he had made the water wine. Now there was a royal official whose son was ill in Capernaum. When he heard that Jesus had arrived in Galilee from Judea, he went to him and asked him to come down and heal his son, who was near death. Jesus said to him, "Unless you people see signs and wonders, you will not believe." The royal official said to him, "Sir, come down before my child dies." Jesus said to him, "You may go; your son will live." The man believed what Jesus said to him and left. While he was on his way back, his slaves met him and told him that his boy would live. He asked them when he began to recover. They told him, "The fever left him yesterday, about one in the afternoon." The father realized that just at that time Jesus had said to him, "Your son will live," and he and his whole household came to believe. (Now) this was the second sign Jesus did when he came to Galilee from Judea.*

Many receive the miracle and disappear from the Gospel and from the history of Jesus. The royal official receives a miracle, but he opens to the faith with his entire family. The miracle must always be done, but also the man always be advised. If the miracle does not produce true faith and true discipleship it becomes a word of accusation in the day of judgment.

Virgin Mary, Mother of the Redemption, Angels and Saints make us of most pure faith.

### Rise, take up your mat, and walk

### Ez 47,1-9.12; Ps 45,2-3.5-6.8-9; Jn 5,1-16.

### 28 MARCH

Jesus does not help the man according to his expectations. The man often wants to be patched, stitched up, put back on track, but staying in his old humanity. The Eternal Son of the Father came among us to recreate, renew and make us totally new. He make us anew by freeing us from the ancient evil that is pride and from all its fruit: idolatry, immorality, stupidity, ignorance, many injustices and by giving us a new nature, a nature in which there is the sharing in the divine nature, inhabited by the Holy Spirit and conducted by him from light to light, and from truth to truth. Seeing Jesus as a comforter, a healer, one that patches our soul, our spirit and also our body is debasing and almost despising his supreme divine mission.

A man is sick. No man helps him. Everyone thinks on how to help himself. This is the first ancient evil of the man: he sees himself, according to himself, he does not see others, according to others. He does not see them not because he does not want to, but because his nature is blind. Spiritual blindness is congenital. Selfishness is innate. It is a consequence, the result of the ancient sin which ruined our entire nature. If we want to see the others, we must acquire the new nature in Christ, we have to clothe us of him and the Holy Spirit must live in us. Only with the thought of Christ and with the Holy Spirit eyes we can see others and love them as the Father loves them. But to be we in Christ and the Spirit to be in us we must obey the Word of the Lord Jesus: *"Get up, pick up your mat and walk!".* *"Rise, take up the stretcher of your humanity and get on the move"*. The stretcher is what you are before. It no longer brings you. You are the one that brings it. But you have to bring it to never forget what you were and what the Lord has done for you. The day in which the stretcher will be thrown away, you forget the Lord and you will return to the falsehood of the past. But it is a worse falsehood than the one before.

Jesus says it to the healed paralytic, *"Sin no more, lest something worse happen to you."* What can happen worse? Before he was sick by nature. Our nature was unable to move, to walk and to advance. But now one becomes sick by will, by choice, by a failure of supervision, by a lack of attention, by forgetting what he was before. One becomes sick because he places himself out of the Lord, who is our eternal healing, our daily miracle and our continuous resurrection. Every day Jesus Christ must tell us: *"Take up your mat and walk"* and every day we have to invoke him so that the miracle is fulfilled.

*After this, there was a feast of the Jews, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. Now there is in Jerusalem at the Sheep (Gate) a pool called in Hebrew Bethesda, with five porticoes. In these lay a large number of ill, blind, lame, and crippled. One man was there who had been ill for thirty-eight years. When Jesus saw him lying there and knew that he had been ill for a long time, he said to him, "Do you want to be well?" The sick man answered him, "Sir, I have no one to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up; while I am on my way, someone else gets down there before me." Jesus said to him, "Rise, take up your mat, and walk." Immediately the man became well, took up his mat, and walked.*

*Now that day was a Sabbath. So the Jews said to the man who was cured, "It is the Sabbath, and it is not lawful for you to carry your mat." He answered them, "The man who made me well told me, 'Take up your mat and walk.'" They asked him, "Who is the man who told you, 'Take it up and walk'?" The man who was healed did not know who it was, for Jesus had slipped away, since there was a crowd there. After this Jesus found him in the temple area and said to him, "Look, you are well; do not sin anymore, so that nothing worse may happen to you." The man went and told the Jews that Jesus was the one who had made him well. Therefore, the Jews began to persecute Jesus because he did this on a Sabbath.*

The Jews are blind by nature and will. They are blind by nature because they were born so. They are blind by will, because they do not want to let themselves be healed by Christ the Lord. They are so blind that they cannot even see the good done by Jesus.

Virgin Mary, Mother of the Redemption, Angels and Saints make us real seers in Christ.

### I cannot do anything on my own

### Is 49,8-15; Ps 144,8-9.13-14.17-18; Jn 5,17-30.

### 29 MARCH

The Jews do not carry with them the old stretcher of their physical, spiritual and moral bondage, from which the Lord always delivered them. They do not see their history that is all a continuous creation of their Lord God Almighty. If Moses delivered them from Pharaoh and from his death harassment he did not do it with his hand. It was the hand of man. An incapable hand, without any force. Moses had failed even to make peace between a Jew and another Jew. Not being able to do anything for his people, he withdrew and hid in the desert, away from their sight. What good was it to work for a people that does not want to be saved? Why risk life for a people that loves slavery and yearns to stay in it? Better to go away and forget pains and sorrows of death.

But then the Lord comes, clothes him of his omnipotence and sends him to Egypt. It is God who sends him. It is not Moses the one that returns. If he had been the one to decide to return, he would have come with the same weakness, fragility and impassibility as before. God sends him and fills him of all his power. So it is true of Jesus. He did not come from himself. Who comes from himself might do nothing to bring life to this humanity that loves to remain in death and every day invents new of slavery, poverty and inhumanity shows. Maybe is not today our humanity inventing brand new shows of genocide, mass destruction, massacres of defenceless people, devastation and destruction of entire populations? Is not it the one that invented the cosmic, unstoppable exodus show? No one who comes from himself can do anything for the salvation of man.

Jesus does not come from himself. He cannot do anything from himself. From himself he is devoid of any divine omnipotence. Never could have he said from himself to the paralytic, *"Rise, take up your mat and walk."* If the paralytic got up, took his stretcher and walked, he could do it, because the command had been drawn in God the Father Almighty. Now God would never give an order against himself, against manifested his will and against His Law. If God commanded the paralytic to get up on a Sabbath it is because on a Sabbath the old humanity can be repaired, refurbished and rebuilt. If all this were in the order of creation, God certainly would not do it. But since it is in the order of the new creation, one enters a new ordering, new rules and a new life. You can always create a new humanity. For this new creation, there are no days of rest.

*But Jesus answered them, "My Father is at work until now, so I am at work." For this reason the Jews tried all the more to kill him, because he not only broke the Sabbath but he also called God his own father, making himself equal to God. Jesus answered and said to them, "Amen, amen, I say to you, a son cannot do anything on his own, but only what he sees his father doing; for what he does, his son will do also. For the Father loves his Son and shows him everything that he himself does, and he will show him greater works than these, so that you may be amazed. For just as the Father raises the dead and gives life, so also does the Son give life to whomever he wishes. Nor does the Father judge anyone, but he has given all judgment to his Son, so that all may honour the Son just as they honour the Father. Whoever does not honour the Son does not honour the Father who sent him.*

*Amen, amen, I say to you, whoever hears my word and believes in the one who sent me has eternal life and will not come to condemnation, but has passed from death to life. Amen, amen, I say to you, the hour is coming and is now here when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live. For just as the Father has life in himself, so also he gave to his Son the possession of life in himself. And he gave him power to exercise judgment, because he is the Son of Man. Do not be amazed at this, because the hour is coming in which all who are in the tombs will hear his voice and will come out, those who have done good deeds to the resurrection of life, but those who have done wicked deeds to the resurrection of condemnation. "I cannot do anything on my own; I judge as I hear, and my judgment is just, because I do not seek my own will but the will of the one who sent me.*

Jesus asks the Jews to see everything from the truth of God. If He performs a miracle on the Sabbath, it is God who does it. If God does it, He testifies that it can be accomplished. Seeing God behind Jesus Christ, it is that what is lacking to the Jews. They are blind.

Virgin Mary, Mother of the Redemption, Holy Angels, give us the eyes of Christ Jesus.

### I came in the name of my Father

### Ex 32,7-14; Ps 105,19-23; Jn 5,31-47.

### 30 MARCH

In his First Letter, the Apostle John offers us a truth that introduces every heart that seeks the Lord, that loves him, that acts in his name, that lives his charity and proclaim his Word, to understand why the hatred of the world is all poured above him. This truth is an eternal and immortal principle, true for every believer in Christ.

*Beloved, do not trust every spirit but test the spirits to see whether they belong to God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world. This is how you can know the Spirit of God: every spirit that acknowledges Jesus Christ come in the flesh be longs to God, and every spirit that does not acknowledge Jesus does not belong to God. This is the spirit of the antichrist that, as you heard, is to come, but in fact is already in the world. You belong to God, children, and you have conquered them, for the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world. They belong to the world; accordingly, their teaching belongs to the world, and the world listens to them. We belong to God, and anyone who knows God listens to us, while anyone who does not belong to God refuses to hear us. This is how we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of deceit. Beloved, let us love one another, because love is of God; everyone who loves is begotten by God and knows God. Whoever is without love does not know God, for God is love.*

*In this way the love of God was revealed to us: God sent his only Son into the world so that we might have life through him. In this is love: not that we have loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as expiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we also must love one another. No one has ever seen God. Yet, if we love one another, God remains in us, and his love is brought to perfection in us. This is how we know that we remain in him and he in us, that he has given us of his Spirit. Moreover, we have seen and testify that the Father sent his Son as saviour of the world. Whoever acknowledges that Jesus is the Son of God, God remains in him and he in God. We have come to know and to believe in the love God has for us. God is love, and whoever remains in love remains in God and God in him (1Jn 4,1-16).*

 The Jews cannot know Christ, they do not know the Father. Their lack of knowledge is not of the Father that today proclaims Jesus. It is of the Father that Moses and all the prophets and all the great sages of whom they say they are children, preached and manifested. Their God is a *"shake"*, a *"mixture"*, a *"product"* of their sin.

*"If I testify on my own behalf, my testimony cannot be verified. But there is another who testifies on my behalf, and I know that the testimony he gives on my behalf is true. You sent emissaries to John, and he testified to the truth. I do not accept testimony from a human being, but I say this so that you may be saved. He was a burning and shining lamp, and for a while you were content to rejoice in his light. But I have testimony greater than John's. The works that the Father gave me to accomplish, these works that I perform testify on my behalf that the Father has sent me. Moreover, the Father who sent me has testified on my behalf. But you have never heard his voice nor seen his form, and you do not have his word remaining in you, because you do not believe in the one whom he has sent.*

*You search the scriptures, because you think you have eternal life through them; even they testify on my behalf. But you do not want to come to me to have life. "I do not accept human praise; moreover, I know that you do not have the love of God in you. I came in the name of my Father, but you do not accept me; yet if another comes in his own name, you will accept him. How can you believe, when you accept praise from one another and do not seek the praise that comes from the only God? Do not think that I will accuse you before the Father: the one who will accuse you is Moses, in whom you have placed your hope. For if you had believed Moses, you would have believed me, because he wrote about me. But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe my words?"*

Having the Jews a false God, not having they the true God of Moses and the Prophets, of the Law and the Psalms, never might they believe in the God of Jesus the Lord, in the God who has decided to fulfil his every word in Christ, with Christ, for Christ. Jesus did not come to show another God. He has come to bring to our land all the eternal beauty of the God whom they had already experienced in their history. But they burned the stretcher of their history and made them from themselves. It is the rejection.

Virgin Mary, Mother of the Redemption, Angels and Saints, give us the truth of the faith.

### Yet I did not come on my own

### Wis 2,1a.12-22; Ps 33,17-22; Jn 7,1-2.10.25-30.

### 31 MARCH

Two Psalms announce that the Messiah of the Lord, before than from the earth, comes from the Father's bosom. He comes from his heart, from his life, from his eternal essence, but remaining his one and only eternal essence. Jesus wants this truth never to be forgotten. Before than the fruit of a man, the Messiah is the *"Eternal Fruit"* of the Father.

*Why are the nations in an uproar And the peoples devising a vain thing?* *The kings of the earth take their stand And the rulers take counsel together Against the Lord and against His Anointed, saying,* *“Let us tear their fetters apart And cast away their cords from us!”**He who sits in the heavens laughs, The Lord scoffs at them.* *Then He will speak to them in His anger And terrify them in His fury, saying,* *“But as for Me, I have installed My King Upon Zion, My holy mountain.”**“I will surely tell of the decree of the Lord: He said to Me, ‘You are My Son, Today I have begotten You.* *‘Ask of Me, and I will surely give the nations as Your inheritance, And the very ends of the earth as Your possession.* *‘You shall break them with a rod of iron, You shall shatter them like earthenware.’” Now therefore, O kings, show discernment; Take warning, O judges of the earth. Worship the Lord with reverence And rejoice with trembling.**Do homage to the Son, that He not become angry, and you perish in the way, For His wrath may soon be kindled. How blessed are all who take refuge in Him! (Ps 2,1-12).*

*The Lord says to my Lord: “Sit at My right hand Until I make Your enemies a footstool for Your feet.”**The Lord will stretch forth Your strong sceptre from Zion, saying, “Rule in the midst of Your enemies.”**Your people will volunteer freely in the day of Your power; In holy array, from the womb of the dawn, Your youth are to You as the dew.* *The Lord has sworn and will not change His mind, “You are a priest forever According to the order of Melchizedek.”**The Lord is at Your right hand; He will shatter kings in the day of His wrath.**He will judge among the nations, He will fill them with corpses, He will shatter the chief men over a broad country.**He will drink from the brook by the wayside; Therefore He will lift up His head (Ps 110 (109) 1-7).*

Even the prophecy of Micah, while announcing the birth of the Messiah in Bethlehem, adds that his origins are from antiquity, from remote days and this antiquity and remote days are in the bosom of the Father. Jesus comes from the bosom of the Father, is in the bosom of the Father, comes from the bosom Father and works from the bosom of the Father. This is his truth.

*But you, Bethlehem-Ephrathah too small to be among the clans of Judah, From you shall come forth for me one who is to be ruler in Israel; Whose origin is from of old, from ancient times. (Therefore the Lord will give them up, until the time when she who is to give birth has borne, And the rest of his brethren shall return to the children of Israel.) He shall stand firm and shepherd his flock by the strength of the Lord, in the majestic name of the Lord, his God; And they shall remain, for now his greatness shall reach to the ends of the earth; he shall be peace. (Mi 5,1-4).*

 It is a useless search investigating on the human origin of Christ, if you cannot see through his history, which is immediate concreteness falling under the eyes of all, that He comes from God. If you are blind before the visible, which view may you have before the invisible, what is hidden, what does not fall under the eyes?

*After this, Jesus moved about within Galilee; but he did not wish to travel in Judea, because the Jews were trying to kill him. But the Jewish feast of Tabernacles was near. But when his brothers had gone up to the feast, he himself also went up, not openly but (as it were) in secret. So some of the inhabitants of Jerusalem said, "Is he not the one they are trying to kill? And look, he is speaking openly and they say nothing to him. Could the authorities have realized that he is the Messiah? But we know where he is from. When the Messiah comes, no one will know where he is from." So Jesus cried out in the temple area as he was teaching and said, "You know me and also know where I am from. Yet I did not come on my own, but the one who sent me, whom you do not know, is true. I know him, because I am from him, and he sent me." So they tried to arrest him, but no one laid a hand upon him, because his hour had not yet come.*

Jesus wants to teach those who listen to him one truth: look at what I am now, before you. Acknowledge that I am from God, that I act in the name of God. This is the visible truth. It is a truth that can be grasped in the works. Having grasped this truth, all others can be grasped. Without this truth, the others are useless because they are fruitless.

Virgin Mary, Mother of the Redemption, Angels and Saints make us real in the truth of Jesus.