**NOVEMBER 2017**

## FIRST DECADE OF NOVEMBER

# Your reward will be great in heaven

# Rev 7,2-4.9-14; Ps 23,1-6; 1 Jn 3,1-3; Mt 5,1-12a.

### 1 NOVEMBER (Mt 5,1-12a)

The Gospel of Christ Jesus is not only the perfect fulfilment of the Ancient Law. The Law of Christ Jesus is both fulfilment, perfection, but also shifting the axis of visualising things. It suffices reading a few lines of the blessings promised by the Lord to the observers of his law and everything becomes clear and obvious.

*"Thus, then, shall it be: if you continue to heed the voice of the Lord, your God, and are careful to observe all his commandments which I enjoin on you today, the Lord, your God, will raise you high above all the nations of the earth. When you hearken to the voice of the Lord, your God, all these blessings will come upon you and overwhelm you: "May you be blessed in the city, and blessed in the country! "Blessed be the fruit of your womb, the produce of your soil and the offspring of your livestock, the issue of your herds and the young of your flocks! "Blessed be your grain bin and your kneading bowl! "May you be blessed in your coming in, and blessed in your going out! "The Lord will beat down before you the enemies that rise up against you; though they come out against you from but one direction, they will flee before you in seven. The Lord will affirm his blessing upon you, on your barns and on all your undertakings, blessing you in the land that the Lord, your God, gives you. Provided that you keep the commandments of the Lord, your God, and walk in his ways, he will establish you as a people sacred to himself, as he swore to you; so that, when all the nations of the earth see you bearing the name of the Lord, they will stand in awe of you. The Lord will increase in more than goodly measure the fruit of your womb, the offspring of your livestock, and the produce of your soil, in the land which he swore to your fathers he would give you. The Lord will open up for you his rich treasure house of the heavens, to give your land rain in due season, blessing all your undertakings, so that you will lend to many nations and borrow from none. The Lord will make you the head, not the tail, and you will always mount higher and not decline, as long as you obey the commandments of the Lord, your God, which I order you today to observe carefully; not turning aside to the right or to the left from any of the commandments which I now give you, in order to follow other gods and serve them (Dt 28,1-15).*

This viewing and observation axis is over forever. Now the axis moves from earth to heaven, from time to eternity, from receiving to giving, from richness to poverty. Everything must be lived in view of eternal bliss. Even the body must be sacrificed on the cross to be transformed into light as God is light. The Beatitudes dictate the celestial modes of seeing, watching, living, relating to God, to men and things. They are the only true, holy and perfect way for who wants to hand his life over to God, in Christ, in the motion of the Holy Spirit, so that the Lord the one to make of it the instrument to bring eternity to the earth and then lead transformed eternity into humanity to Paradise. That of the Christian is a divine mission.

*When he saw the crowds, he went up the mountain, and after he had sat down, his disciples came to him. He began to teach them, saying: "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are they who mourn, for they will be comforted. Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the land. Blessed are they who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be satisfied. Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy. Blessed are the clean of heart, for they will see God. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God. Blessed are they who are persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are you when they insult you and persecute you and utter every kind of evil against you (falsely) because of me. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward will be great in heaven.*

If the Beatitudes are the true way to die to the self, then it is fair to rejoice and to exult when someone insults, slanders and says falsehood on our behalf because we are of Christ and believe in his Gospel, we live it in the world, we witness it as the one and only Law of our lives. All the evil that the world throws upon us, we must turn it into coin to acquire greater bliss and eternal glory. How will we operate this transformation? By loving our enemies and praying for our persecutors. Not responding to evil with evil, but overcoming with good all evil. This is Christian wisdom: dying for the blessed eternity.

Virgin Mary, Mother of Redemption, Angels and Saints guide us to blessed eternity.

# Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy

# Wis 3,1-9; Ps 41,2-3.5; 42,3-5; Rev 21,1-5a.6b-7; Mt 5,1-12a.

### 2 NOVEMBER

Man lives of mercy more than air. He is in death and never might he pass into life, except for God's very pure mercy. However, God gives his mercy both directly and indirectly. Ordinarily he gives it through his mediators. Today, mediator of all the mercy of redemption, justification, truth, light, grace, Holy Spirit, Word and Gospel is the one, holy, Catholic and apostolic Church. If the Church lives her mercy well, man returns to life; on the contrary, if the Church lives badly, this ministry in her sons, the man remains in death. Saul was drawn to Christ by the direct mercy of Christ, but he was immediately entrusted to the Church to be enveloped by the mercy of her sacramental grace.

If man wants direct and indirect, mediated and immediate mercy, he is obliged to live of mercy. If he does not live of compassion, he does not attract divine compassion on himself. Cornelius is a pious man and lives by taking care of the poor and needy. He attracts upon himself all of the Lord's love. An angel appears to him and reveals to him that for his pity and alms the Lord wants to give him the grace of the fullness of redemption and salvation, indicating him ways and modes for the fulfilment of his benevolence.

*Now in Caesarea there was a man named Cornelius, a centurion of the Cohort called the Italica, devout and God-fearing along with his whole household, who used to give alms generously to the Jewish people and pray to God constantly. One afternoon about three o'clock, he saw plainly in a vision an angel of God come in to him and say to him, "Cornelius." He looked intently at him and, seized with fear, said, "What is it, sir?" He said to him, "Your prayers and almsgiving have ascended as a memorial offering before God. Now send some men to Joppa and summon one Simon who is called Peter. He is staying with another Simon, a tanner, who has a house by the sea." When the angel who spoke to him had left, he called two of his servants and a devout soldier from his staff, explained everything to them, and sent them to Joppa (At 10,1-8).*

All beatitudes are ways through which man is clothed with mercy or becomes able of mercy. Whoever is not poor in spirit will never be merciful. Who is not meek will miss in forgiveness and might not offer his suffering for the redemption of his brothers. Who is not strong in persecutions might never persevere in the work of peace and in being hungry and thirsty of justice. Who does not know how to live suffering, will rebel and even commit serious injustices with God and men, making himself also guilty of horrible sins and nefariousness. Everything in the Beatitudes is aimed at the greatest love towards brothers. But everything happens in who believes in the Word of Jesus and chooses it as the sole rule of his life.

*When he saw the crowds, he went up the mountain, and after he had sat down, his disciples came to him. He began to teach them, saying: "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are they who mourn, for they will be comforted. Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the land. Blessed are they who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be satisfied. Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy. Blessed are the clean of heart, for they will see God. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God. Blessed are they who are persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are you when they insult you and persecute you and utter every kind of evil against you (falsely) because of me. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward will be great in heaven.*

The Beatitudes reveal us the eight ways for a full, total, permanent delivery to love. For them one is filled with all the love of God, in Christ, through the Holy Spirit and it is transformed into grace of salvation in Christ and through the Holy Spirit. It is the Spirit of God, and He alone, that can teach every man how to embody and translate into life, in his particular ministry and charisma, each of these eight Words of Jesus the Lord. Whoever is separated with sin from the communion of the Holy Spirit will give them meanings of immanence, will remove all transcendence from them, and no salvation will be carried out.

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

# But they were unable to answer his question

# Rm 9,1-5; Ps 147,12-15.19-20; Lk 14,1-6.

### 3 NOVEMBER

Jesus is full of the Holy Spirit. He knows all the secrets of wisdom. But he also knows how the heart of man "works" and how to touch it at the right time, so that the divine truth of the Word of his Father can enter into it. Knowing how to argue is a true divine science. In the argument He is the Master over every master. If it had not been for this divine wisdom, he would have been stoned from the first day of his preaching. There were too many angry foes against him, always ready to spy on him, setting traps to catch him on the wrong foot in some words coming out of his mouth. Instead, for this divine science of argument, he was possible to announce to men all the Word of the Father according to the truth of the Father, saving it from all false interpretations and tampering introduced by them in its eternal purity. St. Paul exhorts Timothy to use Scripture. Certainly it might support him in the defence of truth, in the proclamation of sound doctrine. His words illuminate.

*But you, remain faithful to what you have learned and believed, because you know from whom you learned it, and that from infancy you have known (the) sacred scriptures, which are capable of giving you wisdom for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. All scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching, for refutation, for correction, and for training in righteousness, so that one who belongs to God may be competent, equipped for every good work.  I charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who will judge the living and the dead, and by his appearing and his kingly power: proclaim the word; be persistent whether it is convenient or inconvenient; convince, reprimand, encourage through all patience and teaching. For the time will come when people will not tolerate sound doctrine but, following their own desires and insatiable curiosity, will accumulate teachers and will stop listening to the truth and will be diverted to myths. But you, be self-possessed in all circumstances; put up with hardship; perform the work of an evangelist; fulfil your ministry (2Tm 3,14-4,5).*

All knowledge of Scripture, All the science of Tradition, All the doctrine that comes from Theology and Hagiography, all the implementation embodied in the Magisterium, are not enough to argue. We can also be a well of science and doctrine, but remain without truth before some hearts. Argumentation is only the present gift of the Holy Spirit. It is He who from all the science and revelation existing, makes us draw the Word, the truth and the thought to say. But it is always He who has to suggest ways and forms of how to say things. Finally, it is He who must illuminate the heart to whom it is spoken to accept the revealed truth and make of it a great treasure of salvation and redemption. But even the Spirit remains the one who has to extinguish the murder flames of the listeners, so that they do nothing evil to God's messenger until his hour has not come. Nothing is from Scripture. Nothing from Tradition. Nothing from the Magisterium. Nothing from theology and hagiography. Nothing from the missionary. Because these *"things"* must only be instruments in the hands of the Holy Spirit.

*On a Sabbath he went to dine at the home of one of the leading Pharisees, and the people there were observing him carefully. In front of him there was a man suffering from dropsy. Jesus spoke to the scholars of the law and Pharisees in reply, asking, "Is it lawful to cure on the Sabbath or not?" But they kept silent; so he took the man and, after he had healed him, dismissed him. Then he said to them, "Who among you, if your son or ox falls into a cistern, would not immediately pull him out on the Sabbath day?" But they were unable to answer his question.*

Every disciple of Jesus must know that it is not his ministry that saves and not even his charisma. The ministry and charisma that are guided, moved, exercised in the Holy Spirit are the ones that save. The Holy Spirit will take the disciple of Jesus and will serve himself of him if he stays away from sin. The transgression of Commandments and obedience to the Spirit cannot coexist. As sin and grace cannot dwell together. Anyone who wants to possess the science and the wisdom of true argumentation must be filled only with the Holy Spirit. He is the perpetual present light that must enlighten the mind of both the one who gives and the one who receives it. Without him, both the minds of one and the other are in the dark.

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

# Noticing how they were choosing the places of honour

# Rm 11,1-2a.11-12.25-29; Ps 93,12-15.17-18; Lk 14,1.7-11.

**4 NOVEMBER**

In Ancient Scripture, the Lord always invites his faithful to make of two virtues their own flesh and their own blood. They are humility and meekness. Only those who possess these two virtues are great before God and men. Without them, one is only a man among men. Jesus also asked to be imitated in these two virtues. God resists superb, learned, wise and intelligent men. He gives his grace to the small and humble.

*My son, conduct your affairs with humility, and you will be loved more than a giver of gifts. Humble yourself the more, the greater you are, and you will find favour with God. For great is the power of God; by the humble he is glorified. What is too sublime for you, seek not, into things beyond your strength search not. What is committed to you, attend to; for what is hidden is not your concern. With what is too much for you meddle not, when shown things beyond human understanding. Their own opinion has misled many, and false reasoning unbalanced their judgment. Where the pupil of the eye is missing, there is no light, and where there is no knowledge, there is no wisdom. A stubborn man will fare badly in the end, and he who loves danger will perish in it. A stubborn man will be burdened with sorrow; a sinner will heap sin upon sin. For the affliction of the proud man there is no cure; he is the offshoot of an evil plant. The mind of a sage appreciates proverbs, and an attentive ear is the wise man's joy. Water quenches a flaming fire, and alms atone for sins. He who does a kindness is remembered afterward; when he falls, he finds a support (Sir 3,17-31).*

*At that time Jesus said in reply, "I give praise to you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, for although you have hidden these things from the wise and the learned you have revealed them to the childlike. Yes, Father, such has been your gracious will. All things have been handed over to me by my Father. No one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son wishes to reveal him. "Come to me, all you who labour and are burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am meek and humble of heart; and you will find rest for your selves. For my yoke is easy, and my burden light" (Mt 11,25-30).*

What is the so dear humility to the Lord? It is the decisive, determined will that is made prayer for only God to be the Lord, the Father of our lives and it is made welcome of all that He disposes for us. With the virtue of humility and mildness, man does nothing starting from his will. He wants everything to be from the divine will. Where the Lord places him, there he sets himself to serve his brothers with love, diligence and always pure obedience to the divine will, manifested to him by the Word and made present by the Holy Spirit. The humble stays where the Lord puts him. He moves when the Lord orders him to move. He goes where the Lord sends him. He returns when the Lord orders him to return. He sits in the place that the Lord assigns to him. He looks for nothing for himself. He wants everything for the Lord his God, having offered his life to his Lord only to serve.

*On a Sabbath he went to dine at the home of one of the leading Pharisees, and the people there were observing him carefully.  He told a parable to those who had been invited, noticing how they were choosing the places of honour at the table. "When you are invited by someone to a wedding banquet, do not recline at table in the place of honour. A more distinguished guest than you may have been invited by him, and the host who invited both of you may approach you and say, 'Give your place to this man,' and then you would proceed with embarrassment to take the lowest place. Rather, when you are invited, go and take the lowest place so that when the host comes to you he may say, 'My friend, move up to a higher position.' Then you will enjoy the esteem of your companions at the table. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but the one who humbles himself will be exalted."*

Jesus wants every man to live as if he were always at the very first moment of creation. God creates and places him. He takes and puts him. It is not him that must take and place himself. But his Lord will always have to take and place him. The true place of man is only where God wants him to be. In other places, he can also be located, but they are not his own. What is the first place where the man will have to be located? In the will of God. If he comes out of the will of his Lord, he will enter Satan's will and it will be hell for him.

Virgin Mary, Mother of Redemption, Angels and Saints place us in the right place.

# The greatest among you must be your servant

# Mt 23,1-12.

### 5 NOVEMBER – XXXI SUNDAY O.T.

The religion that Jesus has come to teach on earth is enclosed in a particular statute that is made up of one article or principle and one only paragraph. Everything else is useful to his religion, but it is not his religion. This only article or principle is made up of two only words: listen and obey. I speak and you live. I say and you do. As soon as you break this relation, my religion dies, yours begins. Only mine is religion of life, though. Your religion is of death. This statute and article is always true for Jesus, even when scribes and the Pharisees sit at the chair of his truth and of his love. Those are of a completely opposed religion to his one.

Being his religion only listening, obedience, life of listening and obedience, Jesus wants it never to be changed, modified, altered. You listen to the scribe and the Pharisee who is at his chair, you are saved. You do not listen to him, you violated the statute of the religion of Christ the Lord. Then it is righteous to ask: should the listening be always given? The answer is affirmative. It must not be given only when there is an explicit command of Christ to which one must always give priority even at the cost of life. Jesus has obeyed the command of the Father until death and to the death of cross. Even the disciples must obey the command of Christ until the death of cross. It is truth taught by the Holy Spirit by mouth of Peter. He has received a command from Jesus and he owes obedience.

*Observing the boldness of Peter and John and perceiving them to be uneducated, ordinary men, they were amazed, and they recognized them as the companions of Jesus. Then when they saw the man who had been cured standing there with them, they could say nothing in reply. So they ordered them to leave the Sanhedrin, and conferred with one another, saying, "What are we to do with these men? Everyone living in Jerusalem knows that a remarkable sign was done through them, and we cannot deny it. But so that it may not be spread any further among the people, let us give them a stern warning never again to speak to anyone in this name." So they called them back and ordered them not to speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus. Peter and John, however, said to them in reply, "Whether it is right in the sight of God for us to obey you rather than God, you be the judges. It is impossible for us not to speak about what we have seen and heard." After threatening them further, they released them, finding no way to punish them, on account of the people who were all praising God for what had happened. For the man on whom this sign of healing had been done was over forty years old. (Act 4,13-22).*

This relation of listening and of obedience must be lived, but always in the Word of Jesus, even between disciple and disciple. The Christian serves the Christian listening and obeying, as a servant does with his master.

*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 honor at banquets, seats of honor 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 religion of Jesus is a perennial service to God who asks us to serve man, but always in the respect of his Word, from the Word, always remaining in the Word. It is a service that demands our annihilation. One denied himself before men to deny ourselves before God. This alone is the religion of Jesus. All the other ones are of man at the service of himself. The religion of the scribes and of the Pharisees was that.

Virgin Mary, Mother of Redemption, Angels, Saints, make us of the religion of Jesus.

# Blessed will you be because of their inability to repay you

# Rm 11,29-36; Ps 68,30-31.33-34.36-37; Lk 14,12-14.

### 6 NOVEMBER

Man is called by Christ Jesus to choose: whether to work for time or for eternity, whether to act for an ephemeral reward today that leaves no trace except that of ephemeral and vain glory, or to want to work for a glory and eternal bliss. It is truth. Everyone will enjoy what he has chosen. If one chooses the vain and ephemeral glory, surely he will not be able to enjoy eternal glory. But if one chooses eternal glory, he will have to give up the ephemeral and vain glory of the earth. Both of these glories cannot be lived by man. He is obligated to give the earth for heaven, or to take the ephemeral heaven on earth today and lose the true one for eternity. The religion of Christ Jesus is the choice of heaven and renunciation of the earth until the annihilation of all our being, till the delivery our body even to the torture of the cross. This religion of heaven's choice is taught by St. Paul this way.

*If there is any encouragement in Christ, any solace in love, any participation in the Spirit, any compassion and mercy, complete my joy by being of the same mind, with the same love, united in heart, thinking one thing. Do nothing out of selfishness or out of vainglory; rather, humbly regard others as more important than yourselves, each looking out not for his own interests, but (also) everyone for those of others. Have among yourselves the same attitude that is also yours in Christ Jesus, Who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God something to be grasped. Rather, he emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, coming in human likeness; and found human in appearance, he humbled himself, becoming obedient to death, even death on a cross. Because of this, God greatly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, of those in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God 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 2,1-18).*

Every choice is true if you are always ready to live all its consequences. If one chooses eternity at the price of time, all time must be delivered as the price of eternity. If one chooses bliss at God, it also involves the sacrifice of our body on the cross. He who chooses Heaven necessarily chooses to do all possible good with what belongs to the earth. He does nothing for himself, to have an immediate return; instead, he works all for an eternal return. It is a choice and it obliges one for life. What we do and how we do it reveals our choice.

*Then he said to the host who invited him, "When you hold a lunch or a dinner, do not invite your friends or your brothers or your relatives or your wealthy neighbours, in case they may invite you back and you have repayment. Rather, when you hold a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind; blessed indeed will you be because of their inability to repay you. For you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous."*

With Jesus choices are forever, without going back. *"Who puts hand to the plough and then turns back, he is not suitable for the kingdom of heaven."* Today, first you choose and then you turn back. The sacraments are chosen and then they are annulled. You choose the Gospel and then you do not live it. You choose heaven and walk towards hell. You choose studying and you live of idleness. You choose indissolubility and then you divorce. You choose the Eucharist, but not its holiness, because you want to live with sin. This turning back is then sanctified with the announcement of God's mercy that is given to cover sin.

Virgin Mary, Mother of Redemption, Angels, Saints, make us faithful in every choice.

# Blessed is the one who will dine in the kingdom of God

# Rm 12,5-16a; Ps 130,1-3; Lk 14,15-24.

### 7 NOVEMBER

In the kingdom of God you enter by invitation. The servants of the Lord come, invite you, you leave everything and go to the banquet hall; you will enjoy the supper of your Lord. You are invited, you do not go, you have other things to deal with; you do not enter the banquet hall, you will not enjoy your Lord's supper. You will be excluded from it forever. Who is first invited to the Lord's supper? His people. His people refuse. The Lord sends his servants to invite every other man, everyone, none excluded. This truth is thus narrated by the Gospel according to Mark, on the day when the Apostles receive the mission.

*(But) later, as the eleven were at table, he appeared to them and rebuked them for their unbelief and hardness of heart because they had not believed those who saw him after he had been raised. He said to them, "Go into the whole world and proclaim the gospel to every creature. Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved; whoever does not believe will be condemned. These signs will accompany those who believe: in my name they will drive out demons, they will speak new languages. They will pick up serpents (with their hands), and if they drink any deadly thing, it will not harm them. They will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover." So then the Lord Jesus, after he spoke to them, was taken up into heaven and took his seat at the right hand of God. But they went forth and preached everywhere, while the Lord worked with them and confirmed the word through accompanying signs (Mk 16,14-20).*

In the kingdom of God you enter by invitation, not by merit or other personal requirements. All are welcome. Everyone must be invited. The command of Jesus is explicit. His servants must travel around the world, towards every man, without leaving anyone out. This first truth obliges on every other truth. The mission is before the sacraments and never must the sacraments obscure the mission. Jesus' missionaries must pay close attention to the fact that no man remains without an explicit invitation to attend the banquet of their King and Lord. This invitation must be personally brought to every man. It cannot be done by newspaper, by e-mail and by other means of social communication. These are means of remembrance, but not of invitation. The invitation is made from a heart that speaks to another heart. It is done by a person talking to another person. Never must a newspaper serve as a personal invitation. It might only serve to remind that the invitation has been made and what it entails.

*One of his fellow guests on hearing this said to him, "Blessed is the one who will dine in the kingdom of God." He replied to him, "A man gave a great dinner to which he invited many. When the time for the dinner came, he dispatched his servant to say to those invited, 'Come, everything is now ready.' But one by one, they all began to excuse themselves. The first said to him, 'I have purchased a field and must go to examine it; I ask you, consider me excused.' And another said, 'I have purchased five yoke of oxen and am on my way to evaluate them; I ask you, consider me excused.' And another said, 'I have just married a woman, and therefore I cannot come.' The servant went and reported this to his master. Then the master of the house in a rage commanded his servant, 'Go out quickly into the streets and alleys of the town and bring in here the poor and the crippled, the blind and the lame.' The servant reported, 'Sir, your orders have been carried out and still there is room.' The master then ordered the servant, 'Go out to the highways and hedgerows and make people come in that my home may be filled. For, I tell you, none of those men who were invited will taste my dinner.'"*

If we want to go to the bottom, even the pulpit or the very catechesis or teaching of the doctrine of the Church cannot be called a true invitation. These things recall the rules of the invitation, but they are not replaceable to the invitation. I have known a true prophet of the living God who, after having publicly recalled the rules of the invitation, went desk by desk, seat by seat and personally spoke to each one the invitation addressed him by the Lord Jesus. The rules are reminded and the invitation is made. What to do is said and then everyone is called. Nothing must replace the personal invitation. Knowing that meeting with the individual person is the essence of the call, each missionary must personally speak to the heart, telling it a word that is for him, just for him, so that he is convinced, accepts and begins to live the Gospel for the Gospel.

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

# He turned and addressed them

# Rm 13,8-10; Ps 111,1-2.4-5.9; Lk 14,25-33.

### 8 NOVEMBER

Reading the Gospel of Jesus the Lord and examining it word by word, sentence by sentence, everyone is obliged to give Jesus the same witness given him by the soldiers sent by the Jews to arrest him: "Nobody has ever spoken so."

*The Pharisees heard the crowd murmuring about him to this effect, and the chief priests and the Pharisees sent guards to arrest him. So Jesus said, "I will be with you only a little while longer, and then I will go to the one who sent me. You will look for me but not find (me), and where I am you cannot come." So the Jews said to one another, "Where is he going that we will not find him? Surely he is not going to the dispersion among the Greeks to teach the Greeks, is he? What is the meaning of his saying, 'You will look for me and not find (me), and where I am you cannot come'?" On the last and greatest day of the feast, Jesus stood up and exclaimed, "Let anyone who thirsts come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as scripture says: 'Rivers of living water will flow from within him.'" He said this in reference to the Spirit that those who came to believe in him were to receive. There was, of course, no Spirit yet, because Jesus had not yet been glorified.*

*Some in the crowd who heard these words said, "This is truly the Prophet." Others said, "This is the Messiah." But others said, "The Messiah will not come from Galilee, will he? Does not scripture say that the Messiah will be of David's family and come from Bethlehem, the village where David lived?" So a division occurred in the crowd because of him. Some of them even wanted to arrest him, but no one laid hands on him. So the guards went to the chief priests and Pharisees, who asked them, "Why did you not bring him?" The guards answered, "Never before has anyone spoken like this one." So the Pharisees answered them, "Have you also been deceived? Have any of the authorities or the Pharisees believed in him? But this crowd, which does not know the law, is accursed." Nicodemus, one of their members who had come to him earlier, said to them, "Does our law condemn a person before it first hears him and finds out what he is doing?" They answered and said to him, "You are not from Galilee also, are you? Look and see that no prophet arises from Galilee." Then each went to his own house (Jn 7,32-53).*

Every honest man of mind, lover of historical truth, reading all the religious books that are in the world, already written or even to be written, must confess that truly, really, no man has ever spoken as Jesus Christ. All in some way promise life, Jesus promises death. Everyone promises successes and achievements, even if religious, of the soul. Jesus promises crucifixion, insult, outrage, slander and every physical evil. Everyone else almost seduces. Jesus asks to assess before if one is ready to die on the cross, only afterwards he might choose to follow him.

*Great crowds were travelling with him, and he turned and addressed them, "If any one comes to me without hating his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, and even his own life, he cannot be my disciple. Whoever does not carry his own cross and come after me cannot be my disciple. Which of you wishing to construct a tower does not first sit down and calculate the cost to see if there is enough for its completion? Otherwise, after laying the foundation and finding himself unable to finish the work the onlookers should laugh at him and say, 'This one began to build but did not have the resources to finish.' Or what king marching into battle would not first sit down and decide whether with ten thousand troops he can successfully oppose another king advancing upon him with twenty thousand troops? But if not, while he is still far away, he will send a delegation to ask for peace terms. In the same way, everyone of you who does not renounce all his possessions cannot be my disciple.*

*"Nobody has ever spoken so!":* it is a witness that first of all his disciples are obliged to give him. Jesus never forced, obliged and yoked them up to his Gospel. His is just a proposal of eternal life. Every other man is obliged to give him this same witness if he has a nanogram of honesty in the heart and mind. He too will have to shout: *"Truly this man does not speak like other men. His word is infinitely different. It is a word that respects man in all his choices, both of life and death, of salvation and of eternal perdition."* It is just this way!

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

# But he was speaking about the temple of his body

# Ez 47,1-2.8-9.12; Ps 45,2-3.5-6.8-9; 1Cor 3,9c-11.16-17; Jn 2,13-22.

### 9 NOVEMBER

The temple was the saintest place in the world. It was the only true home of God on earth. Ezekiel prophesies that from the new temple of God a river that gives life wherever it reaches, will come out. Where the river does not reach there will not be life.

*Then he brought me back to the entrance of the temple, and I saw water flowing out from beneath the threshold of the temple toward the east, for the facade of the temple was toward the east; the water flowed down from the southern side of the temple, south of the altar. He led me outside by the north gate, and around to the outer gate facing the east, where I saw water trickling from the southern side. Then when he had walked off to the east, along the bank of the river I saw very many trees on both sides. He said to me, "This water flows into the eastern district down upon the Arabah, and empties into the sea, the salt waters, which it makes fresh. Wherever the river flows, every sort of living creature that can multiply shall live, and there shall be abundant fish, for wherever this water comes the sea shall be made fresh. Along both banks of the river, fruit trees of every kind shall grow; their leaves shall not fade, nor their fruit fail. Every month they shall bear fresh fruit, for they shall be watered by the flow from the sanctuary. Their fruit shall serve for food, and their leaves for medicine" (Ez 47,1-12).*

The Apostle John announces that Ezekiel's prophecy has been fulfilled in Christ Jesus. It is from his pierced body that the great river of life flows. It is not only made of water, that is, of the Holy Spirit, but also of blood, that is, of all grace and blessing.

*Now since it was preparation day, in order that the bodies might not remain on the cross on the Sabbath, for the Sabbath day of that week was a solemn one, the Jews asked Pilate that their legs be broken and they be taken down. So the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first and then of the other one who was crucified with Jesus. But when they came to Jesus and saw that he was already dead, they did not break his legs, but one soldier thrust his lance into his side, and immediately blood and water flowed out. An eyewitness has testified, and his testimony is true; he knows that he is speaking the truth, so that you also may (come to) believe" (Jn 19.31-37).*

Saint Paul reveals to us that in Christ the fullness of divinity dwells bodily. Whoever has Christ needs nothing. He possesses God corporally. Christ is God. He is the true God.

*For in him dwells the whole fullness of the deity bodily, and you share in this fullness in him, who is the head of every principality and power. In him you were also circumcised with a circumcision not administered by hand, by stripping off the carnal body, with the circumcision of Christ. You were buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through faith in the power of God, who raised him from the dead. And even when you were dead (in) transgressions and the uncircumcision of your flesh, he brought you to life along with him, having forgiven us all our transgressions; obliterating the bond against us, with its legal claims, which was opposed to us, he also removed it from our midst, nailing it to the cross; despoiling the principalities and the powers, he made a public spectacle of them, leading them away in triumph by it (Cf. Col 2,9-15).*

Today in Christ, with Christ, for Christ and temple of God, is his one, holy, Catholic and apostolic Church. It is from this temple that the water of life will always have to pour.

*Since the Passover of the Jews was near, Jesus went up to Jerusalem. He found in the temple area those who sold oxen, sheep, and doves, as well as the money-changers seated there. He made a whip out of cords and drove them all out of the temple area, with the sheep and oxen, and spilled the coins of the money-changers and overturned their tables, and to those who sold doves he said, "Take these out of here, and stop making my Father's house a marketplace." His disciples recalled the words of scripture, "Zeal for your house will consume me." At this the Jews answered and said to him, "What sign can you show us for doing this?" Jesus answered and said to them, "Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up." The Jews said, "This temple has been under construction for forty-six years, and you will raise it up in three days?" But he was speaking about the temple of his body. Therefore, when he was raised from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this, and they came to believe the scripture and the word Jesus had spoken.*

Virgin Mary, Mother of Redemption, Angels and Saints, make us the temple of God in Christ.

# What is this I hear about you?

# Rm 15,14-21; Ps 97,1-4; Lk 16,1-8.

### 10 NOVEMBER

Our history, the history of humanity begins with four timely interventions of God on the poor man's administration of creation, received so that he cultivated and kept it according to his will. The administration of life and earth is taken away from Adam and Eve. They can only administer death. Life and earth return to the hands of the Lord. Caino is taken away the administration of himself. He becomes a rover and without peace. The earth does not want him to tread it. Every corner of it refuses him. To the whole of mankind, the very physical life is removed because of its high corruption. It is the universal flood. Finally, after the flood the man was deprived of the government of the city. Where the man is united, there will always be chaos and confusion.

Only with Abraham a new fact begins on earth. God promises him, through his obedience, that once again blessing and life would come back to earth through his descent. The man would have become again the administrator of the mysteries of God, at one condition: that he always remained planted in Christ and moved by the Holy Spirit. Today, man can be the bearer, administrator and giver of God's life, but only in Christ, by the Spirit of the Lord. If he comes out of Christ and is not moved by the Spirit, every administration will be a real failure. The Lord comes and will ask him to give account of it. All that the Lord gives to man, he gives it to him only to administer it in his name, on his behalf, according to his will and divine rules.

This is the great mistake of man. Since he has become God, believing of having replaced himself with God, he placed even God's things, including his life, entirely in his will. He thinks he is master and lord of them. He thinks he can make the use he wants of them. Every day, he forgets, because of that diabolical vaccine that made him lose his memory on his eternal origin and dependence on God, that everything is a gift of God and that everything must be used according to God. There is no freedom in man not even to use a gram of powder with his will. Even a mustard grain must be used according to the command received by his Creator and Lord. But he might do this only if, every day he lets himself be vaccinated in his soul and his heart by the Holy Spirit, that is the living memory of who man is and what he is called to do on earth in view of heaven.

*Then he also said to his disciples, "A rich man had a steward who was reported to him for squandering his property. He summoned him and said, 'What is this I hear about you? Prepare a full account of your stewardship, because you can no longer be my steward.' The steward said to himself, 'What shall I do, now that my master is taking the position of steward away from me? I am not strong enough to dig and I am ashamed to beg. I know what I shall do so that, when I am removed from the stewardship, they may welcome me into their homes.' He called in his master's debtors one by one. To the first he said, 'How much do you owe my master?' He replied, 'One hundred measures of olive oil.' He said to him, 'Here is your promissory note. Sit down and quickly write one for fifty.' Then to another he said, 'And you, how much do you owe?' He replied, 'One hundred kors of wheat.' He said to him, 'Here is your promissory note; write one for eighty.' And the master commended that dishonest steward for acting prudently. "For the children of this world are more prudent in dealing with their own generation than are the children of light.*

The administrator squanders the goods of his Lord. He is asked to account for everything because he has to leave his job. Once again, he uses the master's assets to prepare for a good future. The teaching of Jesus is rich in divine truth. Every man today will have to leave time and enter eternity. It will be of hunger or of abundance, of death or of life. It will be of abundance if with the Lord's goods he has done good to every other man. It will be of hunger if we have used them only for us, consuming them in vices in the corruption of our very nature. Jesus warned us. Everyone will receive the future that he has built for himself: of hunger and death, of abundance and life. Today, it is preferable to suffer hunger and nudity by doing something for the poor and needy, rather than enjoying in time and dying in the unquenchable fire in eternity.

Virgin Mary, Mother of the Redemption, Angels and Saints, make us wise administrators.

**NOVEMBER 2017**

## SECOND DECADE OF NOVEMBER

# It is an abomination in the sight of God

# Rm 16,3-9.16.22-27; Ps 144,2-5.10-11; Lk 16,9-15.

### 11 NOVEMBER

It is abominable before God that religion finalized by the man to fatten his ephemeral and worldly glory, using the cult and the Word both for merely egoistic spiritual and material gains. The Pharisees did not serve God, they used God to celebrate themselves before men. People were also used by them for illicit and dishonest accumulations of wealth. This is a religion where God is no longer served by man and in which even God cannot serve man by pouring upon him all the abundance of grace, light, blessing, salvation and redemption. Even to this religion can be applied what Jesus teaches about the impure spirit that once that he comes out of a heart, returns to its conquest with seven more determined spirits than him and the condition of that man becomes worse than before.

*"When an unclean spirit goes out of a person it roams through arid regions searching for rest but finds none. Then it says, 'I will return to my home from which I came.' But upon returning, it finds it empty, swept clean, and put in order. Then it goes and brings back with itself seven other spirits more evil than itself, and they move in and dwell there; and the last condition of that person is worse than the first. Thus it will be with this evil generation" (Mt 12,45.45).*

Once, it was taught that corruption of the best is very bad. We know that in pagan religions people have also come to the point of sacrificing men to the gods; nevertheless, none of them has ever thought of killing and sacrificing their God to man. In the best religion, which has become the worst, the Son of God, the Only Son of the Father, made man, was nailed to the cross. This is the abominable religion spoken of by Jesus. But what has happened with the Pharisees also happens with the religion of Christ Jesus. Everything in it can become abominable, even priesthood, which is the most precious pearl existing on earth and heavens. Even priesthood can be reduced to an abominable practice.

Jesus sees scribes, the Pharisees of the abominable religion and knows that his Apostles too tomorrow might fall into this satanic death trap. He tells them the parable of the dishonest administrator and gives them an essential principle that will always help them so that tomorrow their religion is not abominable. The principle to be observed is infallible. Did you receive a good? Divide it immediately with someone that has none. If you accumulate the first good, you will also accumulate the second. Then the heart will be enthusiastic and will want more and more. The heart is conquered by never showing to it the things of the earth. Those who accumulate on the first day will also accumulate on the second and the third and they will become prisoners of matter. From the imprisonment of even one vice, the religion he has served will be transformed into destruction, annihilation and subjugation of God and man.

*I tell you, make friends for yourselves with dishonest wealth, so that when it fails, you will be welcomed into eternal dwellings. The person who is trustworthy in very small matters is also trustworthy in great ones; and the person who is dishonest in very small matters is also dishonest in great ones. If, therefore, you are not trustworthy with dishonest wealth, who will trust you with true wealth? If you are not trustworthy with what belongs to another, who will give you what is yours? No servant can serve two masters. He will either hate one and love the other, or be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon." The Pharisees, who loved money, heard all these things and sneered at him. And he said to them, "You justify yourselves in the sight of others, but God knows your hearts; for what is of human esteem is an abomination in the sight of God.*

What then is the faithfulness that Jesus asks in the least? It is a loyalty of immediate liberation. Do you have little? Give that little you have. God is your providence. Does not Luke's Gospel end with the image of a woman that gives all that she had to God for the service of his temple? A sublime example of fidelity. Does not he end with the other image: that of the Pharisees who stole God and men because what they possessed was always little for them? They are images of true and false religion.

Virgin Mary, Mother of Redemption, Angels and Saints, make us free in the service of God.

# You know neither the day nor the hour

# Wis 6,12-16; Ps 62,2-8; 1 Ts 4,13-18; Mt 25,1-13.

### 12 NOVEMBER – XXXII SUNDAY O.T.

Through the prophet Isaiah, the Lord makes his people know that between his thoughts and theirs there is an eternal abyss. There is no way to put them together. Those of the earth must be destroyed, abandoned, burned, removed from the heart and mind. In their place, those of God must be placed, installed and planted. This transplantation process has only one name: conversion to the Word of God and faith in it.

*All you who are thirsty, come to the water! You who have no money, come, receive grain and eat; Come, without paying and without cost, drink wine and milk! Why spend your money for what is not bread; your wages for what fails to satisfy? Heed me, and you shall eat well, you shall delight in rich fare. Come to me heedfully, listen, that you may have life. I will renew with you the everlasting covenant, the benefits assured to David. As I made him a witness to the peoples, a leader and commander of nations, So shall you summon a nation you knew not, and nations that knew you not shall run to you, Because of the Lord, your God, the Holy One of Israel, who has glorified you. Seek the Lord while he may be found, call him while he is near. Let the scoundrel forsake his way, and the wicked man his thoughts; Let him turn to the Lord for mercy; to our God, who is generous in forgiving. For my thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways my ways, says the Lord. As high as the heavens are above the earth, so high are my ways above your ways and my thoughts above your thoughts (Is 55,1-9).*

We can be excellent teachers in the Sacred Page, talented scholars and connoisseurs of all theological knowledge, we can devote the whole life to meditation and contemplation of the Word of God and of Christ Jesus, we can comment divinely every parable of the Gospel, but always bearing in our heart the worm of the non faith. We comment, study, read, meditate, but do not believe in what we say. If we only believed in a single Word of the Lord Jesus, we would change entirely our life, we would show the world our faith, we would say to it with our body the truth we believe in. Instead there is this infinite, unbridgeable distance between what is written and what we believe. Our mind is like a mill. As soon as the good grain of the Word enters it, it is immediately reduced to flour. It's no longer good grain. You can also sow the flour, never will a single stem sprout, just one seedlings, never will just another seed of grain be produced.

*"Then the kingdom of heaven will be like ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. Five of them were foolish and five were wise. The foolish ones, when taking their lamps, brought no oil with them, but the wise brought flasks of oil with their lamps. Since the bridegroom was long delayed, they all became drowsy and fell asleep. At midnight, there was a cry, 'Behold, the bridegroom! Come out to meet him!' Then all those virgins got up and trimmed their lamps. The foolish ones said to the wise, 'Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.' But the wise ones replied, 'No, for there may not be enough for us and you. Go instead to the merchants and buy some for yourselves.' While they went off to buy it, the bridegroom came and those who were ready went into the wedding feast with him. Then the door was locked. Afterwards the other virgins came and said, 'Lord, Lord, open the door for us!' But he said in reply, 'Amen, I say to you, I do not know you.' Therefore, stay awake, for you know neither the day nor the hour.*

Whoever of us believes in the Word of Jesus he solemnly states, because it is his Gospel: *"Verily I say unto you, I know you not?"* Did we not invent the worm of *"mercy without Gospel and without truth"*, with which we destroy every Word of Jesus Christ, saying that in the end God's forgiveness is universal, for all? Have we not sanctified Judah, suicide for despair of salvation, so that we too, suicides of our spirit and our soul, we could feel safe of any eternal damnation, despite our countless abominations and wickedness? We can also celebrate two hundred Saint Masses a day, but everything becomes vain because of this worm that deprives every Word of Christ the Lord and his Father of truth.

Virgin Mary, Mother of Redemption, Angels and Saints, free us from the destroyer worm.

# Things that cause sin will inevitably occur

# Wis 1,1-7; Ps 138,1-10; Lk 17,1-6.

### 13 NOVEMBER

Why does Jesus tell his disciples. "Is it inevitable that scandals happen"? Cannot man avoid that they happen, sinning in hiding and far from seeing eyes and that are impregnated with evil? The answer comes from St. Paul in the Letter to the Galatians. It is stated in it that every tree produces according to its nature. Once nature has become corrupt and advances from corruption to corruption, it also becomes ungovernable. Nature is like a dead body. The more it dissolves and the more it smells bad. So is the nature of man, the more it is corrupted and the more it gives scandal.

*For you were called for freedom, brothers. But do not use this freedom as an opportunity for the flesh; rather, serve one another through love. For the whole law is fulfilled in one statement, namely, "You shall love your neighbour as yourself." But if you go on biting and devouring one another, beware that you are not consumed by one another. I say, then: live by the Spirit and you will certainly not gratify the desire of the flesh. For the flesh has desires against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; these are opposed to each other, so that you may not do what you want.*

*But if you are guided by the Spirit, you are not under the law. Now the works of the flesh are obvious: immorality, impurity, licentiousness, idolatry, sorcery, hatreds, rivalry, jealousy, outbursts of fury, acts of selfishness, dissensions, factions, occasions of envy, drinking bouts, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. In contrast, the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law. Now those who belong to Christ (Jesus) have crucified their flesh with its passions and desires. If we live in the Spirit, let us also follow the Spirit. Let us not be conceited, provoking one another, envious of one another (Gal 5,13-26).*

Whoever does not want scandals to happen through him must bring his nature into virtues, freeing it from any vice. Once it was taught that vice is a true habit, a way of being, which naturally orients and drives toward evil. While virtue is a habit that directs heart, mind, desires and will toward the good. When a man is corrupted in his nature, it becomes non-governable. It's like a rock that falls from a high precipice. It is not governable. We can apply to evil the same physical law that applies to bodies. The rate of fall increases in relation to their weight and mass. The more a body is possessed by the vice and the more ungovernable its evil is. This is the gross mistake of our modern society. It has become a cultivator of only vices. Then, it complains with feigned pain of the consequences of its plantations.

*He said to his disciples, "Things that cause sin will inevitably occur, but woe to the person through whom they occur. It would be better for him if a millstone were put around his neck and he be thrown into the sea than for him to cause one of these little ones to sin. Be on your guard! If your brother sins, rebuke him; and if he repents, forgive him. And if he wrongs you seven times in one day and returns to you seven times saying, 'I am sorry,' you should forgive him." And the apostles said to the Lord, "Increase our faith." The Lord replied, "If you have faith the size of a mustard seed, you would say to (this) mulberry tree, 'Be uprooted and planted in the sea,' and it would obey you.*

Jesus never tricked anyone. He always puts man before his responsibilities that are the fruit of his choices. If you, man, choose vice, you will be governed by vice. If you choose virtue, you will be guided and led virtues. When you fall into vice, you will always become a scandal worker due to our body that is in free fall without even a tiny parachute. Whoever does not want to be an operator and master in every scandal, must begin the hard journey that leads him to virtue from vice and then from the initial virtue leads him to the attainment of perfection in them. Today the world is an unbroken and universal scandal. Let nobody think that a law saves it. The Holy Spirit and his gifts in the heart save the world.

Virgin Mary, Mother of Redemption, Angels and Saints, fill us with the holy virtues.

# Put on your apron and wait on me

# Wis 2,23-3,9; Ps 33,2-3.16-19; Lk 17,7-10.

### 14 NOVEMBER

In this passage of his Gospel, Christ Jesus offers himself as the image of the true servant of the Lord, the perfect servant, not always ready to do his Father's will but that identified with the will of the Father. Indeed, in the Jordan River, He stripped himself of his human will to take on all the will of the Father. The Father welcomed the gift of Christ and gave him the Holy Spirit as his one and only will. It is because of the Holy Spirit that his heart, his mind, his desires, his wisdom and intelligence, his fortitude and his love now are that he is perpetually obedience of the Father. By doing his will He does the will of the Father, by doing the will of the Father, He does his will, always in the Holy Spirit and for Him. Jesus asks every Apostle and Missionary to act according to this style of obedience and life. This style is a true death declaration to the world.

*As they were proceeding on their journey someone said to him, "I will follow you wherever you go." Jesus answered him, "Foxes have dens and birds of the sky have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to rest his head." And to another he said, "Follow me." But he replied, "(Lord,) let me go first and bury my father." But he answered him, "Let the dead bury their dead. But you, go and proclaim the kingdom of God." And another said, "I will follow you, Lord, but first let me say farewell to my family at home." (To him) Jesus said, "No one who sets a hand to the plow and looks to what was left behind is fit for the kingdom of God" (Lk 9,57.62).*

It is evident that for this obedience it is necessary that all the power of the Holy Spirit is in the Christian. Rather, that the Spirit of the Lord is mind, heart, will, intelligence, desires, aspirations and soul of the Christian. The Spirit of God is given in every sacrament. However, it is urgent to grow in Him, to abound in Him and to develop in Him. This is the command Paul gives to his faithful disciple Timothy. Without the continued growth in the Spirit of the Lord, the flesh always resumes what is its and every obedience to the Lord, according to the Word of the Gospel, fails.

*For this reason, I remind you to stir into flame the gift of God that you have through the imposition of my hands. For God did not give us a spirit of cowardice but rather of power and love and self-control. So do not be ashamed of your testimony to our Lord, nor of me, a prisoner for his sake; but bear your share of hardship for the gospel with the strength that comes from God. He saved us and called us to a holy life, not according to our works but according to his own design and the grace bestowed on us in Christ Jesus before time began, but now made manifest through the appearance of our saviour Christ Jesus, who destroyed death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel, for which I was appointed preacher and apostle and teacher. On this account I am suffering these things; but I am not ashamed, for I know him in whom I have believed and am confident that he is able to guard what has been entrusted to me until that day. Take as your norm the sound words that you heard from me, in the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. Guard this rich trust with the help of the holy Spirit that dwells within us (2Tm 1,6-14).*

You can be faithful servants only by growing in the Holy Spirit. From the flesh, no obedience might be given to the Lord and we become lazy servants, operators of every transgression of his Word. Everything in the Christian is the fruit and work of the Spirit of God.

*"Who among you would say to your servant who has just come in from ploughing or tending sheep in the field, 'Come here immediately and take your place at table'? Would he not rather say to him, 'Prepare something for me to eat. Put on your apron and wait on me while I eat and drink. You may eat and drink when I am finished'? Is he grateful to that servant because he did what was commanded? So should it be with you. When you have done all you have been commanded, say, 'We are unprofitable servants; we have done what we were obliged to do.'"*

The usefulness of the Christian is the exclusive fruit of the Spirit of the Lord. That's why nobody might be glorified of anything. We are clay in his hands, incapable of any transformation. He takes us and models us, forming us according to the divine will.

Virgin Mary, Mother of Redemption, Angels and saints, make us true servants in Christ Jesus.

# Go show yourselves to the priests

# Wis 6,1-11; Ps 81,3-4.6-7; Lk 17,11-19.

### 15 NOVEMBER

According to the Book of Leviticus, it is the ministry of the priest to declare a person suffering from leprosy, excluding him from the community. It is also his ministry to declare him healed, to offer the sacrifice for purification occurred, to admit him back in the midst of the people of God.

*"When a man loses the hair of his head, he is not unclean merely because of his bald crown. So too, if he loses the hair on the front of his head, he is not unclean merely because of his bald forehead. But when there is a pink sore on his bald crown or bald forehead, it is leprosy that is breaking out there. The priest shall examine him; and if the scab on the sore of the bald spot has the same pink appearance as that of skin leprosy of the fleshy part of the body, the man is leprous and unclean, and the priest shall declare him unclean by reason of the sore on his head. "The one who bears the sore of leprosy shall keep his garments rent and his head bare, and shall muffle his beard; he shall cry out, 'Unclean, unclean!' As long as the sore is on him he shall declare himself unclean, since he is in fact unclean. He shall dwell apart, making his abode outside the camp (Lev 13,4-46). "If a man is poor and cannot afford so much, he shall take one male lamb for a guilt offering, to be used as a wave offering in atonement for himself, one tenth of an ephah of fine flour mixed with oil for a cereal offering, a log of oil, and two turtledoves or pigeons, which he can more easily afford, the one as a sin offering and the other as a holocaust. On the eighth day of his purification he shall bring them to the priest, at the entrance of the meeting tent before the Lord. Taking the guilt-offering lamb, along with the log of oil, the priest shall wave them as a wave offering before the Lord. When he has slaughtered the guilt-offering lamb, he shall take some of its blood, and put it on the tip of the right ear of the man being purified, on the thumb of his right hand, and on the big toe of his right foot. The priest shall then pour some of the oil into the palm of his own left hand and with his right forefinger sprinkle it seven times before the Lord. Some of the oil in his hand the priest shall also put on the tip of the man's right ear, the thumb of his right hand, and the big toe of his right foot, over the blood of the guilt offering. The rest of the oil in his hand the priest shall put on the man's head. Thus shall he make atonement for him before the Lord. Then, of the turtledoves or pigeons, such as the man can afford, the priest shall offer up one as a sin offering and the other as a holocaust, along with the cereal offering. Thus shall the priest make atonement before the Lord for the man who is to be purified. This is the law for one afflicted with leprosy who has insufficient means for his purification" (Lev 14,1-32).*

Lepers obey Christ the Lord. As they go to the priests they are healed. For their faith, healing was accomplished. What is the first thing to do now? Going back and thanking God through Christ the Lord or going to the priests? The attestation of purification is needed to man. Thanksgiving is needed to God. God comes before man. You leave man, you serve God and then you go to serve man.

*As he continued his journey to Jerusalem, he traveled through Samaria and Galilee. As he was entering a village, ten lepers met (him). They stood at a distance from him and raised their voice, saying, "Jesus, Master! Have pity on us!" And when he saw them, he said, "Go show yourselves to the priests." As they were going they were cleansed. And one of them, realizing he had been healed, returned, glorifying God in a loud voice; and he fell at the feet of Jesus and thanked him. He was a Samaritan. Jesus said in reply, "Ten were cleansed, were they not? Where are the other nine? Has none but this foreigner returned to give thanks to God?" Then he said to him, "Stand up and go; your faith has saved you."*

A wise, intelligent faith, always lived under the motion of the Holy Spirit, always places God in the first place. First, it serves God. Only afterwards one must serve oneself. Christ must immediately thank the Father. That is why the faith of the one who comes back is praised. It is a faith that knows how to put everything in its proper place: first God and then yourself. First the good of Christ Jesus and then the personal one. The Christian is always required to act with a clever and intelligent faith. That is why it is urgent that he is always full, overflowing with the Holy Spirit, otherwise he will live with naive and interested faith.

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

# He must suffer greatly

# Wis 7,22-8,1; Ps 118,89-9.130.135.175; Lk 17,20-25.

### 16 NOVEMBER

The kingdom of God comes to our land only with the descent of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is the gift of Christ Jesus and is the fruit of his Eucharist and his death on the cross. The Eucharist is given immediately before the passion. The gift of the Holy Spirit has been poured out as a river of life and grace immediately after death. The Eucharist was immediately handed over to the disciples. The Holy Spirit was given after his glorious resurrection. From this moment on the kingdom of God in the midst of men begins. Its construction in the world will end with the advent of the Parusia of the Lord.

*When the hour came, he took his place at table with the apostles. He said to them, "I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer, for, I tell you, I shall not eat it (again) until there is fulfilment in the kingdom of God." Then he took a cup, gave thanks, and said, "Take this and share it among yourselves; for I tell you (that) from this time on I shall not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes." Then he took the bread, said the blessing, broke it, and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body, which will be given for you; do this in memory of me." And likewise the cup after they had eaten, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which will be shed for you (Lk 22,14-20).*

*He said to them, "These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the law of Moses and in the prophets and psalms must be fulfilled." Then he opened their minds to understand the scriptures. And he said to them, "Thus it is written that the Messiah would suffer and rise from the dead on the third day and that repentance, for the forgiveness of sins, would be preached in his name to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things. And (behold) I am sending the promise of my Father upon you; but stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high" (Lk 24,44-49).*

When will the kingdom of God come? It comes whenever the true Word of Christ Jesus resounds in the world, man gets converted to it and lets himself be baptized in water and in Holy Spirit. It is then that you enter into the kingdom of God according to the Word of Jesus.

*Now there was a Pharisee named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews. He came to Jesus at night and said to him, "Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God, for no one can do these signs that you are doing unless God is with him." Jesus answered and said to him, "Amen, amen, I say to you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above." Nicodemus said to him, "How can a person once grown old be born again? Surely he cannot reenter his mother's womb and be born again, can he?" Jesus answered, "Amen, amen, I say to you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit. What is born of flesh is flesh and what is born of spirit is spirit. Do not be amazed that I told you, 'You must be born from above.' The wind blows where it wills, and you can hear the sound it makes, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes; so it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit" (Jn 3,1-8).*

Until the advent of new heavens and the new earth the kingdom comes with the sowing of the Word, faith in it, immersion in water to be born of the Holy Spirit. Other ways are not given. Birth, growth, belonging to the kingdom will end with the coming of Jesus on the clouds of heaven for the final judgment. Then whoever is kingdom remains kingdom forever, who is not kingdom, remains forever not kingdom. There are no further steps.

*Asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, he said in reply, "The coming of the kingdom of God cannot be observed, and no one will announce, 'Look, here it is,' or, 'There it is.' For behold, the kingdom of God is among you." Then he said to his disciples, "The days will come when you will long to see one of the days of the Son of Man, but you will not see it. There will be those who will say to you, 'Look, there he is,' (or) 'Look, here he is.' Do not go off, do not run in pursuit. For just as lightning flashes and lights up the sky from one side to the other, so will the Son of Man be (in his day). But first he must suffer greatly and be rejected by this generation.*

With his glorious ascension, Jesus left his visible form. We know that He always manifests himself to individual people. It is a personal, special and unique grace. When he comes for everyone, everyone will see him in an instant. You do not go. It is He the one who comes.

Virgin Mary, Mother of Redemption, Angels and Saints make us true kingdom of God today.

# Remember the wife of Lot

# Wis 13,1-9; Ps 18,2-5; Lk 17,26-37.

### 17 NOVEMBER

On the universal flood, the Book of Genesis reveals to us only the motive and the order given to Noah. It does not speak of an invitation to the conversion made by the Lord. The only warning might have been the sight of Noah who was building the ark on a firm ground.

*When the Lord saw how great was man's wickedness on earth, and how no desire that his heart conceived was ever anything but evil, he regretted that he had made man on the earth, and his heart was grieved. So the Lord said: "I will wipe out from the earth the men whom I have created, and not only the men, but also the beasts and the creeping things and the birds of the air, for I am sorry that I made them." But Noah found favour with the Lord. he said to Noah: "I have decided to put an end to all mortals on earth; the earth is full of lawlessness because of them. So I will destroy them and all life on earth. Make yourself an ark of gopher wood, put various compartments in it, and cover it inside and out with pitch. This is how you shall build it: the length of the ark shall be three hundred cubits, its width fifty cubits, and its height thirty cubits. Make an opening for daylight in the ark, and finish the ark a cubit above it. Put an entrance in the side of the ark, which you shall make with bottom, second and third decks (Cf. Gen 6,1-16).*

While we know that when Lot went out to his two sons-in-law to warn them so that they fled to safety, they did not believe. They refused salvation, falling under fire and sulphur. Lot had been ordered to flee without turning back.

*So Lot went out and spoke to his sons-in-law, who had contracted marriage with his daughters. "Get up and leave this place," he told them; "the Lord is about to destroy the city." But his sons-in-law thought he was joking. As dawn was breaking, the angels urged Lot on, saying, "On your way! Take with you your wife and your two daughters who are here, or you will be swept away in the punishment of the city." When he hesitated, the men, by the Lord’s mercy, seized his hand and the hands of his wife and his two daughters and led them to safety outside the city. As soon as they had been brought outside, he was told: "Flee for your life! Don't look back or stop anywhere on the Plain. Get off to the hills at once, or you will be swept away." The sun was just rising over the earth as Lot arrived in Zoar; at the same time the Lord rained down sulphurous fire upon Sodom and Gomorrah (from the Lord out of heaven). But Lot's wife looked back, and she was turned into a pillar of salt (Cf. Gen 19,1-25).*

In the Gospel passage offered to our meditation, there are two judgments of the Lord: one that can always happen in history and the last that will take place at the end of time. Both are immediate, quick and no one is waiting for them. When they arrive they have already arrived. About judgments in history Jesus reveals that one can only save his physical life. Nothing else. Who saves and who loses it? It is not up to us to know before. About judgment in eternity, Jesus asks us to lose the entire life in time to gain life in eternity. But does not man today think that Jesus is joking?

*As it was in the days of Noah, so it will be in the days of the Son of Man; they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage up to the day that Noah entered the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all. Similarly, as it was in the days of Lot: they were eating, drinking, buying, selling, planting, building; on the day when Lot left Sodom, fire and brimstone rained from the sky to destroy them all. So it will be on the day the Son of Man is revealed. On that day, a person who is on the housetop and whose belongings are in the house must not go down to get them, and likewise a person in the field must not return to what was left behind. Remember the wife of Lot. Whoever seeks to preserve his life will lose it, but whoever loses it will save it. I tell you, on that night there will be two people in one bed; one will be taken, the other left. And there will be two women grinding meal together; one will be taken, the other left." They said to him in reply, "Where, Lord?" He said to them, "Where the body is, there also the vultures will gather."*

Where there is a man, there is always death lurking there. Man and death walk together. One moves and the other moves. One stops and the other one stops. One takes the train and the other takes the train. One goes on a cruise and the other goes on a cruises. Always together.

Virgin Mary, Mother of Redemption, Angels, Saints, give us true faith in judgment.

# Render a just decision for me against my adversary

# Wis 18,14-16; 19,6-9; Ps 104,2-3.36-37.42-43; Lk 18,1-8.

### 18 NOVEMBER

The Book of Genesis reveals to us that prayer is the true struggle of man with God. The Lord lets himself be overcome by the man that prays. But one prays from the fulfilment of God's will for its complete fulfilment. One prays from the Word for the Word. Jacob received the order to return to Canaan. He obeys. He's afraid, he prays and fights with God in order to obey. God lets himself be overcome by him.

*Then he prayed: "O God of my father Abraham and God of my father Isaac! You told me, O Lord, 'Go back to the land of your birth, and I will be good to you.' I am unworthy of all the acts of kindness that you have loyally performed for your servant: although I crossed the Jordan here with nothing but my staff, I have now grown into two companies. Save me, I pray, from the hand of my brother Esau! Otherwise I fear that when he comes he will strike me down and slay the mothers and children. You yourself said, 'I will be very good to you, and I will make your descendants like the sands of the sea, which are too numerous to count.'" Jacob was left there alone. Then some man wrestled with him until the break of dawn. When the man saw that he could not prevail over him, he struck Jacob's hip at its socket, so that the hip socket was wrenched as they wrestled. The man then said, "Let me go, for it is daybreak." But Jacob said, "I will not let you go until you bless me." "What is your name?" the man asked. He answered, "Jacob." Then the man said, "You shall no longer be spoken of as Jacob, but as Israel, because you have contended with divine and human beings and have prevailed." Jacob then asked him, "Do tell me your name, please." He answered, "Why should you want to know my name?" With that, he bade him farewell. Jacob named the place Peniel, "Because I have seen God face to face," he said, "yet my life has been spared" (Cf. Gen 32,1-33).*

Jesus obeyed his Father. Like Jacob he is afraid. He fights with God in the Garden of Olives. An Angel comes down to comfort him. He gets victory. He goes onto the cross.

*Then going out he went, as was his custom, to the Mount of Olives, and the disciples followed him. When he arrived at the place he said to them, "Pray that you may not undergo the test." After withdrawing about a stone's throw from them and kneeling, he prayed, saying, "Father, if you are willing, take this cup away from me; still, not my will but yours be done." (And to strengthen him an angel from heaven appeared to him. He was in such agony and he prayed so fervently that his sweat became like drops of blood falling on the ground.) When he rose from prayer and returned to his disciples, he found them sleeping from grief. He said to them, "Why are you sleeping? Get up and pray that you may not undergo the test." (Lk 22,39-46).*

Jacob won fighting with God and with men in prayer. Jesus also won with God and men fighting in prayer. If the Christian wants to win with God and with men he must struggle with a prayer without interruption. He has to fight from obedience for obedience, from the Word for the Word. He has to struggle so that through him only the divine will is done on earth, even with the sacrifice of his life.

*Then he told them a parable about the necessity for them to pray always without becoming weary. He said, "There was a judge in a certain town who neither feared God nor respected any human being. And a widow in that town used to come to him and say, 'Render a just decision for me against my adversary.' For a long time the judge was unwilling, but eventually he thought, 'While it is true that I neither fear God nor respect any human being, because this widow keeps bothering me I shall deliver a just decision for her lest she finally come and strike me.'" The Lord said, "Pay attention to what the dishonest judge says. Will not God then secure the rights of his chosen ones who call out to him day and night? Will he be slow to answer them? I tell you, he will see to it that justice is done for them speedily. But when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on earth?"*

Jesus attests for us. the Father will always hear the prayer of his children. Jacob did not wait long. Even Jesus Christ did not wait long. Jacob prays and is immediately heard. Christ Jesus prays and peace comes down immediately to his soul and sets out toward the cross. When you struggle with God for the fulfilment of his will, the night is not over and you have already been heard. God cannot fail to answer this prayer.

Virgin Mary, Mother of Redemption, Angels and Saints, fight with us in prayers.

# Called in his servants and entrusted his possessions to them

# Pr 31,10-13.19-20.30-31; Ps 127,1-5; 1 Ts 5,1-6; Mt 25,14-30.

### 19 NOVEMBER – XXXIII SUNDAY O.T.

The Gospel according to Matthew both in the Speech of the Mountain and in the Speeches held by Jesus in Jerusalem immediately before his Passion and Death, ends with the judgment of the Lord on every man's life. For the disciples of Jesus, since the First Speech has been addressed to them, it will all be on the Word heard and lived. A disciple that hears and does not live is compared to an operator of iniquity. There will be no place for Him in the new heavens and in the new earth. In Jerusalem Jesus announces three judgments: the first on the Word. It's for the disciples. The disciple of Jesus will be judged in relation to the Word heard and put into practice. With the oil-free lamp you do not enter the dining room.

The second judgment is for every man. It is made on gifts received and put to fruition. Everyone is not only obliged to bring to fruition the gifts of God - intelligence, wisdom, grace, truth, Holy Spirit, faith, hope, charity and that he has received – he must deliver all to his Lord in the end. E He received everything and has to delivered everything. He delivers everything on earth today, transforming it into works of mercy and piety. The third judgment is on the relationship of man with every other man. Let no one present himself to enter paradise, if he has not loved his brothers. The first love is not to cause them any harm, through a strict observance of the Commandments. The second love is to help them to the extent that everyone is in the possibility of doing so.

The parable of talents reveals us a very great truth. There is no man on earth that has not received a gift from the Lord. Everyone has to love according to the gift received. If one has ten, he has to love for ten, if he has five, for five and if he has one, for one. God is righteous and never asks for more than it is due to him. Then it is right that everyone takes great care. Wasting intelligence, wisdom, grace, Holy Spirit and Sacraments, makes us greatly guilty before the Lord. Even of a single Eucharist received one comes up for trial. The Lord does not love that his gifts are made sterile by the sloth of man.

*"It will be as when a man who was going on a journey called in his servants and entrusted his possessions to them. To one he gave five talents; to another, two; to a third, one - to each according to his ability. Then he went away. Immediately the one who received five talents went and traded with them, and made another five. Likewise, the one who received two made another two. But the man who received one went off and dug a hole in the ground and buried his master's money. After a long time the master of those servants came back and settled accounts with them. The one who had received five talents came forward bringing the additional five. He said, 'Master, you gave me five talents. See, I have made five more.' His master said to him, 'Well done, my good and faithful servant. Since you were faithful in small matters, I will give you great responsibilities. Come, share your master's joy.' (Then) the one who had received two talents also came forward and said, 'Master, you gave me two talents. See, I have made two more.' His master said to him, 'Well done, my good and faithful servant. Since you were faithful in small matters, I will give you great responsibilities. Come, share your master's joy.' Then the one who had received the one talent came forward and said, 'Master, I knew you were a demanding person, harvesting where you did not plant and gathering where you did not scatter; so out of fear I went off and buried your talent in the ground. Here it is back.' His master said to him in reply, 'You wicked, lazy servant! So you knew that I harvest where I did not plant and gather where I did not scatter? Should you not then have put my money in the bank so that I could have got it back with interest on my return? Now then! Take the talent from him and give it to the one with ten. For to everyone who has, more will be given and he will grow rich; but from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away. And throw this useless servant into the darkness outside, where there will be wailing and grinding of teeth.'*

Nothing of the Lord's gifts must go wasted, lost and not put to fruition. The civilization of waste, squandering, excesses in every field, drug, alcohol, pleasure, taste, luxury and squander will be called into judgment for every use of God's things done against the will of God, because it prevented and hindered the well-ordered development and use of every other gift of the Lord. How can one who is drugged, drunk, thrown into gluttony or other vices, develop and bring to fruition the gifts of God? Also for this obstacle he will be called into judgment. The evil servant did not do any evil. He failed to make the gift fructify.

Virgin Mary, Mother of the Redemption, Angels and Saints, make us responsible for every gift.

# What do you want me to do for you?

# 1Mac 1,10-15.41-43.54-57.62-64; Ps 118,53.61.134.150.158-159; Lk 18,35-43.

### 20 NOVEMBER

No man of God in Ancient Scripture has given sight to a single blind, nor has anyone loosened the tongue of a mute or ever made the deaf hear. The one and only physical miracles were operated by Elijah and Elisha. Both of them resurrected a dead baby, in addition Elisha healed Naaman's leprosy and gave life to a man who, while was being taken to burial, was abandoned on his tomb. Many other healings from various ills are also narrated. However, Elisha gave the sight of invisible things to the servant who accompanied him, making him contemplate an army of horses and chariots of fire escorting them on their journey to Samaria.

*Early the next morning, when the attendant of the man of God arose and went out, he saw the force with its horses and chariots surrounding the city. "Alas!" he said to Elisha. "What shall we do, my lord?" "Do not be afraid," Elisha answered. "Our side outnumbers theirs." Then he prayed, "O Lord, open his eyes, that he may see." And the Lord opened the eyes of the servant, so that he saw the mountainside filled with horses and fiery chariots around Elisha. When the Arameans came down to get him, Elisha prayed to the Lord, "Strike this people blind, I pray you." And in answer to the prophet's prayer the Lord struck them blind. Then Elisha said to them: "This is the wrong road, and this is the wrong city. Follow me! I will take you to the man you want." And he led them to Samaria. When they entered Samaria, Elisha prayed, "O Lord, open their eyes that they may see." The Lord opened their eyes, and they saw that they were inside Samaria (2Kings 6,15-20).*

On the other hand, the prophecy announces that the Messiah gives sight to the blind, opens the mouth of the mute and makes the deaf hear. With Him, men can return to listen to the Lord, tell his wonders, see his prodigies that are extraordinarily great and all aimed at the salvation of his people and every other man.

*Say to those whose hearts are frightened: Be strong, fear not! Here is your God, he comes with vindication; With divine recompense he comes to save you. Then will the eyes of the blind be opened, the ears of the deaf be cleared; Then will the lame leap like a stag, then the tongue of the dumb will sing. Streams will burst forth in the desert, and rivers in the steppe. The burning sands will become pools, and the thirsty ground, springs of water; The abode where jackals lurk will be a marsh for the reed and papyrus. A highway will be there, called the holy way; No one unclean may pass over it, nor fools go astray on it (Is 35,4-8).*

The blind man asks the Son of David to have mercy on him. And Jesus: *"What do you want me to do for you?"* In the prayer it is a right thing to always show the heart to the Lord. We must pray with timely desires. Desire reveals what is in the soul and what our spirit is governed by. It suffices to listen to one prayer and the soul reveals itself in full. The soul is its desire, its prayer.

*Now as he approached Jericho a blind man was sitting by the roadside begging, and hearing a crowd going by, he inquired what was happening. They told him, "Jesus of Nazareth is passing by." He shouted, "Jesus, Son of David, have pity on me!" The people walking in front rebuked him, telling him to be silent, but he kept calling out all the more, "Son of David, have pity on me!" Then Jesus stopped and ordered that he be brought to him; and when he came near, Jesus asked him, "What do you want me to do for you?" He replied, "Lord, please let me see." Jesus told him, "Have sight; your faith has saved you." He immediately received his sight and followed him, giving glory to God. When they saw this, all the people gave praise to God.*

If we examine carefully all the prayers we elevate to the Lord, we must confess that by now matter got the upper hand over the spirit and the earth is erasing eternity. Does not Jesus say perhaps, *"Look first for the kingdom of heaven and for its justice and all these things will be given you in addition"?* The law of faith is what must move the law of prayer. We often make the law of prayer, the law of faith. Does not Jesus begin our Father asking for the kingdom of God?

Virgin Mary, Mother of Redemption, Angels and Saints, teach us the law of faith.

**NOVEMBER 2017**

## THIRD DECADE OF NOVEMBER

# Who is my mother? Who are my brothers?

# Zc 2,14-17; Ps Lk 1,46-55; Mt 12,46-50.

### 21 NOVEMBER

Two episodes of ancient history - in the New Testament the modes change, but not the truths and not even the substance of love for the Lord – they help us understand what the Lord reveals today with strong words that might seem like true repudiation of his Mother, his relatives and every other person. Fineès, son of Aaron, was not afraid to take away his idolatrous and immoral brothers from among the people. He recognized the Lord and placed him in the first place. The Lord blesses him and exalts him with great glory.

*Yet a certain Israelite came and brought in a Midianite woman to his clansmen in the view of Moses and of the whole Israelite community, while they were weeping at the entrance of the meeting tent. When Phinehas, son of Eleazar, son of Aaron the priest, saw this, he left the assembly, and taking a lance in hand, followed the Israelite into his retreat where he pierced the pair of them, the Israelite and the woman. Thus the slaughter of Israelites was checked; but only after twenty-four thousand had died. Then the Lord said to Moses, "Phinehas, son of Eleazar, son of Aaron the priest, has turned my anger from the Israelites by his zeal for my honour among them; that is why I did not put an end to the Israelites for the offense to my honour. Announce, therefore, that I hereby give him my pledge of friendship, which shall be for him and for his descendants after him the pledge of an everlasting priesthood, because he was zealous on behalf of his God and thus made amends for the Israelites" (Num 25,6-13).*

Eli, the priest of the Most High God, is weak with his children. He corrects them blandly. He does not have the strength to remove them from worship service. A real catastrophe beats down on him. He loved his children more than the glory of the Lord and his honour.

*A man of God came to Eli and said to him: "This is what the Lord says: 'I went so far as to reveal myself to your father's family when they were in Egypt as slaves to the house of Pharaoh. I chose them out of all the tribes of Israel to be my priests, to go up to my altar, to burn incense, and to wear the ephod before me; and I assigned all the oblations of the Israelites to your father's family. Why do you keep a greedy eye on my sacrifices and on the offerings which I have prescribed? And why do you honour your sons in preference to me, fattening yourselves with the choicest part of every offering of my people Israel?' This, therefore, is the oracle of the Lord, the God of Israel: 'I said in the past that your family and your father's family should minister in my presence forever. But now,' the Lord declares, 'away with this! for I will honour those who honour me, but those who spurn me shall be accursed. Yes, the time is coming when I will break your strength and the strength of your father's family, so that no man in your family shall reach old age. You shall witness as a disappointed rival all the benefits enjoyed by Israel, but there shall never be an old man in your family. I will permit some of your family to remain at my altar, to wear out their eyes in consuming greed; but the rest of the men of your family shall die by the sword. You shall have a sign in what will happen to your two sons, Hophni and Phinehas: both shall die on the same day. I will choose a faithful priest who shall do what I have in heart and mind. I will establish a lasting house for him which shall function in the presence of my anointed forever. Then whoever is left of your family will come to grovel before him for a piece of silver or a loaf of bread, and will say: Appoint me, I beg you, to a priestly function, that I may have a morsel of bread to eat'" (1Sam 2,27-36).*

Today Jesus does not speak for his Mother. He has already spoken to her when he was twelve and she had put the word heard in her heart. She is the true mother of Jesus. His brothers are not true brothers. These do not believe in him, nor do they seek him to do the divine will. They are only moved by curiosity and search for ephemeral and worldly glory.

*While he was still speaking to the crowds, his mother and his brothers appeared outside, wishing to speak with him. (Someone told him, "Your mother and your brothers are standing outside, asking to speak with you.") But he said in reply to the one who told him, "Who is my mother? Who are my brothers?" And stretching out his hand toward his disciples, he said, "Here are my mother and my brothers. For whoever does the will of my heavenly Father is my brother, and sister, and mother."*

The Lord must be placed in first place. Everything else is from the Lord, according to the Word.

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

# They thought that the kingdom of God would appear there immediately

# 2Mac 7,1.20-31; Ps 16,1.5-6.8b.15; Lk 19,11-28.

### 22 NOVEMBER

The kingdom of God is not manifested from the outside of man. Every man is obliged to manifest it with his life, just as Jesus manifests it with every word, every work and even his gestures are a powerful manifestation of the kingdom of God. Today He teaches us that the kingdom must be manifested by everyone with a full obedience to the grace and charismas received. Obedience to grace is a true manifestation of the kingdom of God. If every Apostle, every Presbyter, every Prophet, every Doctor, each Master and each Missionary corresponded to the grace received, the world would see the kingdom of God come with power every day. Instead, the grace received is often forgotten and we deal with things that will necessarily have to be done without any grace.

*Paul, a slave of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle and set apart for the gospel of God, which he promised previously through his prophets in the holy scriptures, the gospel about his Son, descended from David according to the flesh, but established as Son of God in power according to the spirit of holiness through resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord. Through him we have received the grace of apostleship, to bring about the obedience of faith, for the sake of his name, among all the Gentiles, among whom are you also, who are called to belong to Jesus Christ; to all the beloved of God in Rome, called to be holy. Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ (Rm 1,1-7).* *For by the grace given to me I tell everyone among you not to think of himself more highly than one ought to think, but to think soberly, each according to the measure of faith that God has apportioned. For as in one body we have many parts, and all the parts do not have the same function, so we, though many, are one body in Christ and individually parts of one another. Since we have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us exercise them: if prophecy, in proportion to the faith; if ministry, in ministering; if one is a teacher, in teaching; if one exhorts, in exhortation; if one contributes, in generosity; if one is over others, with diligence; if one does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness (Rm 12,3-8).*

Today Jesus reveals to us that non-obedience to the grace received becomes an accusation in the day we give account. The idle servant could also build another sky and another land, but he did not obey to the grace he was given. He has acted in his will and not with pure obedience to his Lord and Lord.

*While they were listening to him speak, he proceeded to tell a parable because he was near Jerusalem and they thought that the kingdom of God would appear there immediately. So he said, "A nobleman went off to a distant country to obtain the kingship for himself and then to return. He called ten of his servants and gave them ten gold coins and told them, 'Engage in trade with these until I return.' His fellow citizens, however, despised him and sent a delegation after him to announce, 'We do not want this man to be our king.' But when he returned after obtaining the kingship, he had the servants called, to whom he had given the money, to learn what they had gained by trading. The first came forward and said, 'Sir, your gold coin has earned ten additional ones.' He replied, 'Well done, good servant! You have been faithful in this very small matter; take charge of ten cities.' Then the second came and reported, 'Your gold coin, sir, has earned five more.' And to this servant too he said, 'You, take charge of five cities.' Then the other servant came and said, 'Sir, here is your gold coin; I kept it stored away in a handkerchief, for I was afraid of you, because you are a demanding person; you take up what you did not lay down and you harvest what you did not plant.' He said to him, 'With your own words I shall condemn you, you wicked servant. You knew I was a demanding person, taking up what I did not lay down and harvesting what I did not plant; why did you not put my money in a bank? Then on my return I would have collected it with interest.' And to those standing by he said, 'Take the gold coin from him and give it to the servant who has ten.' But they said to him, 'Sir, he has ten gold coins.' 'I tell you, to everyone who has, more will be given, but from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away. Now as for those enemies of mine who did not want me as their king, bring them here and slay them before me.'" After he had said this, he proceeded on his journey up to Jerusalem.*

We all are warned. God does not want His grace in us to be lived in vain. He has given it to us because only we, in his wisdom, can put it well to fruition to manifest his kingdom present on our land. We are guilty for eternity.

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

# He saw the city and wept over it

# 1Mac 2,15-29; Ps 49,1-2.5-6.14-15; Lk 19,41-44.

### 23 NOVEMBER

Jerusalem is destroyed. The prophet weeps on her ruins, her deaths, the loneliness and abandonment in which the city has fallen because of her misdeeds. It is a bitter weeping that of the prophet. But it is done after the events previously announced and almost described by him. But no one believed in his prophecy!

*How lonely she is now, the once crowded city! Widowed is she who was mistress over nations; The princess among the provinces has been made a toiling slave. Bitterly she weeps at night, tears upon her cheeks, With not one to console her of all her dear ones; Her friends have all betrayed her and become her enemies. Judah has fled into exile from oppression and cruel slavery; Yet where she lives among the nations she finds no place to rest: All her persecutors come upon her where she is narrowly confined. The roads to Zion mourn for lack of pilgrims going to her feasts; All her gateways are deserted, her priests groan, Her virgins sigh; she is in bitter grief. Her foes are uppermost, her enemies are at ease; The Lord has punished her for her many sins. Her little ones have gone away, captive before the foe. Gone from daughter Zion is all her glory: Her princes, like rams that find no pasture, Have gone off without strength before their captors. Jerusalem is mindful of the days of her wretched homelessness, When her people fell into enemy hands, and she had no one to help her; When her foes gloated over her, laughed at her ruin. Through the sin of which she is guilty, Jerusalem is defiled; All who esteemed her think her vile now that they see her nakedness; She herself groans and turns away. Her filth is on her skirt; she gave no thought how she would end. Astounding is her downfall, with no one to console her. Look, O Lord, upon her misery, for the enemy has triumphed! The foe stretched out his hand to all her treasures; She has seen those nations enter her sanctuary Whom you forbade to come into your assembly. All her people groan, searching for bread; They give their treasures for food, to retain the breath of life. "Look O Lord, and see how worthless I have become!*

*"Come, all you who pass by the way, look and see Whether there is any suffering like my suffering, which has been dealt me When the Lord afflicted me on the day of his blazing wrath. "From on high he sent fire down into my very frame; He spread a net for my feet, and overthrew me. He left me desolate, in pain all the day. "He has kept watch over my sins; by his hand they have been plaited: They have settled about my neck, he has brought my strength to its knees; The Lord has delivered me into their grip, I am unable to rise. "All the mighty ones in my midst the Lord has cast away; He summoned an army against me to crush my young men; The Lord has trodden in the wine press virgin daughter Judah. "At this I weep, my eyes run with tears: Far from me are all who could console me, any who might revive me; My sons were reduced to silence when the enemy prevailed." Zion stretched out her hands, but there was no one to console her; The Lord gave orders against Jacob for his neighbours to be his foes; Jerusalem has become in their midst a thing unclean. "The Lord is just; I had defied his command. Listen, all you peoples, and behold my suffering: My maidens and my youths have gone into captivity. "I cried out to my lovers, but they failed me. My priests and my elders perished in the city; Where they sought food for themselves, they found it not. "Look, O Lord, upon my distress: all within me is in ferment, My heart recoils within me from my monstrous rebellion. In the streets the sword bereaves, at home death stalks. "Give heed to my groaning; there is no one to console me. All my enemies rejoice at my misfortune: it is you who have wrought it. Bring on the day you have proclaimed, that they may be even as I. "Let all their evil come before you; deal with them As you have dealt with me for all my sins; My groans are many, and I am sick at heart" (Lam 1,1-23).*

The true prophet of the living God, Jesus cries before the events happen, just as the ancient prophet cried after the happened events. That of Jesus is a true "Lamentation", stronger and more eloquent than the ancient one. It attests that everything will be accomplished in his prophecy. No stone over stone will remain of the city. Jesus cries because he sees everything already done. Nothing has to happen. He sees in the spirit and cries. Who cries this time is not a man. The Father's Only Son is crying.

*As he drew near, he saw the city and wept over it, saying, "If this day you only knew what makes for peace - but now it is hidden from your eyes. For the days are coming upon you when your enemies will raise a palisade against you; they will encircle you and hem you in on all sides. They will smash you to the ground and your children within you, and they will not leave one stone upon another within you because you did not recognize the time of your visitation."*

 Virgin Mary, Mother of Redemption, Angels and Saints make us cry for all sin.

# My house shall be a house of prayer

# 1Mac 4,36-37.52-59; Ps 1 Cr 29,10-12; Lk 19,45-48.

### 24 NOVEMBER

The house of the Lord is a house of prayer, for it is a house of true reconciliation with the God of the Covenant. This is the true spirit hidden in the prayer that Solomon elevates to the Lord on the day of the consecration of his home. You come to the temple, pray looking to the temple to ask the Lord of wanting to be reconciled with his people, with every son of his people and also with every other man. First, we reconcile ourselves with God and with men and then we ask for everything else.

*Listen to the petitions of your servant and of your people Israel which they offer in this place. Listen from your heavenly dwelling and grant pardon. "If a man sins against his neighbour and is required to take an oath sanctioned by a curse, when he comes and takes the oath before your altar in this temple, listen in heaven; take action and pass judgment on your servants. Condemn the wicked and punish him for his conduct, but acquit the just and establish his innocence. "If your people Israel sin against you and are defeated by an enemy, and if then they return to you, praise your name, pray to you, and entreat you in this temple, listen in heaven and forgive the sin of your people Israel, and bring them back to the land you gave their fathers. "If the sky is closed, so that there is no rain, because they have sinned against you and you afflict them, and if then they repent of their sin, and pray, and praise your name in this place, listen in heaven and forgive the sin of your servant and of your people Israel, teaching them the right way to live and sending rain upon this land of yours which you have given to your people as their heritage. "To the foreigner, likewise, who is not of your people Israel, but comes from a distant land to honour you (since men will learn of your great name and your mighty hand and your outstretched arm), when he comes and prays toward this temple, listen from your heavenly dwelling. Do all that the foreigner asks of you, that all the peoples of the earth may know your name, may fear you as do your people Israel, and may acknowledge that this temple which I have built is dedicated to your honour. "Whatever the direction in which you may send your people forth to war against their enemies, if they pray to you, O Lord, toward the city you have chosen and the temple I have built in your honour, listen in heaven to their prayer and petition, and defend their cause. "Thus may your eyes be open to the petition of your servant and to the petition of your people Israel. Hear them whenever they call upon you, because you have set them apart among all the peoples of the earth for your inheritance, as you declared through your servant Moses when you brought our fathers out of Egypt, O Lord God" (Cf. 1Kings 8,30-53).*

The Lord wants to reconcile with the whole humanity. Everyone will be led to the home of reconciliation and peace. This house is Christ the Lord. It is in Him, with Him, for Him that every reconciliation is accomplished. Today the home of reconciliation is the Church.

*Let not the foreigner say, when he would join himself to the Lord, "The Lord will surely exclude me from his people"; Nor let the eunuch say, "See, I am a dry tree." For thus says the Lord: To the eunuchs who observe my Sabbaths and choose what pleases me and hold fast to my covenant, I will give, in my house and within my walls, a monument and a name Better than sons and daughters; an eternal, imperishable name will I give them. And the foreigners who join themselves to the Lord, ministering to him, Loving the name of the Lord, and becoming his servants -  All who keep the Sabbath free from profanation and hold to my covenant, Them I will bring to my holy mountain and make joyful in my house of prayer; Their holocausts and sacrifices will be acceptable on my altar, For my house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples (Is 56, 3-7).*

Making of the temple a thief's nest is debasing it its truest essence. In reconciliation, sin is removed. In the den of thieves, sin is welcomed and one lives together with it.

*Then Jesus entered the temple area and proceeded to drive out those who were selling things, saying to them, "It is written, 'My house shall be a house of prayer, but you have made it a den of thieves.'" And every day he was teaching in the temple area. The chief priests, the scribes, and the leaders of the people, meanwhile, were seeking to put him to death, but they could find no way to accomplish their purpose because all the people were hanging on his words.*

Virgin Mary, Mother of Redemption, Angels and Saints make us a home of reconciliation.

# Neither marry nor are given in marriage

# 1Mac 6,1-13; Ps 9,2-4.6.16.19; Lk 20,27-40.

### 25 NOVEMBER

The people of the Lord had evident in their eyes faith in the resurrection in its double form: of glory and eternal infamy. They were well aware through revelation that obedience produces an eternal blessing, while disobedience yields curse, infamy, condemnation, darkness, death and non life, pain and non joy.

*After he had died, they tortured and maltreated the fourth brother in the same way. When he was near death, he said, "It is my choice to die at the hands of men with the God-given hope of being restored to life by him; but for you, there will be no resurrection to life" (2Mac 7,13-14). You have defied me in word, says the Lord, yet you ask, "What have we spoken against you?" You have said, "It is vain to serve God, and what do we profit by keeping his command, And going about in penitential dress in awe of the Lord of hosts? Rather must we call the proud blessed; for indeed evildoers prosper, and even tempt God with impunity." Then they who fear the Lord spoke with one another, and the Lord listened attentively; And a record book was written before him of those who fear the Lord and trust in his name. And they shall be mine, says the Lord of hosts, my own special possession, on the day I take action. And I will have compassion on them, as a man has compassion on his son who serves him. Then you will again see the distinction between the just and the wicked; Between him who serves God, and him who does not serve him. For lo, the day is coming, blazing like an oven, when all the proud and all evildoers will be stubble, And the day that is coming will set them on fire, leaving them neither root nor branch, says the Lord of hosts. But for you who fear my name, there will arise the sun of justice with its healing rays; And you will gambol like calves out of the stall 1) and tread down the wicked; They will become ashes under the soles of your feet, on the day I take action, says the Lord of hosts (Mal 3,13-21).*

What does Jesus today add to the ancient revelation? It was almost perfect. Only one thing was missing: eternal life is not the continuation of earthly life, even if in the complete absence of pain, death, hunger, thirst, mourning and all other sadness that afflicts humanity fallen into sin. Eternity is in the transformation of our bodily being into light and spirit, as God is spirit, as Angels are spirits. But we must always confess that we are in eternity flesh transformed into spirit and light. While the Angels are spiritual creatures without body of matter, and God is the Purest Non-Created Spirit, but Creator of all that exists of visible and invisible things. Transformation into spirit, annuls the whole regime lived in the flesh.

*Some Sadducees, those who deny that there is a resurrection, came forward and put this question to him, saying, "Teacher, Moses wrote for us, 'If someone's brother dies leaving a wife but no child, his brother must take the wife and raise up descendants for his brother.' Now there were seven brothers; the first married a woman but died childless. Then the second and the third married her, and likewise all the seven died childless. Finally the woman also died. Now at the resurrection whose wife will that woman be? For all seven had been married to her." Jesus said to them, "The children of this age marry and remarry; but those who are deemed worthy to attain to the coming age and to the resurrection of the dead neither marry nor are given in marriage. They can no longer die, for they are like angels; and they are the children of God because they are the ones who will rise. That the dead will rise even Moses made known in the passage about the bush, when he called 'Lord' the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob; and he is not God of the dead, but of the living, for to him all are alive." Some of the scribes said in reply, "Teacher, you have answered well." And they no longer dared to ask him anything.*

With the complete transformation of our flesh into spirit, the question put to Jesus by the Sadducees falls. Spirit does not take either wife or husband. Spirit is not generated into other spirits. The spirit has a full life in itself. It is not created to give life, to fill the sky. It is a life, the eternal one, which we can only imagine with the help of revelation. But what it will be in its true reality is far from our mind because we lack the very concept of eternal life. Spirit cannot be understood from the flesh. Nor flesh solutions are those of the spirit.

Virgin Mary, Mother of Redemption, Angels and Saints, teach us the things of the spirit.

# When the Son of Man comes in his glory

# Ez 34,11-12.15-17; Ps 22,1-3.5-6; 1Cor 15,20-26.28; Mt 25,31-46.

**26 NOVEMBER – CHRIST JESUS THE UNIVERSE KING**

Reducing the evangelical multiplicity to monolithic singularities is true heresy and is the death of true faith. The gospel according to Matthew is made up of twenty-eight chapters. Reducing it to this single story of the final judgment, excluding all else, is a real crime against the complex truth which is made of about two thousand years of revelation. Even in the same chapter twenty-five there are three different judgments. The first judgment is about obedience to faith. You have been given the Word, you have not transformed it into work, into life and into history. You are responsible for the lack of transformation for eternity. Your lamp is oil-free. You cannot enter the eternal wedding room.

Another could say, *"I live the Word, I necessarily save myself."* This too is false. Even if you live obedience to the Word, you have to add to it obedience to grace, ministry and charisma. The Word must be embodied in the ministry, in the charisma and in the mission. The Apostle is not the Priest. The Priest is not the deacon. The Deacon is not the lay faithful. The married person is not the single. The Confirmed is not the baptized. The religious is not the non-religious and the consecrated is not the non-consecrated. The Pope is not only a Bishop, even if he is the Bishop of Rome. He is the visible foundation of the unity of the whole Church. He might never be saved if he does not obey the grace that has been given to him.

One could say, "I never knew the Word. I have never known that one must obey grace." The third judgment remains: that on the goods of this world. Have you shared your goods with the poor, both spiritual and material goods? You will enter the kingdom of heaven. You have only lived for yourself, you will go to the place of the selfish and those who have only thought of themselves. Paradise is the place of eternal communion and cannot be contaminated by people who think only of themselves, closed in their selfishness.

*"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."*

Thinking of a Christian that goes to heaven because he shared a piece of bread with his brothers without sharing the eternal Paradise, Christ Jesus, Heavenly Father, the Holy Spirit, the Virgin Mary, the Church, the Sacraments, the Grace, the Word and the Gospel, is deleterious. It is the destruction of his truth. It is the death of his faith. It is the renunciation to his mission. It is true apostasy of the Gospel. We must be firm and clear in the Gospel proclamation. The Christian must do all good for obedience to the Word and grace. He was commanded this and this is the way of his eternal salvation. He must never reduce the revelation to the only work of material charity.

Virgin Mary, Mother of Redemption, Angels and Saints, give us our Christian truth.

# Has offered her whole livelihood

# Dn 1,1-6.8-20; Ps Dn 3,52-56; Lk 21,1-4.

### 27 NOVEMBER

Luke closes his Gospel on Jesus' public life with the story of the poor widow who throws two coins in the temple treasure, all she had to live. This widow is first of all a true image of Jesus the Lord. He throws his spirit into the heart of the Father, as much as he had to live. He throws it so that the Father makes it become the grace of salvation, and gives it as Holy Spirit for the building of his temple, which is the Church. Saint Paul reveals to us that Christ has given all for us, so that we became rich through the total gift of himself. He dies so that we live.

*Now as you excel in every respect, in faith, discourse, knowledge, all earnestness, and in the love we have for you, may you excel in this gracious act also. I say this not by way of command, but to test the genuineness of your love by your concern for others. For you know the gracious act of our Lord Jesus Christ, that for your sake he became poor although he was rich, so that by his poverty you might become rich. And I am giving counsel in this matter, for it is appropriate for you who began not only to act but to act willingly last year: complete it now, so that your eager willingness may be matched by your completion of it out of what you have. For if the eagerness is there, it is acceptable according to what one has, not according to what one does not have; not that others should have relief while you are burdened, but that as a matter of equality your surplus at the present time should supply their needs, so that their surplus may also supply your needs, that there may be equality. As it is written: "Whoever had much did not have more, and whoever had little did not have less" (2Cor 8,7-15).*

Love is not afraid to die to oneself to be able to love the brothers according to the heart of Christ, in the purest will of God, taught us by the Holy Spirit. In the Old Testament the true image of love that dies to itself to love according to God, in the Holy Spirit, is Ruth. She renounces her present and future, her homeland and her gods, to love her mother-in-law in a moment of solitude. This woman is willing to die to all, even to her femininity of maternity, as long as to love a single woman.

*"Go back, my daughters!" said Naomi. "Why should you come with me? Have I other sons in my womb who may become your husbands? Go back, my daughters! Go, for I am too old to marry again. And even if I could offer any hopes, or if tonight I had a husband or had borne sons, would you then wait and deprive yourselves of husbands until those sons grew up? No, my daughters! my lot is too bitter for you, because the Lord has extended his hand against me." Again they sobbed aloud and wept; and Orpah kissed her mother-in-law good-bye, but Ruth stayed with her. "See now!" she said, "your sister-in-law has gone back to her people and her god. Go back after your sister-in-law!" But Ruth said, "Do not ask me to abandon or forsake you! for wherever you go I will go, wherever you lodge I will lodge, your people shall be my people, and your God my God. Wherever you die I will die, and there be buried. May the Lord do so and so to me, and more besides, if aught but death separates me from you!" (Cf. Ruth 1,1-17).*

How much is the disciple of Jesus willing to give of himself, to give himself for love? Ruth gave it all. The widow gives it all. Christ Jesus gives his spirit, his body, his blood, his life, his death, his cross, every scourge and insult. Nothing that is his remains his, because everything is given to the Father. Even the Father gives all his divine and eternal wealth. He gives the Son and the Holy Spirit from the cross. He might give nothing any more. He gave all of himself in Christ and in his Holy Spirit. Either our faith makes us a total gift in Christ to the Father, or simply it is not true faith.

*When he looked up he saw some wealthy people putting their offerings into the treasury and he noticed a poor widow putting in two small coins. He said, "I tell you truly, this poor widow put in more than all the rest; for those others have all made offerings from their surplus wealth, but she, from her poverty, has offered her whole livelihood."*

 Virgin Mary, Mother of Redemption, Angels and Saints make us a gift of total love.

# See that you not be deceived

# Dn 2,31-45; Ps Dn 3,57-61; Lk 21,5-11.

### 28 NOVEMBER

There is only one way to not be fooled: believing that only the Word of Jesus is the Word of eternal life. Believing that only his is the real one. All the others that disagree with his, even one iota, are false, erroneous and heretic. They are words of death and not of life. This rule or principle is valid in and outside the Church. It applies to theology, exegesis, morality, mysticism, asceticism and even private revelations. The principle given by Saint Paul to the Galatians is of eternal value, immutable over the centuries.

*I am amazed that you are so quickly forsaking the one who called you by (the) grace (of Christ) for a different gospel (not that there is another). But there are some who are disturbing you and wish to pervert the gospel of Christ. But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach (to you) a gospel other than the one that we preached to you, let that one be accursed! As we have said before, and now I say again, if anyone preaches to you a gospel other than the one that you received, let that one be accursed! Am I now currying favour with human beings or God? Or am I seeking to please people? If I were still trying to please people, I would not be a slave of Christ (Gal 1,6-10).*

Saint Paul announces the same rule of faith to the Corinthians. Whenever they depart from the Word preached by Him, they believe in vain. Theirs is a useless belief.

*Now I am reminding you, brothers, of the gospel I preached to you, which you indeed received and in which you also stand. Through it you are also being saved, if you hold fast to the word I preached to you, unless you believed in vain. For I handed on to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the scriptures; that he was buried; that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the scriptures; that he appeared to Kephas, then to the Twelve. After that, he appeared to more than five hundred brothers at once, most of whom are still living, though some have fallen asleep. After that he appeared to James, then to all the apostles. Last of all, as to one born abnormally, he appeared to me. For I am the least of the apostles, not fit to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace to me has not been ineffective. Indeed, I have toiled harder than all of them; not I, however, but the grace of God (that is) with me. Therefore, whether it be I or they, so we preach and so you believed (1Cor 15,1-11).*

To remain in the purest faith in the Word of Jesus it is necessary for us to grow in giving life to the word, until we become the Word of God, just as Christ is the Word of God. It is difficult to accept a different word when our heart is the Word of Jesus Christ and also our spirit and our soul are. But if we only have a superficial relationship with the Word, it is easy for us to be invaded by false words. As soon as Satan sees a glimpse of our being without Word, he immediately intervenes and puts his false word there. Few know this secret and that is why they fall miserably whenever Satan can introduce his word.

*While some people were speaking about how the temple was adorned with costly stones and votive offerings, he said, "All that you see here - the days will come when there will not be left a stone upon another stone that will not be thrown down." Then they asked him, "Teacher, when will this happen? And what sign will there be when all these things are about to happen?" He answered, "See that you not be deceived, for many will come in my name, saying, 'I am he,' and 'The time has come.' Do not follow them! When you hear of wars and insurrections, do not be terrified; for such things must happen first, but it will not immediately be the end." Then he said to them, "Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be powerful earthquakes, famines, and plagues from place to place; and awesome sights and mighty signs will come from the sky.*

Even if the sky were to be upset and the earth shaken, the disciple of Jesus must remain firm in the Word. His salvation is only by the Word. If he comes out of the Word, because enchanted by the wonders of heaven and earth, he will perish for eternity. Satan knows well how to fool man and nothing he spares himself. Nothing he omits to catch in his snares inexperienced souls and seekers of signs.

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

# You will even be handed over by parents

# Dn 5,1-6.13-14.16-17.23-28; Ps Dn 3,62-67; Lk 21,12-19.

### 29 NOVEMBER

Jesus turns Ancient Scripture upside down. In it, it was prescribed that even a father, a brother, a son delivered a son, a brother, a father to death if he had passed onto idolatry, disobeying explicitly the first Commandment. Even a prophet who was found guilty of idolatry had to be put to death.

*If a prophet or a dreamer comes up among you, who will propose you a sign or a miracle and the sign and the miracle announced will happen, and he will tell you, "Let us follow foreign gods whom you have never known and serve them,” you will not have to listen to the words of that prophet or dreamer, for the Lord your God tries you to know if you love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul. You will follow the Lord your God, fear him, keep his commandments, listen to his voice, serve him and keep faithful to him. As for that prophet or dreamer, he must be put to death because he has proposed to forsake the Lord your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt and redeemed you from the servile state to drag you out of the way to which the Lord your God has commanded you to walk. So you will eradicate evil in your midst.*

*If your brother, the son of your father or your mother's son, or your son or daughter or wife resting on your chest or friend who is like you yourself instigates you secretly, saying, "Let's go, let's serve other gods", gods that neither you nor your fathers have known, deities of the peoples around you, close to you or far from you from one end to the other of the earth, you do not mind him, do not listen to him. Let your eye have no compassion: do not spare him, do not cover his guilt. Rather, you must kill him: let your hand be the first against him to put him to death; then it will be the hand of all the people. Stone him and let him die, because he tried to drag you far away from the Lord, your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, from the servile state. All Israel will come to know it, it will fear, and will not commit such a wicked act among you.*

On the other hand, with Jesus betrayal, delivering to death by father, mother, siblings, sisters and relatives, happens for those who will remain faithful to his Word. Who believes in Christ Jesus must know that it could happen that he remains alone in the profession of his faith. It could happen not to be able to trust in anybody in order to be protected so as not to go to death and continue to bear witness to Christ the Lord with the announcement of the Word. However, the Christian knows, that a person he can always trust on is the Holy Spirit. Christ will always ensure that his Holy Spirit assists him, moves him, leads him, inspires him and puts the right word in his mouth at the time necessary for his defence. Knowing this, the Christian is totally delivered to Christ. If He wants him to live because he is needed by him alive, he will live. On the contrary, if Christ Jesus wants him to die, because he needs testimony with the blood, he will die. He always knows that all that will take place in him, is needed by Christ and his Gospel. With this faith only you can be Christians, disciples of the Lord.

*"Before all this happens, however, they will seize and persecute you, they will hand you over to the synagogues and to prisons, and they will have you led before kings and governors because of my name. It will lead to your giving testimony. Remember, you are not to prepare your defence beforehand, for I myself shall give you a wisdom in speaking that all your adversaries will be powerless to resist or refute. You will even be handed over by parents, brothers, relatives, and friends, and they will put some of you to death. You will be hated by all because of my name, but not a hair on your head will be destroyed. By your perseverance you will secure your lives.*

Before every persecution, the Christian is obligated to answer with his faith. The Lord allows it because it is necessary for his Gospel. With it the Word will have to receive greater testimony. Then, whether you live, die, stay in jail or go out, it does not matter. All that happens serves Christ and his Gospel. Therefore, for the Christian, life and death become of equal importance. If he lives, it is because Christ needs life. If he dies, it is because Christ needs death. If he is in suffering it is because Christ needs the suffering as a witness to his truth.

Virgin Mary, Mother of Redemption, Angels and Saints make us of strong, firm faith.

# As he was walking by the Sea of Galilee

# Rm 10,9-18; Ps 18,2-5; Mt 4,18-22.

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Man searches for high roles, special places, renowned faculties, prestigious ministries, excellent charismas, famous dioceses, well-placed parishes and other positions from which he may receive some honour. He ignores that by doing this he subverts all the Gospel of Christ the Lord. It is not a cathedral that has to give honour to a person, but it is the person that makes the cathedral full of Christ. It is the Person the one that brings Christ and serves him. Instead man thinks it is the place that honours and glorifies him, while he must be the one to give honour to the place. It is not the presidency of an ecclesiastical or other *"entity"* that gives prestige to a man. It is always the man that must give truth to the body that he is called to preside. The body is null. It is what the man who presides over it wants it to be. From dishonesty, the body becomes a source of dishonesty, from the truth it becomes a source of truth and from justice it becomes a diffuser of justice in the world.

Jesus did not have these problems of sin. He was not moved by the flesh. He never looked for a man and a friendship for a mean earthly interest. Jesus is full of God, of Holy Spirit, full of truth and justice, of holiness and grace, of charity and mercy. The only place he sought for all his life was the Cross. The Gospel is simply a journey to the Cross, because it is necessary for Him to pour out the Holy Spirit from it and also because it was chosen by the Father as the one and only way for Him to pass from this world to the Father. Christ the Lord feels well only in the will of the Father. Where the Father is, He is there. Where the Father is not, neither He might be there. If the Father leaves the temple of Jerusalem, He also leaves it. And if the Father abandons a heart, Jesus also abandons it. This is the difference between us and Christ Jesus. We are where He never and ever might be. We are in our flesh, while He is always in His spirit and His spirit is always in the Father and in the Holy Spirit.

Today he walks along the sea of ​​Galilee. Out of every structure, every program, every organization and without any team. Alone. He sees two brothers and calls them to make them fishermen of men. He walks a little more and sees two other brothers. He also calls these. He will have to make them also, fishermen of men. Andrea, Simon, James, John leave boat, nets, father and boys and go after Jesus. The answer is immediate because the power of the Holy Spirit that works in Jesus is divinely great. As long as the Church invests in structures and little in the Holy Spirit, vocations will always be few. On the contrary, if she invests in the Holy Spirit, the Father of Heaven will always send workers for his harvest. Then, here is the real secret for vocations: investing in the Holy Spirit. The Spirit attracts, conquers and moves hearts to obedience.

*As he was walking by the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon who is called Peter, and his brother Andrew, casting a net into the sea; they were fishermen. He said to them, "Come after me, and I will make you fishers of men." At once they left their nets and followed him. He walked along from there and saw two other brothers, James, the son of Zebedee, and his brother John. They were in a boat, with their father Zebedee, mending their nets. He called them, and immediately they left their boat and their father and followed him.*

But how do you invest in the Holy Spirit? Investing in personal holiness. He must invest in holiness, growing in wisdom and grace to the perfect conformation to Christ the Lord, to his Crucified God, the Bishop, the Priest, the Deacon, the Confirmed and the Baptized. Without this growth of conformation to the Lord Jesus, in the process of vocation something will always be jammed and the harvest will remain without workers. Where there is a crisis of vocations, there is always a crisis of holiness. A Church that grows in holiness, that grows in the power of the Holy Spirit, will always have the Spirit that moves both the one that calls and the one that is called. It is the Holy Spirit that moves to call and it is the Spirit that moves to answer. The Spirit will always have to be the only inspirer of the call and of the answer. One must always grow in the Spirit.

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

# CONCLUSION

There are several ways of approaching the Gospel. Some are good, others are less good, others are still worse and noxious. Harmful and not good ways are certainly all those that quote some Gospel phrases, according to *"vulgar", "popular", "of the flesh" and "not of the Holy Spirit"* comprehensions. Misleading ways are those that stop on a single pericope and from it draw all the truth of Christ, of God and of man, forgetting that it is inserted in a *"divine structure"*, called *"Revelation"*, including about two thousand years of manifestation of God to man with words and signs or intimately connected prodigies. Another not holy way is that of reading it separate from Tradition, Magisterium, Theology and Agiography. The Gospel is history that creates history. The history created by the Gospel, Christian sanctity, is also an understanding of it, because it is its life.

The understanding of the Gospel can be given only by the One who wrote it: the Holy Ghost. Some examples will help us to enter the complexity that there is in every word of the Gospel, often more mysterious and enigmatic for us than a hieroglyph. If we are convinced of the eternal mystery enclosed in the Gospel, then we will also know that without the Holy Spirit of Scripture, Tradition, Magisterium, Theology, Agiography and Mystics the Gospel will be a closed book for us. The other Holy Spirit is that of Christ Jesus always working in our history together with the Spirit of the Mother of God, that is the Spirit that always has to bring Christ into every believer’s mind. Then it is not a matter of methods, studies and human approaches. Instead, it is a divine and supernatural matter. Compliance with the rules will have to be top.

First example. We can see the Gospel in itself as the Pharaoh's dream. The king of Egypt sees the seven fat cows and the seven thin cows; he even sees the seven full and seven empty ears. He does not know how to tie the two visions together. He does not know how to translate into prophecy and into history what seen. He possesses the matter of things, but not their truth. History is not oriented with matter. You need the truth. Joseph comes, gives the truth of the vision, transforms the dream into history, you can prepare to overcome the terrible years of famine. Without Joseph, the dream would have remained a dream.

*After a lapse of two years, Pharaoh had a dream. He saw himself standing by the Nile, when up out of the Nile came seven cows, handsome and fat; they grazed in the reed grass. Behind them seven other cows, ugly and gaunt, came up out of the Nile; and standing on the bank of the Nile beside the others, the ugly, gaunt cows ate up the seven handsome, fat cows. Then Pharaoh woke up. He fell asleep again and had another dream. He saw seven ears of grain, fat and healthy, growing on a single stalk. Behind them sprouted seven ears of grain, thin and blasted by the east wind; and the seven thin ears swallowed up the seven fat, healthy ears. Then Pharaoh woke up, to find it was only a dream.*

*Next morning his spirit was agitated. So he summoned all the magicians and sages of Egypt and recounted his dreams to them; but no one could interpret his dreams for him.*

*Then the chief cupbearer spoke up and said to Pharaoh: "On this occasion I am reminded of my negligence. Once, when Pharaoh was angry, he put me and the chief baker in custody in the house of the chief steward. Later, we both had dreams on the same night, and each of our dreams had its own meaning. There with us was a Hebrew youth, a slave of the chief steward; and when we told him our dreams, he interpreted them for us and explained for each of us the meaning of his dream. And it turned out just as he had told us: I was restored to my post, but the other man was impaled."*

*Pharaoh therefore had Joseph summoned, and they hurriedly brought him from the dungeon. After he shaved and changed his clothes, he came into Pharaoh's presence. Pharaoh then said to him: "I had certain dreams that no one can interpret. But I hear it said of you that the moment you are told a dream you can interpret it." "It is not I," Joseph replied to Pharaoh, "but God who will give Pharaoh the right answer."*

*Then Pharaoh said to Joseph: "In my dream, I was standing on the bank of the Nile, when up from the Nile came seven cows, fat and well-formed; they grazed in the reed grass. Behind them came seven other cows, scrawny, most ill-formed and gaunt. Never have I seen such ugly specimens as these in all the land of Egypt! The gaunt, ugly cows ate up the first seven fat cows. But when they had consumed them, no one could tell that they had done so, because they looked as ugly as before. Then I woke up. In another dream I saw seven ears of grain, fat and healthy, growing on a single stalk. Behind them sprouted seven ears of grain, shriveled and thin and blasted by the east wind; and the seven thin ears swallowed up the seven healthy ears. I have spoken to the magicians, but none of them can give me an explanation."*

*Joseph said to Pharaoh: "Both of Pharaoh's dreams have the same meaning. God has thus foretold to Pharaoh what he is about to do. The seven healthy cows are seven years, and the seven healthy ears are seven years - the same in each dream. So also, the seven thin, ugly cows that came up after them are seven years, as are the seven thin, wind-blasted ears; they are seven years of famine. It is just as I told Pharaoh: God has revealed to Pharaoh what he is about to do. Seven years of great abundance are now coming throughout the land of Egypt; but these will be followed by seven years of famine, when all the abundance in the land of Egypt will be forgotten. When the famine has ravaged the land, no trace of the abundance will be found in the land because of the famine that follows it - so utterly severe will that famine be. That Pharaoh had the same dream twice means that the matter has been reaffirmed by God and that God will soon bring it about.*

*"Therefore, let Pharaoh seek out a wise and discerning man and put him in charge of the land of Egypt. Pharaoh should also take action to appoint overseers, so as to regiment the land during the seven years of abundance. They should husband all the food of the coming good years, collecting the grain under Pharaoh's authority, to be stored in the towns for food. This food will serve as a reserve for the country against the seven years of famine that are to follow in the land of Egypt, so that the land may not perish in the famine" (Gen 41,1-36).*

Second example. We can see the Gospel in itself as the dream of Nebuchadnezzar. He dreams, but does not even remember the dream done. But he is troubled and asks his wizards and diviners to tell him the dream and its interpretation. The people questioned answer that it has never been heard in the world that a magician or a diviner could do such a thing. Daniel comes, full of the Spirit of God and of his divine wisdom, tells the dream and even explains it. It often happen to us that we do not even have the letter of the Gospel. How do you go about getting into the truth of the letter, if you do not even know it? Yet many are those who go beyond the magicians and diviners of the ancient courts. They lack in total honesty. They talk and discuss the Gospel without having ever read, ever known and ever opened it. Today, man does not even possess the matter of the Gospel anymore. To this man it is necessary first to offer the matter and then the *"Spirit"* that is in matter. This is a mission of today's Church. It is an urgent mission.

*In the second year of his reign, King Nebuchadnezzar had a dream which left his spirit no rest and robbed him of his sleep. So he ordered that the magicians, enchanters, sorcerers, and Chaldeans be summoned to interpret the dream for him. When they came and presented themselves to the king, he said to them, "I had a dream which will allow my spirit no rest until I know what it means." The Chaldeans answered the king (Aramaic): "O king, live forever! Tell your servants the dream and we will give its meaning." The king answered the Chaldeans, "This is what I have decided: unless you tell me the dream and its meaning, you shall be cut to pieces and your houses destroyed. But if you tell me the dream and its meaning, you shall receive from me gifts and presents and great honours. Now tell me the dream and its meaning." Again they answered, "Let the king tell his servants the dream and we will give its meaning." But the king replied: "I know for certain that you are bargaining for time, since you know what I have decided. If you do not tell me the dream, there can be but one decree for you. You have framed a false and deceitful interpretation to present me with till the crisis is past. Tell me the dream, therefore, that I may be sure that you can also give its correct interpretation." The Chaldeans answered the king: "There is not a man on earth who can do what you ask, O king; never has any king, however great and mighty, asked such a thing of any magician, enchanter, or Chaldean. What you demand, O king, is too difficult; there is no one who can tell it to the king except the gods who do not dwell among men."*

*At this the king became violently angry and ordered all the wise men of Babylon to be put to death. When the decree was issued that the wise men should be slain, Daniel and his companions were also sought out.*

*Then Daniel prudently took counsel with Arioch, the captain of the king's guard, who had set out to kill the wise men of Babylon: "O officer of the king," he asked, "what is the reason for this harsh order from the king?" When Arioch told him, Daniel went and asked for time from the king, that he might give him the interpretation. Daniel went home and informed his companions Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, that they might implore the mercy of the God of heaven in regard to this mystery, so that Daniel and his companions might not perish with the rest of the wise men of Babylon.*

*During the night the mystery was revealed to Daniel in a vision, and he blessed the God of heaven: "Blessed be the name of God forever and ever, for wisdom and power are his. He causes the changes of the times and seasons, makes kings and unmakes them. He gives wisdom to the wise and knowledge to those who understand. He reveals deep and hidden things and knows what is in the darkness, for the light dwells with him. To you, O God of my fathers, I give thanks and praise, because you have given me wisdom and power. Now you have shown me what we asked of you, you have made known to us the king's dream."*

*So Daniel went to Arioch, whom the king had appointed to destroy the wise men of Babylon, and said to him, "Do not put the wise men of Babylon to death. Bring me before the king, and I will tell him the interpretation of the dream." Arioch quickly brought Daniel to the king and said, "I have found a man among the Judean captives who can give the interpretation to the king." The king asked Daniel, whose name was Belteshazzar, "Can you tell me the dream that I had, and its meaning?" In the king's presence Daniel made this reply: "The mystery about which the king has inquired, the wise men, enchanters, magicians, and astrologers could not explain to the king. But there is a God in heaven who reveals mysteries, and he has shown King Nebuchadnezzar what is to happen in days to come; this was the dream you saw as you lay in bed. To you in your bed there came thoughts about what should happen in the future, and he who reveals mysteries showed you what is to be. To me also this mystery has been revealed; not that I am wiser than any other living person, but in order that its meaning may be made known to the king, that you may understand the thoughts in your own mind. "In your vision, O king, you saw a statue, very large and exceedingly bright, terrifying in appearance as it stood before you. The head of the statue was pure gold, its chest and arms were silver, its belly and thighs bronze, the legs iron, its feet partly iron and partly tile. While you looked at the statue, a stone which was hewn from a mountain without a hand being put to it, struck its iron and tile feet, breaking them in pieces. The iron, tile, bronze, silver, and gold all crumbled at once, fine as the chaff on the threshing floor in summer, and the wind blew them away without leaving a trace. But the stone that struck the statue became a great mountain and filled the whole earth.*

*"This was the dream; the interpretation we shall also give in the king's presence. You, O king, are the king of kings; to you the God of heaven has given dominion and strength, power and glory; men, wild beasts, and birds of the air, wherever they may dwell, he has handed over to you, making you ruler over them all; you are the head of gold. Another kingdom shall take your place, inferior to yours, then a third kingdom, of bronze, which shall rule over the whole earth. There shall be a fourth kingdom, strong as iron; it shall break in pieces and subdue all these others, just as iron breaks in pieces and crushes everything else. The feet and toes you saw, partly of potter's tile and partly of iron, mean that it shall be a divided kingdom, but yet have some of the hardness of iron. As you saw the iron mixed with clay tile, and the toes partly iron and partly tile, the kingdom shall be partly strong and partly fragile. The iron mixed with clay tile means that they shall seal their alliances by intermarriage, but they shall not stay united, any more than iron mixes with clay. In the lifetime of those kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that shall never be destroyed or delivered up to another people; rather, it shall break in pieces all these kingdoms and put an end to them, and it shall stand forever. That is the meaning of the stone you saw hewn from the mountain without a hand being put to it, which broke in pieces the tile, iron, bronze, silver, and gold. The great God has revealed to the king what shall be in the future; this is exactly what you dreamed, and its meaning is sure."*

*Then King Nebuchadnezzar fell down and worshiped Daniel and ordered sacrifice and incense offered to him. To Daniel the king said, "Truly your God is the God of gods and Lord of kings and a revealer of mysteries; that is why you were able to reveal this mystery." He advanced Daniel to a high post, gave him many generous presents, made him ruler of the whole province of Babylon and chief prefect over all the wise men of Babylon. At Daniel's request the king made Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego administrators of the province of Babylon, while Daniel himself remained at the king's court (Dn 2,1-49).*

Third example. Sometimes the Gospel is similar to the vision of Peter. We have our own certainty, our guarantees, our cultural, theological, philosophical, dogmatic, pastoral, ascetic and mystical foundation. However, there is a novelty that is incumbent on, knocks and asks. To this newness we must bring the Gospel. We need in this case a powerful help from the Holy Spirit to free us from the chains of our thoughts so that we can go meet the needs of the world, without any betrayal of the Gospel, but only in denial of ourselves and our way of thinking the revealed truth. This third example concerns in a special and particular way every disciple of Jesus, called to let himself be renewed by the novelty of the Gospel which is always new. The Gospel is a tree that always produces new fruits. It suffices to look at the Agiography of the Church and you will notice that every saint is a new fruit of the Spirit of the Lord, is an updated understanding of the truth of the Gospel.

*Now in Caesarea there was a man named Cornelius, a centurion of the Cohort called the Italica, devout and God-fearing along with his whole household, who used to give alms generously to the Jewish people and pray to God constantly. One afternoon about three o'clock, he saw plainly in a vision an angel of God come in to him and say to him, "Cornelius." He looked intently at him and, seized with fear, said, "What is it, sir?" He said to him, "Your prayers and almsgiving have ascended as a memorial offering before God. Now send some men to Joppa and summon one Simon who is called Peter. He is staying with another Simon, a tanner, who has a house by the sea." When the angel who spoke to him had left, he called two of his servants and a devout soldier from his staff, explained everything to them, and sent them to Joppa.*

*The next day, while they were on their way and nearing the city, Peter went up to the roof terrace to pray at about noontime. He was hungry and wished to eat, and while they were making preparations he fell into a trance. He saw heaven opened and something resembling a large sheet coming down, lowered to the ground by its four corners. In it were all the earth's four-legged animals and reptiles and the birds of the sky. A voice said to him, "Get up, Peter. Slaughter and eat." But Peter said, "Certainly not, sir. For never have I eaten anything profane and unclean." The voice spoke to him again, a second time, "What God has made clean, you are not to call profane." This happened three times, and then the object was taken up into the sky. While Peter was in doubt about the meaning of the vision he had seen, the men sent by Cornelius asked for Simon's house and arrived at the entrance. They called out inquiring whether Simon, who is called Peter, was staying there. As Peter was pondering the vision, the Spirit said (to him), "There are three men here looking for you. So get up, go downstairs, and accompany them without hesitation, because I have sent them." Then Peter went down to the men and said, "I am the one you are looking for. What is the reason for your being here?" They answered, "Cornelius, a centurion, an upright and God-fearing man, respected by the whole Jewish nation, was directed by a holy angel to summon you to his house and to hear what you have to say." So he invited them in and showed them hospitality.*

*The next day he got up and went with them, and some of the brothers from Joppa went with him. On the following day he entered Caesarea. Cornelius was expecting them and had called together his relatives and close friends. When Peter entered, Cornelius met him and, falling at his feet, paid him homage. Peter, however, raised him up, saying, "Get up. I myself am also a human being." While he conversed with him, he went in and found many people gathered together and said to them, "You know that it is unlawful for a Jewish man to associate with, or visit, a Gentile, but God has shown me that I should not call any person profane or unclean. And that is why I came without objection when sent for. May I ask, then, why you summoned me?" Cornelius replied, "Four days ago at this hour, three o'clock in the afternoon, I was at prayer in my house when suddenly a man in dazzling robes stood before me and said, 'Cornelius, your prayer has been heard and your almsgiving remembered before God. Send therefore to Joppa and summon Simon, who is called Peter. He is a guest in the house of Simon, a tanner, by the sea.' So I sent for you immediately, and you were kind enough to come. Now therefore we are all here in the presence of God to listen to all that you have been commanded by the Lord."*

*Then Peter proceeded to speak and said, "In truth, I see that God shows no partiality. Rather, in every nation whoever fears him and acts uprightly is acceptable to him. You know the word (that) he sent to the Israelites as he proclaimed peace through Jesus Christ, who is Lord of all, what has happened all over Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism that John preached, how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the holy Spirit and power. He went about doing good and healing all those oppressed by the devil, for God was with him. We are witnesses of all that he did both in the country of the Jews and (in) Jerusalem. They put him to death by hanging him on a tree. This man God raised (on) the third day and granted that he be visible, not to all the people, but to us, the witnesses chosen by God in advance, who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead. He commissioned us to preach to the people and testify that he is the one appointed by God as judge of the living and the dead. To him all the prophets bear witness, that everyone who believes in him will receive forgiveness of sins through his name."*

*While Peter was still speaking these things, the holy Spirit fell upon all who were listening to the word. The circumcised believers who had accompanied Peter were astounded that the gift of the holy Spirit should have been poured out on the Gentiles also, for they could hear them speaking in tongues and glorifying God. Then Peter responded, "Can anyone withhold the water for baptizing these people, who have received the holy Spirit even as we have?" He ordered them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they invited him to stay for a few days (At 10,1-48).*

Fourth example. The Gospel itself is always reproducible to the visions that the Apostle John tells in his Apocalypse. These visions do not concern the past, but always the future. Almost all of them have already been accomplished and are still to be accomplished. The Lord performs them every day, giving them full truth. The Word of the Gospel is fulfilled and all to be accomplished. It is understood and to be understood. Never might its light of yesterday be the light of today. Every day, from the Gospel, a new light must be emitted. The one of the Gospel is a vibrant, dynamic, ever-new, never static, never of yesterday, never of the past, light. Our mistake is one: that of stopping at yesterday. While Theology and Tradition teach us that from the light of yesterday a new light has arisen for today and that never a single theologian illuminated the world with the light of his predecessors. But we often want to illuminate the world with the light of yesterday, which is a dead light, because we are lacking in today's light due to the Holy Spirit that is not in us.

*When he broke open the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven for about half an hour. And I saw that the seven angels who stood before God were given seven trumpets. Another angel came and stood at the altar, holding a gold censer. He was given a great quantity of incense to offer, along with the prayers of all the holy ones, on the gold altar that was before the throne. The smoke of the incense along with the prayers of the holy ones went up before God from the hand of the angel. Then the angel took the censer, filled it with burning coals from the altar, and hurled it down to the earth. There were peals of thunder, rumblings, flashes of lightning, and an earthquake.*

*The seven angels who were holding the seven trumpets prepared to blow them. When the first one blew his trumpet, there came hail and fire mixed with blood, which was hurled down to the earth. A third of the land was burned up, along with a third of the trees and all green grass. When the second angel blew his trumpet, something like a large burning mountain was hurled into the sea. A third of the sea turned to blood, a third of the creatures living in the sea died, and a third of the ships were wrecked.*

*When the third angel blew his trumpet, a large star burning like a torch fell from the sky. It fell on a third of the rivers and on the springs of water. The star was called "Wormwood," and a third of all the water turned to wormwood. Many people died from this water, because it was made bitter. When the fourth angel blew his trumpet, a third of the sun, a third of the moon, and a third of the stars were struck, so that a third of them became dark. The day lost its light for a third of the time, as did the night. Then I looked again and heard an eagle flying high overhead cry out in a loud voice, "Woe! Woe! Woe to the inhabitants of the earth from the rest of the trumpet blasts that the three angels are about to blow!" (Rev 8, 1-13).*

*Then the fifth angel blew his trumpet, and I saw a star that had fallen from the sky to the earth. It was given the key for the passage to the abyss. It opened the passage to the abyss, and smoke came up out of the passage like smoke from a huge furnace. The sun and the air were darkened by the smoke from the passage. Locusts came out of the smoke onto the land, and they were given the same power as scorpions of the earth. They were told not to harm the grass of the earth or any plant or any tree, but only those people who did not have the seal of God on their foreheads. They were not allowed to kill them but only to torment them for five months; the torment they inflicted was like that of a scorpion when it stings a person. During that time these people will seek death but will not find it, and they will long to die but death will escape them.*

*The appearance of the locusts was like that of horses ready for battle. On their heads they wore what looked like crowns of gold; their faces were like human faces, and they had hair like women's hair. Their teeth were like lions' teeth, and they had chests like iron breastplates. The sound of their wings was like the sound of many horse-drawn chariots racing into battle. They had tails like scorpions, with stingers; with their tails they had power to harm people for five months. They had as their king the angel of the abyss, whose name in Hebrew is Abaddon and in Greek Apollyon.*

*The first woe has passed, but there are two more to come. Then the sixth angel blew his trumpet, and I heard a voice coming from the [four] horns of the gold altar before God, telling the sixth angel who held the trumpet, "Release the four angels who are bound at the banks of the great river Euphrates." So the four angels were released, who were prepared for this hour, day, month, and year to kill a third of the human race. The number of cavalry troops was two hundred million; I heard their number. Now in my vision this is how I saw the horses and their riders. They wore red, blue, and yellow breastplates, and the horses' heads were like heads of lions, and out of their mouths came fire, smoke, and sulphur. By these three plagues of fire, smoke, and sulphur that came out of their mouths a third of the human race was killed. For the power of the horses is in their mouths and in their tails; for their tails are like snakes, with heads that inflict harm.*

*The rest of the human race, who were not killed by these plagues, did not repent of the works of their hands, to give up the worship of demons and idols made from gold, silver, bronze, stone, and wood, which cannot see or hear or walk. Nor did they repent of their murders, their magic potions, their unchastity, or their robberies (Rev 9,1-21).*

*Then I saw another mighty angel come down from heaven wrapped in a cloud, with a halo around his head; his face was like the sun and his feet were like pillars of fire. In his hand he held a small scroll that had been opened. He placed his right foot on the sea and his left foot on the land, and then he cried out in a loud voice as a lion roars. When he cried out, the seven thunders raised their voices, too. When the seven thunders had spoken, I was about to write it down; but I heard a voice from heaven say, "Seal up what the seven thunders have spoken, but do not write it down." Then the angel I saw standing on the sea and on the land raised his right hand to heaven and swore by the one who lives forever and ever, who created heaven and earth and sea and all that is in them, "There shall be no more delay. At the time when you hear the seventh angel blow his trumpet, the mysterious plan of God shall be fulfilled, as he promised to his servants the prophets."*

*Then the voice that I had heard from heaven spoke to me again and said, "Go, take the scroll that lies open in the hand of the angel who is standing on the sea and on the land." So I went up to the angel and told him to give me the small scroll. He said to me, "Take and swallow it. It will turn your stomach sour, but in your mouth it will taste as sweet as honey." I took the small scroll from the angel's hand and swallowed it. In my mouth it was like sweet honey, but when I had eaten it, my stomach turned sour. Then someone said to me, "You must prophesy again about many peoples, nations, tongues, and kings" (Rev 10,1-11).*

*Then I was given a measuring rod like a staff and I was told, "Come and measure the temple of God and the altar, and count those who are worshiping in it. But exclude the outer court of the temple; do not measure it, for it has been handed over to the Gentiles, who will trample the holy city for forty-two months. I will commission my two witnesses to prophesy for those twelve hundred and sixty days, wearing sackcloth." These are the two olive trees and the two lamp stands that stand before the Lord of the earth. If anyone wants to harm them, fire comes out of their mouths and devours their enemies. In this way, anyone wanting to harm them is sure to be slain. They have the power to close up the sky so that no rain can fall during the time of their prophesying. They also have power to turn water into blood and to afflict the earth with any plague as often as they wish. When they have finished their testimony, the beast that comes up from the abyss will wage war against them and conquer them and kill them. Their corpses will lie in the main street of the great city, which has the symbolic names "Sodom" and "Egypt," where indeed their Lord was crucified. Those from every people, tribe, tongue, and nation will gaze on their corpses for three and a half days, and they will not allow their corpses to be buried. The inhabitants of the earth will gloat over them and be glad and exchange gifts because these two prophets tormented the inhabitants of the earth.*

*But after the three and a half days, a breath of life from God entered them. When they stood on their feet, great fear fell on those who saw them. Then they heard a loud voice from heaven say to them, "Come up here." So they went up to heaven in a cloud as their enemies looked on. At that moment there was a great earthquake, and a tenth of the city fell in ruins. Seven thousand people were killed during the earthquake; the rest were terrified and gave glory to the God of heaven.*

*The second woe has passed, but the third is coming soon. Then the seventh angel blew his trumpet. There were loud voices in heaven, saying, "The kingdom of the world now belongs to our Lord and to his Anointed, and he will reign forever and ever." The twenty-four elders who sat on their thrones before God prostrated themselves and worshiped God and said: "We give thanks to you, Lord God almighty, who are and who were. For you have assumed your great power and have established your reign. The nations raged, but your wrath has come, and the time for the dead to be judged, and to recompense your servants, the prophets, and the holy ones and those who fear your name, the small and the great alike, and to destroy those who destroy the earth."*

*Then God's temple in heaven was opened, and the ark of his covenant could be seen in the temple. There were flashes of lightning, rumblings, and peals of thunder, an earthquake, and a violent hailstorm (Rev 11,1-19).*

Fifth example. Sometimes the Gospel is similar to Daniel's visions. Daniel is a wise person. He knows how to interpret untold dreams. God gave him the Spirit beyond measure. Yet this man always needs the heavenly help to understand what his eyes see. This truth must also apply to the greatest saints of the Church. The Spirit that is in them alone is not enough to understand the secrets of the Gospel. It is necessary for them the Spirit of the Lord that with a timely update of light, revelation, wisdom and truth gives the meaning of the Word of Jesus necessary to understand how to bring all history to God. Without this daily update, the saints would not be true saints. They would miss the immediate wisdom that makes their holiness ever-present and never of yesterday.

*After this first vision, I, Daniel, had another, in the third year of the reign of King Belshazzar. In my vision I saw myself in the fortress of Susa in the province of Elam; I was beside the river Ulai.*

*I looked up and saw standing by the river a ram with two great horns, the one larger and newer than the other. I saw the ram butting toward the west, north, and south. No beast could withstand it or be rescued from its power; it did what it pleased and became very powerful.*

*As I was reflecting, a he-goat with a prominent horn on its forehead suddenly came from the west across the whole earth without touching the ground. It approached the two-horned ram I had seen standing by the river, and rushed toward it with savage force. I saw it attack the ram with furious blows when they met, and break both its horns. It threw the ram, which had not the force to withstand it, to the ground, and trampled upon it; and no one could rescue it from its power.*

*The he-goat became very powerful, but at the height of its power the great horn was shattered, and in its place came up four others, facing the four winds of heaven. Out of one of them came a little horn which kept growing toward the south, the east, and the glorious country. Its power extended to the host of heaven, so that it cast down to earth some of the host and some of the stars and trampled on them. It boasted even against the prince of the host, from whom it removed the daily sacrifice, and whose sanctuary it cast down, as well as the host, while sin replaced the daily sacrifice. It cast truth to the ground, and was succeeding in its undertaking.*

*I heard a holy one speaking, and another said to whichever one it was that spoke, "How long shall the events of this vision last concerning the daily sacrifice, the desolating sin which is placed there, the sanctuary, and the trampled host?" He answered him, "For two thousand three hundred evenings and mornings; then the sanctuary shall be purified."*

*While I, Daniel, sought the meaning of the vision I had seen, a manlike figure stood before me, and on the Ulai I heard a human voice that cried out, "Gabriel, explain the vision to this man." When he came near where I was standing, I fell prostrate in terror. But he said to me, "Understand, son of man, that the vision refers to the end time." As he spoke to me, I fell forward in a faint; he touched me and made me stand up.*

*"I will show you," he said, "what is to happen later in the period of wrath; for at the appointed time, there will be an end. "The two-horned ram you saw represents the kings of the Medes and Persians. The he-goat is the king of the Greeks, and the great horn on its forehead is the first king. The four that rose in its place when it was broken are four kingdoms that will issue from his nation, but without his strength.*

*"After their reign, when sinners have reached their measure, There shall arise a king, impudent and skilled in intrigue. He shall be strong and powerful, bring about fearful ruin, and succeed in his undertaking. He shall destroy powerful peoples; his cunning shall be against the holy ones, his treacherous conduct shall succeed. He shall be proud of heart and destroy many by stealth. But when he rises against the prince of princes, he shall be broken without a hand being raised. The vision of the evenings and the mornings is true, as spoken; Do you, however, keep this vision undisclosed, because the days are to be many."*

*I, Daniel, was weak and ill for some days; then I arose and took care of the king's affairs. But I was appalled at the vision, which I could not understand (Dn 8,1-27).*

Sixth example. Finally, we need the great humility of science and wisdom that must always leave us amazed and dumbfounded before each Word of the Gospel. We can always know a spark of it. If this is true of the works of God, it is infinitely more true for the work of the works of God which is the Incarnation of the Word of Life and his mission of salvation among men. We must always profess ourselves ignorant of the Gospel. We know just a spark of it. It is proper of the spark to appear and disappear immediately. It is a light not light. It's an unstable light. Knowing this every day we have to open the Book and ask the Lord to show us at least one spark of the mystery enclosed in it.

*Now will I recall God's works; what I have seen, I will describe. At God's word were his works brought into being; they do his will as he has ordained for them. As the rising sun is clear to all, so the glory of the Lord fills all his works; Yet even God's holy ones must fail in recounting the wonders of the Lord, Though God has given these, his hosts, the strength to stand firm before his glory. He plumbs the depths and penetrates the heart; their innermost being he understands. The Most High possesses all knowledge, and sees from of old the things that are to come: He makes known the past and the future, and reveals the deepest secrets. No understanding does he lack; no single thing escapes him. Perennial is his almighty wisdom; he is from all eternity one and the same, With nothing added, nothing taken away; no need of a counsellor for him! How beautiful are all his works! even to the spark and the fleeting vision! The universe lives and abides forever; to meet each need, each creature is preserved. All of them differ, one from another, yet none of them has he made in vain, For each in turn, as it comes, is good; can one ever see enough of their splendour? (Sir 42,15-25).*

*The clear vault of the sky shines forth like heaven itself, a vision of glory. The orb of the sun, resplendent at its rising: what a wonderful work of the Most High! At noon it seethes the surface of the earth, and who can bear its fiery heat? Like a blazing furnace of solid metal, it sets the mountains aflame with its rays; By its fiery darts the land is consumed; the eyes are dazzled by its light. Great indeed is the Lord who made it, at whose orders it urges on its steeds.*

*The moon, too, that marks the changing times, governing the seasons, their lasting sign, By which we know the feast days and fixed dates, this light-giver which wanes in its course: As its name says, each month it renews itself; how wondrous in this change!*

*The beauty, the glory, of the heavens are the stars that adorn with their sparkling the heights of God, At whose command they keep their place and never relax in their vigils. A weapon against the flood waters stored on high, lighting up the firmament by its brilliance, Behold the rainbow! Then bless its Maker, for majestic indeed is its splendour; It spans the heavens with its glory, this bow bent by the mighty hand of God.*

*His rebuke marks out the path for the lightning, and speeds the arrows of his judgment to their goal. At it the storehouse is opened, and like vultures the clouds hurry forth. In his majesty he gives the storm its power and breaks off the hailstones. The thunder of his voice makes the earth writhe; before his might the mountains quake. A word from him drives on the south wind, the angry north wind, the hurricane and the storm. He sprinkles the snow like fluttering birds; it comes to settle like swarms of locusts. Its shining whiteness blinds the eyes, the mind is baffled by its steady fall. He scatters frost like so much salt; it shines like blossoms on the thorn bush. Cold northern blasts he sends that turn the ponds to lumps of ice. He freezes over every body of water, and clothes each pool with a coat of mail. When the mountain growth is scorched with heat, and the flowering plains as though by flames, The dripping clouds restore them all, and the scattered dew enriches the parched land.*

*His is the plan that calms the deep, and plants the islands in the sea. Those who go down to the sea tell part of its story, and when we hear them we are thunderstruck; In it are his creatures, stupendous, amazing, all kinds of life, and the monsters of the deep. For him each messenger succeeds, and at his bidding accomplishes his will.*

*More than this we need not add; let the last word be, he is all in all! Let us praise him the more, since we cannot fathom him, for greater is he than all his works; Awful indeed is the Lord’s majesty, and wonderful is his power. Lift up your voices to glorify the Lord, though he is still beyond your power to praise; Extol him with renewed strength, and weary not, though you cannot reach the end: For who can see him and describe him? or who can praise him as he is? Beyond these, many things lie hid; only a few of his works have we seen. It is the Lord who has made all things, and to those who fear him he gives wisdom (Sir 43,1-33).*

Seventh example. Before the Gospel we all have to feel like the royal official who on his carriage was returning to his distant Ethiopia. He was reading, but did not understand, but he read. The Lord had pity on him and sent him Philip to illuminate him, explaining to him what he read without understanding. That is how we are. If we read the Gospel and do not understand it, we must always keep reading. The Lord will have mercy on us and will certainly send the right person, or even an Angel of Heaven, who explains everything to us, making our mind adhere to the truth.

*Then the angel of the Lord spoke to Philip, "Get up and head south on the road that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza, the desert route." So he got up and set out. Now there was an Ethiopian eunuch, a court official of the Candace, that is, the queen of the Ethiopians, in charge of her entire treasury, who had come to Jerusalem to worship, and was returning home. Seated in his chariot, he was reading the prophet Isaiah. The Spirit said to Philip, "Go and join up with that chariot." Philip ran up and heard him reading Isaiah the prophet and said, "Do you understand what you are reading?" He replied, "How can I, unless someone instructs me?" So he invited Philip to get in and sit with him. This was the scripture passage he was reading:*

*"Like a sheep he was led to the slaughter, and as a lamb before its shearer is silent, so he opened not his mouth. In (his) humiliation justice was denied him. Who will tell of his posterity? For his life is taken from the earth."*

*Then the eunuch said to Philip in reply, "I beg you, about whom is the prophet saying this? About himself, or about someone else?" Then Philip opened his mouth and, beginning with this scripture passage, he proclaimed Jesus to him. As they travelled along the road they came to some water, and the eunuch said, "Look, there is water. What is to prevent my being baptized?" Then he ordered the chariot to stop, and Philip and the eunuch both went down into the water, and he baptized him. When they came out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord snatched Philip away, and the eunuch saw him no more, but continued on his way rejoicing. Philip came to Azotus, and went about proclaiming the good news to all the towns until he reached Caesarea (At 8, 26-40).*

Then it is right for everyone to ask: What is my condition before the Gospel? Is it similar to that of Pharaoh? Of Nebuchadnezzar? Of Peter? Of Daniel? Of the royal officer? Do I believe that the Gospel is already accomplished or am I convinced that it is still all to be understood and all to be implemented? Do I have a closed vision or do I let myself be enlightened by the Holy Spirit so that he gives me today the spark for today? Everything is from the attitude that each one has before the Gospel. It can be said that today we are all like Nebuchadnezzar. Its letter and also its Spirit are missing. We speak of the Gospel without the Gospel and of its light without its light. Let us at least take it back from the letter. There is hope that the Lord may have pity on us and send us his Angel to enlighten us and thus introduce us into the mystery of his full truth.

Virgin Mary, Mother of Redemption, come to our help, enter the house of our soul and bring with you the Holy Spirit in all its power of light and grace. With the Holy Spirit you give us, we will fall in love with the letter of the Gospel and gradually will also enter into its light, we will fall in love with it and ask to be transformed into gospel light to illuminate the world of Christ.

Angels and Saints, intercede for us. Without the light of the Gospel the world will sink into the darkest and darkest darkness, which are a true prelude to hell. Ask the Holy Spirit to dwell in the heart of every disciple of Jesus. Only with Him it is possible to grasp the truth of the Gospel and make it our garment, our gown of light, our tunic of love, justice, mercy and eternal life.

*Catanzaro October 07, 2016*

*Feast of the Blessed Virgin of the Rosary*

***Monsignor Costantino Di Bruno***