**APRIL 2018**

## FIRST DECADE OF APRIL

## HE BENT DOWN AND SAW THE BURIAL CLOTHS THERE, BUT DID NOT GO IN

## At 10,34a.37-43; Ps 117; Col 3,1-4 opp. 1Cor 5,6b-8; Jn 20,1-9

### 1 APRIL – EASTER OF RESURRECTION – S

The Apostle John places at the centre of the mystery of the Resurrection of Jesus the most pure spiritual love of a woman for her Master and Lord. It is Mary of Magdala. On the first day of the week, she gets up early in the morning and goes to the sepulchre, when it is still dark and sees that the stone has been removed from the tomb. She immediately thinks of a tampering with the Lord's tomb. At night someone entered it and stole the body. A single woman can do nothing, not even enter the sepulchre. It could be very dangerous. She leaves the place and runs to Simon Peter and the other disciple’s, the one that Jesus loved, and with very simple words tells them that the Lord was taken away from the tomb and they do not know where he was placed. Here is the truth: Jesus is not in the grave. But she did not see. She supposes it is so because of the violation of the grave. It is a truly unprecedented, inexplicable and unimaginable fact.

It is right to stop for a moment to reflect. Mary of Magdala loves the Lord, but does not believe in his resurrection. She loves the Jesus of yesterday, but she cannot love the Jesus of today. She can only embalm a body. But without the very pure faith in the resurrection, her love will only be a memory, it might never be lived in the present. This is the extraordinary beauty of our faith. When it is alive in us, the love for Jesus will never be of yesterday, never of the past, it will never become history, because faith always makes it of today, always new, always alive, always current, more and more intense and more and more strong. Those who do not want to risk that love for Jesus become a dead memory of events that took place yesterday must make every effort to found in their hearts the most complete and true faith. Since today faith is fading in many hearts, even love for Jesus is fading, indeed it has faded. It remains a cult without the living Christ and some sacraments that are celebrated as a historical habit or culture of a people. However it is fitting that it is added that when we search according to the purity of the love of yesterday, Lord Jesus, the Lord always helps us so that it becomes the living love of today, adding He Himself the truth that is still lacking in our faith. We seek and He also seeks.

*On the first day of the week, Mary of Magdala came to the tomb early in the morning, while it was still dark, and saw the stone removed from the tomb. So she ran and went to Simon Peter and to the other disciple whom Jesus loved, and told them, "They have taken the Lord from the tomb, and we don't know where they put him." So Peter and the other disciple went out and came to the tomb. They both ran, but the other disciple ran faster than Peter and arrived at the tomb first; he bent down and saw the burial cloths there, but did not go in. When Simon Peter arrived after him, he went into the tomb and saw the burial cloths there, and the cloth that had covered his head, not with the burial cloths but rolled up in a separate place. Then the other disciple also went in, the one who had arrived at the tomb first, and he saw and believed. For they did not yet understand the scripture that he had to rise from the dead.*

Peter and John do not care about Mary of Magdala. When the news is heard, they both run towards the tomb. John, the younger, arrives first. He stops, looks, but does not enter. The ancient interpreters assert that he does not enter because he awaits Peter who is the authority, the guarantor and the guardian of the faith of all. Peter enters. Giovanni also enters and sees. From the order that reigns in the sepulchre, he opens to the faith in the resurrection of Jesus. The closing words are of vital importance for us: *"They had not yet understood the Scriptures, that is, that he had to rise from the dead"*. These words raise the resurrection from a Christological to a theological event. If it concerns Scripture, it concerns all the Lord's people and the whole world. With the resurrection, all the ancient prophecies on Christ the Lord are fulfilled. Jesus is the true Messiah, sent by God for Israel and for the Gentiles, for the sons of Abraham and for the children of all peoples. It is urgent to be extremely clear: Jesus is not an event that concerns Christians. It is an event that concerns all peoples, none excluded. If it concerns all peoples, it is necessary that it be announced and given to them. If Christ is of the world, he is for the salvation of the world, we cannot keep him hidden in the catacombs of our heart or our spirit.

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

## THEY GAVE A LARGE SUM OF MONEY

## At 2,14.22-32; Ps 15; Mt 28,8-15

### 2 APRIL

In the Gospel according to Matthew, the vision is added to the revelation of the angel that announces the resurrection to the women. Jesus shows up. The gesture made by the women towards the Risen Lord: *"They embraced his feet"*, indicates profound humility. It is the prostration of the servant towards his Lord, of the creature towards his Creator. *"And they adored him"*: it shows that Jesus is not only the Risen Master for them, he is also their God. This is their faith. Even what the Angel had said to them is confirmed. They must go and proclaim to his brothers, that is to the Apostles, to go to Galilee. There they would have seen him: *"Do not be afraid; go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee: they will see me there»*. It is the true mission. They are carriers of a message.

Of this only vision of Jesus in Galilee, there is only one reference in both Matthew and Mark. No trace is in Luca and in Giovanni. In Luke everything takes place in Jerusalem. In John chapter 20 everything is lived in the Holy City. While chapter 21 is at the Sea of ​​Galilee. So it is in Matthew and Mark:

*Then, after singing a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives. Then Jesus said to them, "This night all of you will have your faith in me shaken, for it is written: 'I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock will be dispersed'; but after I have been raised up, I shall go before you to Galilee" (Mt 26,30-32). Then, after singing a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives. Then Jesus said to them, "All of you will have your faith shaken, for it is written: 'I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep will be dispersed.' But after I have been raised up, I shall go before you to Galilee" (Mk 14,26-28).*

Then, it is right to ask oneself, why do Matthew and Mark explicitly contain this reference to Galilee? Surely because they want to apply the prophecy of Isaiah also to the Apostles of the Lord. The light came to Israel from Galilee. The light will come for the Gentiles from Galilee. In fact, from Galilee Jesus sends his apostles into the world.

*When he heard that John had been arrested, he withdrew to Galilee. He left Nazareth and went to live in Capernaum by the sea, in the region of Zebulun and Naphtali, that what had been said through Isaiah the prophet might be fulfilled: "Land of Zebulun and land of Naphtali, the way to the sea, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles, the people who sit in darkness have seen a great light, on those dwelling in a land overshadowed by death light has arisen." From that time on, Jesus began to preach and say, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Mt 4,12-17).*

We know how important it is for Matthew to attest to the fulfilment of every prophecy first of all concerning the Person of Jesus and then also for his disciples and the world that awaits the light of Christ to be enlightened on the mystery of their God.

*Then they went away quickly from the tomb, fearful yet overjoyed, and ran to announce this to his disciples. And behold, Jesus met them on their way and greeted them. They approached, embraced his feet, and did him homage. Then Jesus said to them, "Do not be afraid. Go tell my brothers to go to Galilee, and there they will see me." While they were going, some of the guard went into the city and told the chief priests all that had happened. They assembled with the elders and took counsel; then they gave a large sum of money to the soldiers, telling them, "You are to say, 'His disciples came by night and stole him while we were asleep.' And if this gets to the ears of the governor, we will satisfy (him) and keep you out of trouble." The soldiers took the money and did as they were instructed. And this story has circulated among the Jews to the present (day).*

The announcement of the resurrection does not stop at women. It also reaches the heads of the priests and through them to all the elders of the Jewish people. All of Jerusalem knows that the one who had been crucified has now risen. But neither the Apostles nor the women are the ones to refer it as the true historical news, but the soldiers of Rome, placed as watch and at custody to the grave. The soldiers are ordered to obscure the truth, turning it into a lie. A large sum of money is enough to buy their word.

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

## TELL ME WHERE YOU LAID HIM, AND I WILL TAKE HIM

## At 2,36-41; Ps 32; Jn 20,11-18

### 3 APRIL

Peter and Giovanni after having noticed everything, leave the garden. They leave. On the other hand, Mary of Magdala, does not even enter the sepulchre, she remains outside and cries. She does not care about the high, very high, profound truths about Christ. These are of little use. Her heart does not love the truths of Christ, she loves Christ the truth of her heart, of her soul, of her spirit and of her will. She does not care to know all the science about the sun. She wants to live under the shadow of the sun, letting herself be vivified by its rays. Christ is dead. His body is no longer there. It is as if it had disappeared into nothingness. She does not give up and keeps looking. This is the purest truth of faith: always seeking, without ever stopping. She needs a certainty: knowing where the body of Christ is. Neither does she think about the resurrection. It is outside her heart and mind.

She seeks and the Lord comes to her help. While she cries, *"she bends down to the tomb and sees two angels in white robes, one sitting on one side of the head and the other on the side of the feet, where Jesus' body was placed".* A question is asked her: *"Woman, why are you crying?"* Her answer is immediate: *"They have taken my Lord away and I do not know where they have placed him"*. She cries because she does not know where to find her Lord's body. She lost the life of her life, the breath of her spirit, the soul of her soul and the heart of her heart. In the face of such a loss, one must necessarily cry. She does not even wait for the answer. She turns back and sees Jesus, but she does not know that it is Jesus. Jesus also asks her the same question: *"Woman why are you crying?"* Thinking of that man as the guardian of the garden, she makes him an explicit request: *"Lord, if you have taken him away, tell me where you have placed him and I will go and get him".* She does not care what he did. She is interested in finding the body of her Master. He reveals her the place and she will go and get it. True love transforms life into one thought. When there are a thousand thoughts in love, it is always impure. Now Mary has only one thought: finding the body of Jesus. Everything else is useless for her. True love is not satisfied with thoughts, but with presence. Paradise is the eternal presence of the righteous with their God and Lord in Christ. Faith is also a path towards the attainment of a perfect abode in Christ and in God through the Holy Spirit. Truth helps, but it can never replace presence, abode and habitation.

*But Mary stayed outside the tomb weeping. And as she wept, she bent over into the tomb and saw two angels in white sitting there, one at the head and one at the feet where the body of Jesus had been. And they said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping?" She said to them, "They have taken my Lord, and I don't know where they laid him." When she had said this, she turned around and saw Jesus there, but did not know it was Jesus. Jesus said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you looking for?" She thought it was the gardener and said to him, "Sir, if you carried him away, tell me where you laid him, and I will take him." Jesus said to her, "Mary!" She turned and said to him in Hebrew, "Rabbouni," which means Teacher. Jesus said to her, "Stop holding on to me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father. But go to my brothers and tell them, 'I am going to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.'" Mary of Magdala went and announced to the disciples, "I have seen the Lord," and what he told her.*

Jesus reveals himself to her, but not so that she makes herself a tent to be with him. This would be a true sepulchre of love. On the contrary, every day Jesus wants her to make him be raised to new life in her heart and from her heart make him be spread into the world. Today, she must begin with *"her brothers"*, that is, from the disciples. She must go to them and bring a clear, strong message: "I am going up to my Father and your Father, my God and your God". With the resurrection the history in his body of flesh ends for Jesus, now begins his new history in his spiritual, incorruptible, glorious, of light and immortal body. Now Christ will have to continue his history on earth by using the body, the soul, the spirit of each one of his disciples. Even Mary will have to give her whole life to Christ so that through it he can fulfil the mystery of redemption and salvation. If Jesus does not live through the disciple, the body of the disciple is transformed into a tomb, into a sepulchre, in which a true process of putrefaction of truth and faith begins.Virgin Mary, Mother of the Redemption, Angels and Saints, make us a body in the service of Jesus.

## THEY SET OUT AT ONCE

## At 3,1-10; Ps 104; Lk 24,13-35

### 4 APRIL

Jesus is the true Master in the dialogue. He knows what word to use to enter a heart and install his truth in it. However, dialogue does not consist only in words for him, but also in always appropriate and given gestures and signs at the right time. He also knows what question to raise so that, starting from it, he can give the right answer. It is understood that this perfect mode of dialogue is possible only for those who fully possess the Holy Spirit in his seven gifts of wisdom, knowledge or science, intellect, counsel, fortitude, piety and fear of the Lord. Without the Holy Spirit, that is the communion between the heart of the speaker and the heart of the listener, no real dialogue might ever take place and everyone speaks only to himself. Everyone speaks to and answers himself. On the road to Emmaus, Jesus transforms two hopeless, disappointed and discouraged men into missionaries of his resurrection. In Jerusalem, Jesus had risen from the sepulchre. On the road to Emmaus, Jesus resurrects in the heart of these two of his disciples.

*Now that very day two of them were going to a village seven miles from Jerusalem called Emmaus, and they were conversing about all the things that had occurred. And it happened that while they were conversing and debating, Jesus himself drew near and walked with them, but their eyes were prevented from recognizing him. He asked them, "What are you discussing as you walk along?" They stopped, looking downcast. One of them, named Cleopas, said to him in reply, "Are you the only visitor to Jerusalem who does not know of the things that have taken place there in these days?" And he replied to them, "What sort of things?" They said to him, "The things that happened to Jesus the Nazarene, who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, how our chief priests and rulers both handed him over to a sentence of death and crucified him. But we were hoping that he would be the one to redeem Israel; and besides all this, it is now the third day since this took place. Some women from our group, however, have astounded us: they were at the tomb early in the morning and did not find his body; they came back and reported that they had indeed seen a vision of angels who announced that he was alive. Then some of those with us went to the tomb and found things just as the women had described, but him they did not see." And he said to them, "Oh, how foolish you are! How slow of heart to believe all that the prophets spoke! Was it not necessary that the Messiah should suffer these things and enter into his glory?" Then beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them what referred to him in all the scriptures.*

*As they approached the village to which they were going, he gave the impression that he was going on farther. But they urged him, "Stay with us, for it is nearly evening and the day is almost over." So he went in to stay with them. And it happened that, while he was with them at table, he took bread, said the blessing, broke it, and gave it to them. With that their eyes were opened and they recognized him, but he vanished from their sight. Then they said to each other, "Were not our hearts burning (within us) while he spoke to us on the way and opened the scriptures to us?" So they set out at once and returned to Jerusalem where they found gathered together the eleven and those with them who were saying, "The Lord has truly been raised and has appeared to Simon!" Then the two recounted what had taken place on the way and how he was made known to them in the breaking of the bread.*

The end of the Christian's dialogue is only one: raising up in the heart of man the true God, the true Christ, the true Holy Spirit, the true Church, true grace, true ministry and true sacraments. Consolidating or implanting falsehood in the heart of the one with whom one is talking is seriously harmful. If first there was some doubt about the truth, a false dialogue reinforces the falseness of the heart and mind. In order for a dialogue to be truly effective, the speaker must possess his truth and have no doubt or perplexity in it. If a minister of Christ the Lord does not even know what the will of God on his life is, all his dialogues will be with the worm of falsehood, ambiguity and lack of truth. Jesus knows who He is. He must bring his truth into the heart of the two disciples. Having put the truth in their hearts, they immediately go to proclaim to those who were disappointed like them, that Jesus has risen and that they must continue to believe and hope in Him. Whoever is helped by Jesus rising in his heart, by obligation of love must help every other man, so that in him too Jesus resurrects and lives.

Virgin Mary, Mother of the Redemption, Angels and Saints resurrect Jesus in every heart.

## YOU ARE WITNESSES OF THESE THINGS

## At 3,11-26; Ps 8; Lk 24,35-48

### 5 APRIL

If the risen Jesus is not in the heart of his disciples, never might he be on their lips. We always talk about the fullness of the heart. If in the heart there is Christ, the mouth will speak of Him. Instead if in the heart there is the Gehenna of the fire, one will speak from falsehood, from the lie, from slander and from vanity. Who purifies the heart, will always have his lips pure. Jesus comes. The heart of his disciples is not in his truth. It is urgent to open it to the knowledge of the Law, of the Prophets and of the Psalms. In the Word of the Father all his mystery is hidden. He reveals to them, by divine illumination, the truth of the Word and his mystery will enter into them and will always be on their lips. We can illuminate the mind with every truth about Jesus the Lord. But only the Holy Spirit writes the truth in the hearts. Whoever wants Christ to be written in the hearts must always walk full of the Holy Spirit. This on their lips becomes Word and the breath of truth. In the heart, because having been brought by the Word, he is transformed into a style of light, into a true celestial laser ray, and engraves in them the whole truth of Christ, all his mystery, in which the mystery of the Father and every other mystery of the present, of the future, of the past, of time and of eternity, are.

*The days are coming, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah. It will not be like the covenant I made with their fathers the day I took them by the hand to lead them forth from the land of Egypt; for they broke my covenant and I had to show myself their master, says the Lord. But this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord. I will place my law within them, and write it upon their hearts; I will be their God, and they shall be my people. No longer will they have need to teach their friends and kinsmen how to know the Lord. All, from least to greatest, shall know me, says the Lord, for I will forgive their evildoing and remember their sin no more (Jer 31,31-34).*

In the Cenacle, Jesus fulfils the prophecy of the Father. He writes his mystery in their hearts. But still this writing is not enough so that they leave and go throughout the world as his witnesses. It is also necessary that they themselves are clothed with strength from above, that is, they are filled with the Holy Spirit. Is not the knowledge of the truth alone enough? Knowing the truth and knowing how the truth must be given to every heart, are two very different things. The Holy Spirit does not confer the science of the gift to anyone. As to no one he confers his other gifts, without him. One receives Him, he dresses himself with Him, he is filled with Him, He exercises His gifts in us. One is without Him, he is not clothed with Him, he is not filled with Him, His gifts might never act in us. Owning the truth is one thing. Having the fortitude to give it is another thing. For this reason, the gift of the Holy Spirit and our life in Him must always be added to the knowledge of Scriptures.

*Then the two recounted what had taken place on the way and how he was made known to them in the breaking of the bread. While they were still speaking about this, he stood in their midst and said to them, "Peace be with you." But they were startled and terrified and thought that they were seeing a ghost. Then he said to them, "Why are you troubled? And why do questions arise in your hearts? Look at my hands and my feet, that it is I myself. Touch me and see, because a ghost does not have flesh and bones as you can see I have." And as he said this, he showed them his hands and his feet. While they were still incredulous for joy and were amazed, he asked them, "Have you anything here to eat?" They gave him a piece of baked fish; he took it and ate it in front of them. 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.*

The apostolic mission is quite clear. They will have to go throughout the world, starting from Jerusalem, to preach to all peoples the conversion and the forgiveness of sins. Conversion is to the Gospel, to Christ the Lord. The forgiveness of sins is in his name.

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

## THAT NIGHT THEY CAUGHT NOTHING

## At 4,1-12; Ps 117; Jn 21,1-14

### 6 APRIL

Why does the Apostle John place the episode of miraculous fishing at the end of his Gospel? Is not the Holy Spirit enough to Peter and the other Apostles to go to the world and fish men for the kingdom of God? Evidently not! In fact, even though the Apostles received the Holy Spirit, despite having gone to sea, the nets are empty. They return to shore without having taken anything. The teaching that the Evangelist offers us is of a highly divine light. Christ and the Holy Spirit, the Word and the interior or exterior motion of the Spirit of the Lord must be one. It is as if he wanted to tell us that the Spirit of the Lord must always be a present gift of Christ Jesus. He gives us both the Word and Holy Spirit, his Will and all the wisdom and intelligence of the Holy Spirit and fishing might always be very abundant. If we separate Christ and the Spirit, Word and gifts of the Spirit, Gospel and Charismas, Word and Ministries, we can also work very much, all night long, in the end the net is empty.

How can we always concretely unite Christ Jesus, the Word, the Gospel, the Holy Spirit, the Gifts, the Charismas and the Ministries, making them always be one? The way is the same that was of Lord Jesus. By becoming we one single heart, one soul, one spirit, one body and one life with Him. We are not the ones who can create unity. It is He the one who has always to create it. But He does not create it outside of us. He creates it from within us. He creates it to the extent that we allow him to become our own life, transforming us into his life. This process of "christification" must never be interrupted; each day it will have to become stronger, more intense, more alive, totalizing all of our life. They are in great error all those who think that a prayer is enough for the Holy Spirit to be placed at our disposal. The Spirit of God always acts in us by Christ, through Christ and in Christ. We grow in Christ and we grow in the power of the Holy Spirit. We decrease in Christ and we decrease in the Holy Spirit. This truth must never be forgotten, never neglected. In this truth, our work is.

*After this, Jesus revealed himself again to his disciples at the Sea of Tiberias. He revealed himself in this way. Together were Simon Peter, Thomas called Didymus, Nathanael from Cana in Galilee, Zebedee's sons, and two others of his disciples. Simon Peter said to them, "I am going fishing." They said to him, "We also will come with you." So they went out and got into the boat, but that night they caught nothing. When it was already dawn, Jesus was standing on the shore; but the disciples did not realize that it was Jesus. Jesus said to them, "Children, have you caught anything to eat?" They answered him, "No." So he said to them, "Cast the net over the right side of the boat and you will find something." So they cast it, and were not able to pull it in because of the number of fish. So the disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, "It is the Lord." When Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he tucked in his garment, for he was lightly clad, and jumped into the sea. The other disciples came in the boat, for they were not far from shore, only about a hundred yards, dragging the net with the fish. When they climbed out on shore, they saw a charcoal fire with fish on it and bread. Jesus said to them, "Bring some of the fish you just caught." So Simon Peter went over and dragged the net ashore full of one hundred fifty-three large fish. Even though there were so many, the net was not torn. Jesus said to them, "Come, have breakfast." And none of the disciples dared to ask him, "Who are you?" because they realized it was the Lord. Jesus came over and took the bread and gave it to them, and in like manner the fish. This was now the third time Jesus was revealed to his disciples after being raised from the dead.*

How will the world know that in the disciples there is Christ, He acts and works? How might they be recognized as the life of Christ in the world? In the same way according to which today Jesus makes himself be recognized by his own: always and in every place living with all humility the law of love. If the other person does not see the love of Christ, he will never be converted to Christ. He sees people without love, while Christ Jesus is love. He sees men without humanity, while Christ Jesus is charity and history made flesh. John sees a person that serves with delicate love and recognizes that he is the Lord. When Jesus lives in the disciple, the disciple will always manifest in his life Christ who loves with true love.

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

## BUT THEY DID NOT BELIEVE THEM EITHER

## At 4,13-21; Ps 117; Mk 16,9-15

### 7 APRIL

The Evangelist Mark highlights the non faith of the disciples when they are told that Jesus has risen and has manifested himself. Needless to try to build the history of the morning after Saturday putting together the individual elements of the four Gospels. No agreement will ever be possible. Every Evangelist is the announcer of a truth in its own right. Only the historical core of the *"principal or essential characters to the story"* remains intact: Risen Christ, Mary of Magdala, the other women, the disciples of Emmaus and the Apostles. In Mark everything is aimed at creating in the Apostles the faith in the Risen Christ. But always the Apostles refuse to believe. This is the truth of the Gospel of Mark. Then it is right that we ask ourselves: why does the second Evangelist concentrate everything on the will of not wanting to believe on the part of the Apostles of the Lord? Paul tells us the truth in the First Letter to Timothy. He too refused, stubbornly refused to not wanting to believe in the Risen Christ and stifled the light of Christ by killing his disciples, or dragging them into prisons. He did everything to extinguish Christ.

*I am grateful to him who has strengthened me, Christ Jesus our Lord, because he considered me trustworthy in appointing me to the ministry. I was once a blasphemer and a persecutor and an arrogant man, but I have been mercifully treated because I acted out of ignorance in my unbelief. Indeed, the grace of our Lord has been abundant, along with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. This saying is trustworthy and deserves full acceptance: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. Of these I am the foremost. But for that reason I was mercifully treated, so that in me, as the foremost, Christ Jesus might display all his patience as an example for those who would come to believe in him for everlasting life. To the king of ages, incorruptible, invisible, the only God, honour and glory forever and ever. Amen (1Tm 1,12-17).*

As in Paul his obstinacy becomes an essential element in his preaching - He was torn from non faith by the power of the light of the Risen Christ, blinded by it and planted by grace and mercy in Christ the truth of all the Scriptures - so the Apostles did not come to the faith because they were dragged by others or because there was a need in them to fill the void left by the Master. They believe in the resurrection because Christ himself, just as he did with Paul, worked with them. He came in person, revealed, manifested and has shown himself. They do not go throughout the world for a vague feeling of their heart, but because the Risen Jesus himself gave them this mandate: *"Go into the whole world and proclaim the Gospel to every creature"*. Nothing is from their will, nothing from their feeling. Instead everything is from Christ Jesus.

*When he had risen, early on the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom he had driven seven demons. She went and told his companions who were mourning and weeping. When they heard that he was alive and had been seen by her, they did not believe. After this he appeared in another form to two of them walking along on their way to the country. They returned and told the others; but they did not believe them either. (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.*

Rome, the city in which Peter and Mark live the proclamation of the Gospel there is little room for a faith based on sentiment or exaltation and not even if it is founded on others' experiences. Peter must attest to every heart that not even He believed, He too was afraid to witness to Christ and He also doubted the Word of the Master. This gives him total credibility. He does not present himself as a winner, but as a defeated always saved by the love of the Master. As Jesus saved him, He will save all of them, on condition that they believe in Him and let themselves be led from light to light by Him, in the same way that Peter let himself be led from light to light. If the missionary of Jesus proclaims the Gospel from the historical concreteness of his life, it is always easier to create faith in the hearts, otherwise he could also appear as a deceiver.

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

## RECEIVE THE HOLY SPIRIT

## At 4,32-35; Ps 117; 1Jn 5,1-6; Jn 20,19-31

### 8 APRIL – II SUNDAY OF EASTER – B

In the Garden of Eden man was created by God so that he always lived, without detaching himself for a moment, from him and his will, made known to him as a given word. Nothing from the heart of man, instead everything must be from the heart of God.

*The Lord God formed man out of the clay of the ground and blew into his nostrils the breath of life, and so man became a living being. The Lord God then took the man and settled him in the garden of Eden, to cultivate and care for it. The Lord God gave man this order: "You are free to eat from any of the trees of the garden except the tree of knowledge of good and bad. From that tree you shall not eat; the moment you eat from it you are surely doomed to die" (Gen 2,7.15-17).*

The Upper Room is the new Garden of Eden. Jesus takes the clay of sin and death of his apostles and blows the Holy Spirit upon them. Giving them a precise command: *"To those whose sins you forgive, they will be forgiven; to those whom you will not forgive, they will not be forgiven"*. As Adam must always live, without any interruption or disconnection from the will of the Father, from his explicit command, so also the apostles will have to live from the command of Christ for all the days of their life. They are *"ordained"* to the forgiveness of sins. It is a very delicate and complex mission. Like Jesus, first they must teach men what is falsehood and what is truth, what is right and what is unjust, what is good and what is bad, what the will of God is and what is not his will. The same commandment received from Christ from the Father applies to them. He is the Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world. But how does he remove it? First he reveals it, teaches it, by giving the pure will of the Father. Then he shows how the will of the Father is entirely lived, without neglecting even a dash of it, finally he climbs on the cross and lets himself be burnt and victimized for the expiation of every sin. If the disciples do not walk the way of Christ, no sin will be recognized by man and their missionary work is vain, useless and even harmful. There is neither salvation nor redemption.

*On the evening of that first day of the week, when the doors were locked, where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in their midst and said to them, "Peace be with you." When he had said this, he showed them his hands and his side. The disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. (Jesus) said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you." And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the holy Spirit. Whose sins you forgive are forgiven them, and whose sins you retain are retained." Thomas, called Didymus, one of the Twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. So the other disciples said to him, "We have seen the Lord." But he said to them, "Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands and put my finger into the nail marks and put my hand into his side, I will not believe." Now a week later his disciples were again inside and Thomas was with them. Jesus came, although the doors were locked, and stood in their midst and said, "Peace be with you." Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here and see my hands, and bring your hand and put it into my side, and do not be unbelieving, but believe." Thomas answered and said to him, "My Lord and my God!" Jesus said to him, "Have you come to believe because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and have believed." Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of (his) disciples that are not written in this book. But these are written that you may (come to) believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through this belief you may have life in his name.*

The forgiveness of sins does not consist in a *"sterile sacramental absolution"*. Without formation, enlightenment and teaching of good and evil, of what is the will of God and of what is not God's will is not with divine, Holy Spirit precision, the whole celebration of the sacraments is exposed to nothingness if not to sacrilege. We can say that today this is the failure of so much apostolic ministry. Many human conveniences are taught, but not the divine Law according to the heart of Christ. The Apostle of the Lord is a perennial singer, without ever getting tired, of the will of his Master, just as his Master was the singer of the divine will of the Father. If today even the minister no longer knows what sin is, might he ever forgive it effectively in others?

Virgin Mary, Mother of the Redemption, Angels and Saints make us true imitators of Christ.

## YOU WILL BEAR A SON AND SHALL NAME HIM JESUS

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

### 9 APRIL

About a thousand years before this time the Lord had promised David a king with the eternal, endless kingdom. About six centuries earlier, the prophet Isaiah had announced that the virgin would have give birth. They are words, both of them laden with mystery. St. Paul reveals that the fullness of time comes with the Virgin Mary. That is, times are mature, ready, to welcome the Son of God that comes into the flesh.

*Your house and your kingdom shall endure forever before me; your throne shall stand firm forever'" (2 Sam 7,16).* *Therefore the Lord himself will give you this sign: the virgin shall be with child, and bear a son, and shall name him Immanuel (Is 7,14).* *I mean that as long as the heir is not of age, he is no different from a slave, although he is the owner of everything, but he is under the supervision of guardians and administrators until the date set by his father. In the same way we also, when we were not of age, were enslaved to the elemental powers of the world. But when the fullness of time had come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to ransom those under the law, so that we might receive adoption. As proof that you are children, God sent the spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying out, "Abba, Father!" So you are no longer a slave but a child, and if a child then also an heir, through God (Gal 4,1-7).*

Even if the fullness of time has come, since in the work of incarnation, it needs the yes of the woman - *alone he can upset heaven and earth and the distant galaxies, he can create a thousand new worlds and infinite universes, but alone he cannot make of his Only Son a son of Adam to redeem the sons of Adam* – that is why he sends his Angel Gabriel. This comes, first he reveals to Mary who Mary is according to the most pure celestial vision. Then he announces her what the Lord wants from her: that she allows him to be able to fulfil in Her, through Her, in his Only Son, which will be born for Her, from Him, as a true man, all his words uttered to the Fathers since the creation of the world. Knowing the purity of the heart of the Virgin Mary, the Angel does not ask for anything from her; he tells her what will happen in her, for her. Then she will be the one to have to accept the will of the Lord manifested and let it be done without any obstacle on her part, even at the price of a full consecration to God, renouncing every human project. From this moment on Mary will have to be all of her Lord and for her Lord. She will have to be the "heaven of God" on our earth.

*In the sixth month, the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a town of Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man named Joseph, of the house of David, and the virgin's name was Mary. And coming to her, he said, "Hail, favoured one! The Lord is with you." But she was greatly troubled at what was said and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. Then the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favour with God. Behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give him the throne of David his father, and he will rule over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." But Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I have no relations with a man?" And the angel said to her in reply, "The holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. Therefore the child to be born will be called holy, the Son of God. And behold, Elizabeth, your relative, has also conceived a son in her old age, and this is the sixth month for her who was called barren; for nothing will be impossible for God." Mary said, "Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord. May it be done to me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her.*

As soon as the Angel finishes his speech, confirming that God asks only for the gift of herself, then He will be the one to do everything else, she must be with her Lord as the dust, without any resistance either of will, or of heart, either of mind, or of body; without even a moment of interval, immediately comes her answer: *"Behold the servant of the Lord: come to me according to your word"*. In this fraction of a second the Eternal Word, the Son of God, in her virginal womb, becomes the Son of man. The Incarnation of the Only Begotten of the Father upsets every mystery. Even the mystery of the Blessed Trinity is upset. Humanity is now part of it.

Virgin Mary, Mother of the Redemption, Angels and Saints make us part of the mystery of Jesus.

## SO IT IS WITH EVERYONE WHO IS BORN OF THE SPIRIT

## At 4,32-37; Ps 92; Jn 3,7b-15

### 10 APRIL

It is urgent to understand well what Jesus says to Nicodemus: *"The wind blows where it wants and you hear its voice, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes: so it is whoever is born of the Spirit"*. Whoever is born of the Spirit is always moved by the Spirit on condition that he walks according to the Spirit, otherwise the flesh gains the upper hand and makes slave of it not only who has been baptized, but also who has received every other sacrament. This truth is cried out by St. Paul in the Letter to the Galatians.

*For freedom Christ set us free; so stand firm and do not submit again to the yoke of slavery. For through the Spirit, by faith, we await the hope of righteousness. For in Christ Jesus, neither circumcision nor uncircumcision counts for anything, but only faith working through love. You were running well; who hindered you from following (the) truth? That enticement does not come from the one who called you. A little yeast leavens the whole batch of dough. I am confident of you in the Lord that you will not take a different view, and that the one who is troubling you will bear the condemnation, whoever he may be. 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. 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 (Cf. Gal 5,1-26).*

Who wants to be like the wind in the hands of the Holy Spirit, rather a breath of his mouth, to make the vivification and renewal of every heart, must be one with Christ and you are one with Him, dwelling in his Word. Faith is in the Word. Obedience is in his Word. The Holy Spirit is in his Word, since he is the Spirit of the Lord, Christ and his Word are one. Only one commandment of Christ is transgressed and you are a plate of lead and a slave of sin.

*'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." Nicodemus answered and said to him, "How can this happen?" Jesus answered and said to him, "You are the teacher of Israel and you do not understand this? Amen, amen, I say to you, we speak of what we know and we testify to what we have seen, but you people do not accept our testimony. If I tell you about earthly things and you do not believe, how will you believe if I tell you about heavenly things? No one has gone up to heaven except the one who has come down from heaven, the Son of Man. And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the desert, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, so that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life."*

The other word of Jesus must also be holily understood: *"And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, so that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life"*. There are two truths to say: The sons of Israel were already in death. They looked at the snake, the poison lost its toxicity of death. We are already in death too. We are not asked to look at Him alone. We are asked to believe in him. How does one believe in him? By welcoming all of his Word into our heart and making it become the one and only law of our life. Jesus is inseparable from the Word just as faith is inseparable from the Word. We accept the Word of Jesus, we accept Christ and we believe in him. We do not accept the Word, we do not accept Christ and we do not believe in Him. Great is the responsibility of the ministers of the Word. If they give a Christ without his Word, they give a *"snake"* without efficacy. Who is in death remains in death and who is in life returns to death.

Virgin Mary, Mother of the Redemption, Angels and Saints give us Christ and his Word.

**APRIL 2018**

## SECOND DECADE OF APRIL

## WHOEVER BELIEVES IN HIM WILL NOT BE CONDEMNED

## At 5,17-26; Ps 33; Jn 3,16-21

### 11 APRIL

In Jesus, the only Son of God, the salvation of the world has been placed, that is, of every man who has been, is and will be on earth, from the day of its creation until the last, before the advent of the new heavens and new earth. There are no other people given by God, nor other ways. He is the universal, perennial, eternal way, without any change or variation. This truth must be shouted to every man for the sake of his salvation. If faith in this truth falls, faith in the mission also falls. In fact, it would be useless to preach, to announce and to remember Christ and his Word if it were possible to reach true salvation through other paths or other people. Since Jesus is the one, the only one, for every time, every man and every place, who loves man and wants him to come to the knowledge of salvation, he must commit all of himself in the work of evangelization and teaching of the Word of Jesus. This truth was Paul's own life. He lived and died preaching the Word, his Gospel.

*First of all, then, I ask that supplications, prayers, petitions, and thanksgivings be offered for everyone, for kings and for all in authority, that we may lead a quiet and tranquil life in all devotion and dignity. This is good and pleasing to God our saviour, who wills everyone to be saved and to come to knowledge of the truth. For there is one God. There is also one mediator between God and the human race, Christ Jesus, himself human, who gave himself as ransom for all. This was the testimony at the proper time. For this I was appointed preacher and apostle (I am speaking the truth, I am not lying), teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth (1Tm 2,1-7).*

Faith in Christ Jesus and mission are inseparable, one is the truth of the other. If faith in Christ is pure, the mission is pure too. However, if faith in Christ is impure, even the mission will become impure. If faith in Christ is altered or cancelled, the mission is also altered and cancelled. If I say that all the ways are good to go to God, instantly Jesus is no longer the way. He becomes a way like the others. But if Jesus is a way like the others, there is no longer any need to preach the Gospel. Even the Word of God, in its entirety and globality, of Old and New Testaments is relativized. The Gospel is of a unique clarity: Jesus is the gift of the Father to the world, that is to every man. Life is in faith in his name. One believes in Him, one is saved. We do not believe in Him we have already been condemned. Note well: we have already been condemned.

*For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him might not perish but might have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through him. Whoever believes in him will not be condemned, but whoever does not believe has already been condemned, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God. And this is the verdict, that the light came into the world, but people preferred darkness to light, because their works were evil. For everyone who does wicked things hates the light and does not come toward the light, so that his works might not be exposed. But whoever lives the truth comes to the light, so that his works may be clearly seen as done in God.*

It is right then to ask oneself: why has who does not believe in the Only Begotten Son of God already been condemned? With the first sin of humanity at its origins, we are all in the state of spiritual death and we walk from death to death. Jesus said it in the previous verses. He is the serpent of God for the life of the world. In the desert, the snake was not looked at in order not to be bitten by the burning snakes. One looked when the poison of death was already in the blood. He had already been condemned to death. He looked at the snake, healed. The same is true for us. We have already been bitten. We are already with the poison in the blood of the body, the spirit and the soul. If we reject Christ Crucified and do not believe in his Word, death will consume us. If instead we clothe ourselves with great humility and believe in the Word of Jesus, choosing it as our only home in which to live, then from death we pass to life. Of this the Christian must be convinced: if He does not give Christ, as the Father has given him, he becomes responsible for every death.

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

## CERTIFIES THAT GOD IS TRUSTWORTHY

## At 5,27-33; Ps 33; Jn 3,31-36

### 12 APRIL

Christ Jesus is the truth of God made flesh, history. He is also the crucified love of the Father. Whoever does not believe in the Son makes God a liar. God certifies with the works and the visible life that Jesus is from Him. But also makes a liar of Jesus. Jesus testifies that the Father sent him, while in truth he did not send him. He also makes a liar of John the Baptist. John solemnly declared that Jesus is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world, proclaiming him in the same witness as the Son of God. Finally, whoever does not believe in Christ also make himself a liar. He says he has not sinned, while the flesh, his spirit and his soul, are kneaded with sin. When the truth of Christ is denied, the truth disappears on earth and in the heavens, in time and in eternity. Truly Christ Jesus is the truth of the Father and of the Holy Spirit, the truth of God and of man, the truth of the Church and of society, the truth of the invisible and the visible. He is the truth of every existing, eternal or created reality. Whoever does not believe in Christ, loses all truth and consumes himself to be built on falsehood and untruth. Since life is from the truth, whoever does not believe in Christ can only work for death. Christ Jesus is the only necessary to every man. Without him it is eternal nothingness.

*Whoever does accept his testimony certifies that God is trustworthy (Jn 3, 33). So Jesus cried out in the temple area as he was teaching and said, "You know me and also know where I am from. Yet I did not come on my own, but the one who sent me, whom you do not know, is true (Jn 7, 28). I have much to say about you in condemnation. But the one who sent me is true, and what I heard from him I tell the world" (Jn 8, 26). If we say, "We have not sinned," we make him a liar, and his word is not in us (1Jn 1, 10). Whoever believes in the Son of God has this testimony within himself. Whoever does not believe God has made him a liar by not believing the testimony God has given about his Son (1Jn 5, 10).*

The difference between Jesus and every other man is of origin. From this fundamental and essential difference of origin, then every other difference is born. From this difference of origin John the Baptist departed to attest his smallness or tininess.

*John testified to him and cried out, saying, "This was he of whom I said, 'The one who is coming after me ranks ahead of me because he existed before me'" (Jn 1,15).* *John answered them, "I baptize with water; but there is one among you whom you do not recognize, the one who is coming after me, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to untie" (Jn 1,26-27).*

Jesus is not only of heavenly origin, because he is not an angel sent by God, as it has happened and always happens. He is far beyond the created angelic nature. Jesus comes from the bosom of the Father, of the Father He is the Eternal Only Son, from the Father He has been begotten, in the bosom of the Father He dwells. This is the difference of origin, which becomes a difference of redemption, salvation, light, eternal life, grace and Holy Spirit. He is the only one who knows the Father and the only one who can reveal him. He is the only one who is the life of the Father and he is the only one who can give true life and eternal life to men. He is the only one who can give us the father and the Holy Spirit, in him, with him, for him and as our true life. He is the only Saviour and Redeemer, because he is the only one who gives the spirit without measure. Everything is in him. For Him everything is. With him everything rivives. This is his difference.

*The one who comes from above is above all. The one who is of the earth is earthly and speaks of earthly things. But the one who comes from heaven (is above all). He testifies to what he has seen and heard, but no one accepts his testimony. Whoever does accept his testimony certifies that God is trustworthy. For the one whom God sent speaks the words of God. He does not ration his gift of the Spirit. The Father loves the Son and has given everything over to him. Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but whoever disobeys the Son will not see life, but the wrath of God remains upon him.*

Then, it is understood that there is no difference. He is, others are not. He is holiness, others sin. He is life, others death. He is God, the others are creatures He made. He is the Eternal Son of the Father who became flesh, the others are only flesh. He gives eternal life to everyone. Everyone must believe in him to have life.

Virgin Mary, Mother of the Redemption, Angels and Saints make us one with Christ.

## THIS IS TRULY THE PROPHET

## At 5,34-42; Ps 26; Jn 6,1-15

### 13 APRIL

Every miracle of Jesus attests and reveals a truth either of his Person or of his mission. In the Holy Scripture, who made the manna fall from heaven was not Moses, but the Lord. This sign together with that of the quails was not made through Moses. The first person who performs a miracle on bread is the prophet Elijah. He assures the widow of Sarepta that the last handful of flour in the jar and the last drop of oil in the goat would have not been exhausted until the Lord would not have rained again on the earth. The first true multiplication of the loaves and also of the oil takes place with Elisha. These are signs that attest that God is truly with him. Elisha is a prophet of the God of Israel.

*"Do not be afraid," Elijah said to her. "Go and do as you propose. But first make me a little cake and bring it to me. Then you can prepare something for yourself and your son. For the Lord, the God of Israel, says, 'The jar of flour shall not go empty, nor the jug of oil run dry, until the day when the Lord sends rain upon the earth.'" She left and did as Elijah had said. She was able to eat for a year, and he and her son as well; The jar of flour did not go empty, nor the jug of oil run dry, as the Lord had foretold through Elijah (1Kings 17,13-16). "Go out," he said, "borrow vessels from all your neighbours - as many empty vessels as you can. Then come back and close the door on yourself and your children; pour the oil into all the vessels, and as each is filled, set it aside." She went and did so, closing the door on herself and her children. As they handed her the vessels, she would pour in oil. When all the vessels were filled, she said to her son, "Bring me another vessel." "There is none left," he answered her. And then the oil stopped. She went and told the man of God, who said, "Go and sell the oil to pay off your creditor; with what remains, you and your children can live" (2Kings 4,3-7).* *A man came from Baal-shalishah bringing the man of God twenty barely loaves made from the first fruits, and fresh grain in the ear. "Give it to the people to eat," Elisha said. But his servant objected, "How can I set this before a hundred men?" "Give it to the people to eat," Elisha insisted. "For thus says the Lord, 'They shall eat and there shall be some left over.'" And when they had eaten, there was some left over, as the Lord had said (2Kings 4,42-44).*

The primary purpose of the miracle is not the miracle itself. The miracle is a way, a sign, an instrument to lead to true faith. By the miracle Elijah and Elisha are recognized as men of God, people through whom the Lord acts and speaks. The Word of God is on their lips. If theirs is the Word of God, it must be heard, because true salvation is in it. The same is true for Jesus. His miracles are used to testify that He is from God more than all the others. In fact, today the people from the miracle pass to the true faith in Christ: "This is indeed the prophet, he who comes into the world!".

*After this, Jesus went across the Sea of Galilee (of Tiberias). A large crowd followed him, because they saw the signs he was performing on the sick. Jesus went up on the mountain, and there he sat down with his disciples. The Jewish feast of Passover was near. When Jesus raised his eyes and saw that a large crowd was coming to him, he said to Philip, "Where can we buy enough food for them to eat?" He said this to test him, because he himself knew what he was going to do. Philip answered him, "Two hundred days' wages worth of food would not be enough for each of them to have a little (bit)." One of his disciples, Andrew, the brother of Simon Peter, said to him, "There is a boy here who has five barley loaves and two fish; but what good are these for so many?" Jesus said, "Have the people recline." Now there was a great deal of grass in that place. So the men reclined, about five thousand in number. Then Jesus took the loaves, gave thanks, and distributed them to those who were reclining, and also as much of the fish as they wanted. When they had had their fill, he said to his disciples, "Gather the fragments left over, so that nothing will be wasted." So they collected them, and filled twelve wicker baskets with fragments from the five barley loaves that had been more than they could eat. When the people saw the sign he had done, they said, "This is truly the Prophet, the one who is to come into the world." Since Jesus knew that they were going to come and carry him off to make him king, he withdrew again to the mountain alone.*

However, it happens - and this will always happen - that the people draw a wrong conclusion from true faith. The people decide to take Jesus and make him a king, but a king according to the world and not according to his Father. It is now up to Christ not to fall into their trap.

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

## THEY WANTED TO TAKE HIM INTO THE BOAT

## At 6,1-7; Ps 32; Jn 6,16-21

### 14 APRIL

Never might Jesus be from the will of men, not even from the most holy and true. He must always be and remain from the will of the Father. This truth is the heart of the Gospel according to John. We can say that it is the truth of Christ the Lord, from which every other truth springs. He comes from the Father's will to do the will of the Father. He has never been from himself, either in eternity, or in time. He is from God. It is his essence and it is also the substantial, moral and spiritual difference with every other.

*Jesus said to them, "My food is to do the will of the one who sent me and to finish his work (Jn 4, 34). "I cannot do anything on my own; I judge as I hear, and my judgment is just, because I do not seek my own will but the will of the one who sent me (Jn 5, 30). Because I came down from heaven not to do my own will but the will of the one who sent me (Jn 6, 38). And this is the will of the one who sent me, that I should not lose anything of what he gave me, but that I should raise it (on) the last day (Jn 6, 39). For this is the will of my Father, that everyone who sees the Son and believes in him may have eternal life, and I shall raise him (on) the last day" (Jn 6, 40). Whoever chooses to do his will shall know whether my teaching is from God or whether I speak on my own (Jn 7, 17). We know that God does not listen to sinners, but if one is devout and does his will, he listens to him (Gv 9, 31).*

After the multiplication of the loaves, knowing Jesus the intentions of his people, he immediately seeks refuge with his Father, not only because the Father confirms him in his will, which certainly is not that of men, but also because he gives him every strength in Holy Spirit so that he does not fall into their mortal trap. In this every man must imitate Jesus the Lord. Man tempts man so that he comes out of the will of God and is made according to his will. Those who are tempted must immediately seek refuge with the Lord and ask him for every light and strength. The light to see and the strength to decide. Many men ruin their lives because they let themselves be dragged into the will of others, which is almost always of sin and death. Every word of the other can be a temptation for us.

The Apostles are in the sea. The wind is strong. They row, but do not reach the shore. Still a substantial difference between Jesus and also his Apostles. Jesus comes out of contact with the Father and walks on the waves. He does not let himself be conquered by the temptations of men. He does not dive into their waters, in which one roams and works in vain, without ever reaching the true goal. On the contrary, the Apostles, since they are without Christ the Lord, they are immersed in the waters of history and never might they advance towards the goal. When does the boat reach the shore? When they wanted to take Jesus on the boat. Jesus goes up on their boat and it also walks, indeed it flies on the waves of the sea. It is no longer immersed in the water, but it is above the waters, it even comes immediately out of the waters.

*When it was evening, his disciples went down to the sea, embarked in a boat, and went across the sea to Capernaum. It had already grown dark, and Jesus had not yet come to them. The sea was stirred up because a strong wind was blowing. When they had rowed about three or four miles, they saw Jesus walking on the sea and coming near the boat, and they began to be afraid. But he said to them, "It is I. Do not be afraid." They wanted to take him into the boat, but the boat immediately arrived at the shore to which they were heading.*

A further reflection is required. Not because we are disciples of Christ Jesus, his boat, his Church and his body, Jesus is with us. Like every night Jesus took the Father on the boat of his life - yet He and the Father are one only thing - so every day and every night the disciple, the Church, his body must want to take Jesus with him, in his life, in his boat, in his ministry, in his mission and in the Church. The will to take Christ Jesus must be uninterrupted, moment by moment. If a single moment is without Christ, temptation immediately attacks and bites. One rushes into the sea of ​​history, rows, but never reaches the shore. Knowing that without Christ the boat of our life does not advance towards its goal, everyone must want to take Christ with him on the boat. He takes him, the boat rises on the waves and reaches immediately the shore.

Virgin Mary, Mother of the Redemption, Angels, Saints, make us of resolute and strong will.

## HE SHOWED THEM HIS HANDS AND HIS FEET

## At 3,13-15.17-19; Ps 4; 1 Jn 2,1-5a; Lk 24,35-48

### 15 APRIL – III SUNDAY OF EASTER – B

The resurrection of Jesus is such a new event in history as to result even incomprehensible to the small and petty mind of the disciples. They had witnessed the resurrection of the son of the widow of Nain and also that of Lazarus, by now in the tomb for four days. Ancient Scripture also told of three resurrections, one performed by Elijah and two by Elisha, the first as a living, the second as a dead person. But everyone had returned to their former life. The soul takes its place in the body and man begins to live again. With Jesus, on the other hand, everything is different and everything is new. He does not go back to the life of before. His body of flesh is transformed into spirit, into light, becomes immortal and glorious. It is this transformation in spirit and in light as God is spirit and light that they cannot understand and that is why they are always in doubt. Jesus does not explain the mystery of his resurrection. The only one in the New Testament that gives an explanation is St. Paul in the First Letter to the Corinthians. The Corinthians had come to deny the resurrection of the dead and Paul commits all his wisdom to restore the true faith in the lost, confused and uncertain hearts. The explanation is a help. The mystery is infinitely beyond. We need the Faith. Its understanding is a gift of the Holy Spirit.

*But someone may say, "How are the dead raised? With what kind of body will they come back?" You fool! What you sow is not brought to life unless it dies. And what you sow is not the body that is to be but a bare kernel of wheat, perhaps, or of some other kind; but God gives it a body as he chooses, and to each of the seeds its own body. Not all flesh is the same, but there is one kind for human beings, another kind of flesh for animals, another kind of flesh for birds, and another for fish. There are both heavenly bodies and earthly bodies, but the brightness of the heavenly is one kind and that of the earthly another. The brightness of the sun is one kind, the brightness of the moon another, and the brightness of the stars another. For star differs from star in brightness. So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown corruptible; it is raised incorruptible. It is sown dishonourable; it is raised glorious. It is sown weak; it is raised powerful.* *It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual one (Cf. 1Cor 15,25-58).*

Jesus does not explain his mystery. He wants his disciples to see personally that there is a perfect identity between the Crucified and the person who is before their eyes. Once this truth is placed in the heart, everything else follows. Thus Jesus teaches us that not always in faith we must start from the rational explanation of the mystery, but from the affirmation of its truth. One believes in the truth, everything else follows. If one does not believe in the truth, even the most illuminating explanations are useless. Today we have millions of books that speak of Christ and his mystery, but we no longer have Christ. We know everything about Him, but we do not possess Him. Instead, Jesus wants us to believe in Him, have Him and walk with Him. In due time we will understand.

*Then the two recounted what had taken place on the way and how he was made known to them in the breaking of the bread. While they were still speaking about this, he stood in their midst and said to them, "Peace be with you." But they were startled and terrified and thought that they were seeing a ghost. Then he said to them, "Why are you troubled? And why do questions arise in your hearts? Look at my hands and my feet, that it is I myself. Touch me and see, because a ghost does not have flesh and bones as you can see I have." And as he said this, he showed them his hands and his feet. While they were still incredulous for joy and were amazed, he asked them, "Have you anything here to eat?" They gave him a piece of baked fish; he took it and ate it in front of them. 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.*

Jesus, for the Apostles to open themselves to his mystery of death and resurrection, begins by opening their minds to understanding the Scriptures. His mystery is contained in Scripture, from the Scriptures we must always start. It is an eternal way for every believer.

Virgin Mary, Mother of the Redemption, Angels and Saints make us understand the Scriptures.

## THIS IS THE WORK OF GOD

## At 6,8-15; Ps 118; Jn 6,22-29

### 16 APRIL

The Jews ate the bread given to them by Jesus. They were satisfied. They seek Christ to have bread again from him. But Jesus was not sent into the world to solve the question of bread for the body. His mission is divinely different. He is sent so that every man can nourish his soul and his spirit of their true nourishment, which is Christ. From the beginning and for anticipation we say, it is right to say that this true nourishment is not the Eucharist, but Christ Jesus in the totality of his mystery. Spirit and soul must be nourished by Christ, truth, grace, eternal life, light, resurrection, love, justice, peace and holiness. The Eucharist is Christ, but it is not all of Christ. All of Christ is the nourishment of the soul and the spirit. If we give only one part of Christ, we do not give any nourishment. It would be as if we wanted to quench one man and we gave a molecule of oxygen. This molecule is essential in the composition of water, but it is not water, otherwise we could quench our thirst by breathing. As hydrogen and oxygen in the right proportions form water, so too all of Christ is formed by Word, truth, grace, justice, holiness, Holy Spirit, eternal life and light.

Jesus knows why He is being sought and He says it clearly to the Jews: *"Truly, truly, I say to you, you seek me not because you have seen signs, but because you ate those loaves of bread and were satiated"*. We must confess that they have seen bread as a true sign. They also went beyond the bread when they confessed that Jesus is the prophet that has to come. But then they developed this truth and that is that the prophet does not come to give bread, but true Word of God. Now Jesus is the one who reminds them this truth: *"Do not work for food that does not last, but for food that remains for eternal life and which the Son of Man will give you. Because God, the Father, has put his seal on him"*. Until the Jews chase someone to receive bread for the body, they search in vain and they even find in vain. They must seek not bread, but Christ, indeed they must seek Christ as the one and only bread of eternal life. Jesus is clear in his declaration. The Son of Man can satisfy the hunger of their soul and their spirit, because He has the food that lasts for eternal life. He has it and he gives it. He has it and gives it because the Father, God, has put his seal on Him. Thus, Jesus proclaims himself as the mandate of God, the true mandate of God, to give them the food that lasts for eternal life. We repeat it. This food is Christ in his entirety. All of Christ is the bread that lasts, the food of eternal life. Jesus is the gift of the Father to the world.

*The next day, the crowd that remained across the sea saw that there had been only one boat there, and that Jesus had not gone along with his disciples in the boat, but only his disciples had left. Other boats came from Tiberias near the place where they had eaten the bread when the Lord gave thanks. When the crowd saw that neither Jesus nor his disciples were there, they themselves got into boats and came to Capernaum looking for Jesus. And when they found him across the sea they said to him, "Rabbi, when did you get here?" Jesus answered them and said, "Amen, amen, I say to you, you are looking for me not because you saw signs but because you ate the loaves and were filled. Do not work for food that perishes but for the food that endures for eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you. For on him the Father, God, has set his seal." So they said to him, "What can we do to accomplish the works of God?" Jesus answered and said to them, "This is the work of God, that you believe in the one he sent."*

The Jews seem to want to open themselves to a true dialogue of salvation and ask Jesus: *"What we must do to do the works of God".* Jesus did not speak of works to do, but to look for the true food that remains for eternal life. Since the question has been asked, Jesus reiterates that it is not a question of works, but of faith: *"This is the work of God: that you believe in the one he has sent"*. Do you want to do the works of God? The work of God is only one: believing in the one he has sent. If you believe in me, in every word that I tell you, you do the work of God. You do not believe in me and you do not do any work of God. This truth is especially true for today. Faith in Christ is always everything.

Virgin Mary, Mother of the Redemption, Angels and Saints help us to believe in Christ.

## WHAT CAN YOU DO?

## At 7,51-8,1a; Ps 30; Jn 6,30-35

### 17 APRIL

Faith in Scripture is obedience to every Word that comes from the mouth of God. Obedience to the Word is taken away, there is no faith. The sign that the Word of God is true is given by the fulfilment of the Word. Whether one obeys or does not obey the Word, it always produces what it says. The history of humanity begins with a Word of God from the first moment of the creation of man and woman. In the second chapter of Genesis, the Word is given before the creation of the woman. Since the woman has been taken from the man and given to man, the command given to man is also given to the woman.

*Then God said: "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. Let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, the birds of the air, and the cattle, and over all the wild animals and all the creatures that crawl on the ground." God created man in his image; in the divine image he created him; male and female he created them. God blessed them, saying: "Be fertile and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it. Have dominion over the fish of the sea, the birds of the air, and all the living things that move on the earth" (Gen 1,26-28).* *The Lord God formed man out of the clay of the ground and blew into his nostrils the breath of life, and so man became a living being. The Lord God then took the man and settled him in the garden of Eden, to cultivate and care for it. The Lord God gave man this order: "You are free to eat from any of the trees of the garden except the tree of knowledge of good and bad. From that tree you shall not eat; the moment you eat from it you are surely doomed to die" (Gen 2,7.15-17).*

The life of the earth and of man is in obedience to this Word. One does not obey, it is death. The death that arises from disobedience is the sign that the Word of God is true. The damned of hell will confess forever the truth of the Word of the Lord and so also the blessed ones of paradise. Having abolished hell, we have declared every Word of God false. While the damned say it is true, we say it is false. The Jews saw the sign of the multiplication of the loaves. They have all said that Jesus is the prophet to come. If Jesus is the prophet promised by God, the prophet must be heard. The words of the promise are clear. The prophet must be heard.

*I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their kinsmen, and will put my words into his mouth; he shall tell them all that I command him. If any man will not listen to my words which he speaks in my name, I myself will make him answer for it. But if a prophet presumes to speak in my name an oracle that I have not commanded him to speak, or speaks in the name of other gods, he shall die.' "If you say to yourselves, 'How can we recognize an oracle which the LORD has spoken?', know that, even though a prophet speaks in the name of the LORD, if his oracle is not fulfilled or verified, it is an oracle which the Lord did not speak. The prophet has spoken it presumptuously, and you shall have no fear of him (Dt 18,18-22).*

According to these words of revelation, Jesus must not perform any work. He must only say the Word of God. It will be the Word that will attest to his truth, by fulfilling itself. Jesus is great in his mercy and wants to help the Jews put their faith in him. He tells them that it was not Moses the one who gave them bread from heaven. This is a miracle or a sign given directly by God. Instead, Jesus was sent to give them the true bread. This bread is not of matter. Because the bread of God is he who descends from heaven and gives life to the world. We pass from the material bread to another bread.

*So they said to him, "What sign can you do, that we may see and believe in you? What can you do? Our ancestors ate manna in the desert, as it is written: 'He gave them bread from heaven to eat.'" So Jesus said to them, "Amen, amen, I say to you, it was not Moses who gave the bread from heaven; my Father gives you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is that which comes down from heaven and gives life to the world." So they said to him, "Sir, give us this bread always." Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me will never hunger, and whoever believes in me will never thirst.*

 The Jews do not understand what Jesus is telling them, but they ask for bread. Jesus once again leads them to the truth of the bread: *"I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me will not be hungry and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty, never."* The bread of God is Christ Jesus.

Virgin Mary, Mother of the Redemption, Angels, Saints, give us Christ our bread of life.

## FOR THIS IS THE WILL OF MY FATHER

## At 8,1b-8; Ps 65; Jn 6,35-40

### 18 APRIL

The gift of the Father is Christ, all of Christ, indivisible in his words and in every gift of grace. His body and his blood are one of his gifts. Gift is all his Word. Gift is the truth, the light and the Holy Spirit. Gift is also the Father. We can say that the Eucharist is Christ in its entirety that is given so that all Christ with all his other gifts may live in us. the Eucharist is inseparable from the total Christ. Jesus has already abundantly announced this truth with many details and minutiae.

*For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him might not perish but might have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through him. Whoever believes in him will not be condemned, but whoever does not believe has already been condemned, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God. And this is the verdict, that the light came into the world, but people preferred darkness to light, because their works were evil. For everyone who does wicked things hates the light and does not come toward the light, so that his works might not be exposed. But whoever lives the truth comes to the light, so that his works may be clearly seen as done in God (Jn 3,16-21).* *The one who comes from above is above all. The one who is of the earth is earthly and speaks of earthly things. But the one who comes from heaven (is* *above all). He testifies to what he has seen and heard, but no one accepts his testimony. Whoever does accept his testimony certifies that God is trustworthy. For the one whom God sent speaks the words of God. He does not ration his gift of the Spirit. The Father loves the Son and has given everything over to him. Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but whoever disobeys the Son will not see life, but the wrath of God remains upon him (Jn 3,31-36).*

*A woman of Samaria came to draw water. Jesus said to her, "Give me a drink." His disciples had gone into the town to buy food. The Samaritan woman said to him, "How can you, a Jew, ask me, a Samaritan woman, for a drink?" (For Jews use nothing in common with Samaritans.) Jesus answered and said to her, "If you knew the gift of God and who is saying to you, 'Give me a drink,' you would have asked him and he would have given you living water." (The woman) said to him, "Sir, you do not even have a bucket and the cistern is deep; where then can you get this living water? Are you greater than our father Jacob, who gave us this cistern and drank from it himself with his children and his flocks?" Jesus answered and said to her, "Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again; but whoever drinks the water I shall give will never thirst; the water I shall give will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life." The woman said to him, "Sir, give me this water, so that I may not be thirsty or have to keep coming here to draw water" (Jn 4,7-15). Amen, amen, I say to you, whoever hears my word and believes in the one who sent me has eternal life and will not come to condemnation, but has passed from death to life. Amen, amen, I say to you, the hour is coming and is now here when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live. For just as the Father has life in himself, so also he gave to his Son the possession of life in himself. And he gave him power to exercise judgment, because he is the Son of Man. Do not be amazed at this, because the hour is coming in which all who are in the tombs will hear his voice and will come out, those who have done good deeds to the resurrection of life, but those who have done wicked deeds to the resurrection of condemnation. "I cannot do anything on my own; I judge as I hear, and my judgment is just, because I do not seek my own will but the will of the one who sent me (Jn 5,24-30).*

The path of salvation, eternal life and resurrection is faith in the Son. From the faith in the Son one receives his body and blood. There is no true Eucharist if there is no true faith in the whole Son. The Eucharist is aimed so that all of Christ Jesus lives in us according to the truth.

*But I told you that although you have seen (me), you do not believe. Everything that the Father gives me will come to me, and I will not reject anyone who comes to me, because I came down from heaven not to do my own will but the will of the one who sent me. And this is the will of the one who sent me, that I should not lose anything of what he gave me, but that I should raise it (on) the last day. For this is the will of my Father, that everyone who sees the Son and believes in him may have eternal life, and I shall raise him (on) the last day."*

Receiving the Eucharist without faith in all of Christ, in all his Word, in all his gifts, in no use, because the purpose of the Eucharist is to give full life to every gift of Jesus.

Virgin Mary, Mother of the Redemption, Angels and Saints give us the true faith in the Son.

## IT IS MY FLESH FOR THE LIFE OF THE WORLD

## At 8 ,26-40; Ps 65; Jn 6,44-51

### 19 APRIL

The Father is the life of Jesus. The Father lives in Jesus, Jesus lives. Jesus dwells in the Father and receives every life from the Father. The Father is everything for Jesus. Jesus is nothing without the Father. If He were to separate one moment from the Father, he would be without the Father who is his life. As the Father lives in Jesus, as he is the life of Jesus, so he wants to be the life of every man in his Holy Spirit. For his will to be able to be accomplished He has established only one way: the dwelling of Christ in us, or rather the *"transformation"* of Christ in our life, our spirit, our body and our soul. This *"transformation*" of Christ into our life takes place through the Eucharist. This is the true end of the Eucharist: nourishing ourselves of the body and of the blood Christ, so that all Christ *"is transformed"* into us and the whole Father may live in us through this *"transformation"*.

But how does the Father live in us? In the same way that he lives in the Son. By manifesting through the gift that the Son made him of all himself all the creating and renewing omnipotence of his love and all the light of his eternal essence that gives life to everything. This will and desire of the Father, revealed fully by Jesus and fully accomplished in him, show us how foolish is our way of receiving the Eucharist: as a sacrament in its own right. Do we not seek the Eucharist today by separating it from Christ, from the Father, from the Holy Spirit, from the Word and from every other gift of grace and truth? We want the Eucharist almost as a seal to be applied to all our spiritual misery and even also as a blanket to hide our sins. It is obvious that something does not work. Surely Christ is missing and the Father is absent.

Who must educate the disciple to the truth of the Eucharist is the minister of it. The minister educates to the Eucharist, if he educates to the Word, educates to Christ Jesus and educates to the Father in the Holy Spirit. He educates to Christ if he educates to his Gospel. Since today the Gospel is no longer accepted by the believing mind as the one and only Word of eternal life, since even the minister of the Eucharist is no longer minister of the Word, it becomes impossible to educate to the Eucharist. Without Gospel education there is no education to Christ, if there is no educating to Christ not even might there be to the Father. At most there might be education to the Eucharist only in relation to a Christian morality that still remains at least as a remnant of the truth and light of Christ. In how many by now even this morality has been extinguished; there is no principle either of faith or of morality for which someone can be excluded from the Eucharist in them. Then, if even the Eucharist is no longer even the real, substantial, true presence of the body of Christ and his blood, but only a symbol, one understands that fighting battles for a symbol is of no use.

*No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draw him, and I will raise him on the last day. It is written in the prophets: 'They shall all be taught by God.' Everyone who listens to my Father and learns from him comes to me. Not that anyone has seen the Father except the one who is from God; he has seen the Father. Amen, amen, I say to you, whoever believes has eternal life. I am the bread of life. Your ancestors ate the manna in the desert, but they died; this is the bread that comes down from heaven so that one may eat it and not die. I am the living bread that came down from heaven; whoever eats this bread will live forever; and the bread that I will give is my flesh for the life of the world."*

Everyone speaks of the Eucharist from the fullness of his heart. Christ speaks from the heart of the Father. The disciple speaks from the heart of Christ, if his heart is of Christ and has been given to him, by handing it over to the Word and to the Gospel. If the heart has not been given to Christ, of the Eucharist will always be spoken from our heart of sin. Being the heart of sin without Christ, even of the Eucharist will be spoken without Christ. If the minister of the Eucharist is not a true minister of the Word, the Eucharist will always be received not according to truth. Giving the Eucharist without its truth is not a work of mercy, but a true profanation and a true sacrilege. The Eucharist must be given either in its perfect truth or in the will to become its truth. Truth is the essence of Christ and of the Eucharist.

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

## THE ONE WHO FEEDS ON ME WILL HAVE LIFE BECAUSE OF ME

## At 9,1-20; Ps 116; Jn 6,52-59

### 20 APRIL

Jesus lives for the Father, bringing to fulfilment in his body, in his soul, in his spirit and in his heart all the words of the Father, even those that announced his unspeakable suffering and his holocaust for the atonement of sins.

*He came to Nazareth, where he had grown up, and went according to his custom into the synagogue on the Sabbath day. He stood up to read and was handed a scroll of the prophet Isaiah. He unrolled the scroll and found the passage where it was written: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring glad tidings to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, and to proclaim a year acceptable to the Lord." Rolling up the scroll, he handed it back to the attendant and sat down, and the eyes of all in the synagogue looked intently at him. He said to them, "Today this scripture passage is fulfilled in your hearing" (Lk 4,16-21).* *When it was evening, they brought him many who were possessed by demons, and he drove out the spirits by a word and cured all the sick, to fulfil what had been said by Isaiah the prophet: "He took away our infirmities and bore our diseases" (Mt 8,16-17).*

The text of the prophecy reveals that all the faults of the world have fallen on him.

*Who would believe what we have heard? To whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed? He grew up like a sapling before him, like a shoot from the parched earth; There was in him no stately bearing to make us look at him, nor appearance that would attract us to him. He was spurned and avoided by men, a man of suffering, accustomed to infirmity, One of those from whom men hide their faces, spurned, and we held him in no esteem. Yet it was our infirmities that he bore, our sufferings that he endured, While we thought of him as stricken, as one smitten by God and afflicted. But he was pierced for our offenses, crushed for our sins, Upon him was the chastisement that makes us whole, by his stripes we were healed. We had all gone astray like sheep, each following his own way; But the Lord laid upon him the guilt of us all. Though he was harshly treated, he submitted and opened not his mouth; Like a lamb led to the slaughter or a sheep before the shearers, he was silent and opened not his mouth. Oppressed and condemned, he was taken away, and who would have thought any more of his destiny? When he was cut off from the land of the living, and smitten for the sin of his people, A grave was assigned him among the wicked and a burial place with evildoers, Though he had done no wrong nor spoken any falsehood. (But the Lord was pleased to crush him in infirmity.) If he gives his life as an offering for sin, he shall see his descendants in a long life, and the will of the Lord shall be accomplished through him. Because of his affliction he shall see the light in fullness of days; Through his suffering, my servant shall justify many, and their guilt he shall bear. Therefore I will give him his portion among the great, and he shall divide the spoils with the mighty, Because he surrendered himself to death and was counted among the wicked; And he shall take away the sins of many, and win pardon for their offenses (Is 53,1-12).*

There is no word either of the Psalms, or of the Law, or of the Prophets that has not received fulfilment. Here is the purpose of the Eucharist: giving life to us to every Word of Jesus contained in the Gospel. The disciple eats Christ to give life to the Word of Christ.

*The Jews quarrelled among themselves, saying, "How can this man give us (his) flesh to eat?" Jesus said to them, "Amen, amen, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you do not have life within you. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him on the last day. For my flesh is true food, and my blood is true drink. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me and I in him. Just as the living Father sent me and I have life because of the Father, so also the one who feeds on me will have life because of me. This is the bread that came down from heaven. Unlike your ancestors who ate and still died, whoever eats this bread will live forever." These things he said while teaching in the synagogue in Capernaum.*

Until a single Word of Jesus still remains to be fulfilled, the disciple must not give himself peace. He must always approach the Eucharist with a strong desire to give Christ the greatest glory: his Word can be lived. The disciple, strengthened by his body and his blood, attests that the whole Gospel can be transformed into life. The Christian is the one who removes all excuses to those who say that the Gospel cannot be lived.

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

**APRIL 2018**

## THIRD DECADE OF APRIL

## YOU HAVE THE WORDS OF ETERNAL LIFE

## At 9,31-42; Ps 115; Jn 6,60-69

### 21 APRIL

The Word of Lord Jesus is hard, in the judgment of the Jews, because it asks them for a radical conversion: from the Old Covenant they have to pass into the New, from Moses to Lord Jesus, from the Law to the Gospel, from the sacrifice of communion through the flesh of animals to the sacrifice of communion with the flesh and blood of Christ the Lord. This passage from the old religion to the new is admirably illuminated by the Letter to the Hebrews. The temptation to return to the Old Covenant was always latent.

*Since the law has only a shadow of the good things to come, and not the very image of them, it can never make perfect those who come to worship by the same sacrifices that they offer continually each year. Otherwise, would not the sacrifices have ceased to be offered, since the worshipers, once cleansed, would no longer have had any consciousness of sins? But in those sacrifices there is only a yearly remembrance of sins, for it is impossible that the blood of bulls and goats take away sins. For this reason, when he came into the world, he said: "Sacrifice and offering you did not desire, but a body you prepared for me; holocausts and sin offerings you took no delight in. Then I said, 'As is written of me in the scroll, Behold, I come to do your will, O God.'" First he says, "Sacrifices and offerings, holocausts and sin offerings, you neither desired nor delighted in." These are offered according to the law. Then he says, "Behold, I come to do your will." He takes away the first to establish the second. By this "will," we have been consecrated through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. Every priest stands daily at his ministry, offering frequently those same sacrifices that can never take away sins. But this one offered one sacrifice for sins, and took his seat forever at the right hand of God; now he waits until his enemies are made his footstool. For by one offering he has made perfect forever those who are being consecrated. The holy Spirit also testifies to us, for after saying: "This is the covenant I will establish with them after those days, says the Lord: 'I will put my laws in their hearts, and I will write them upon their minds,'" he also says: "Their sins and their evildoing I will remember no more." Where there is forgiveness of these, there is no longer offering for sin (Heb 10,1-18).*

The Jews do not welcome the Word on the bread of life and many disciples also abandon it. Jesus cannot renounce the gift of himself in the Eucharist. He would have disciples unable to live the gospel. Since the end of everything is obedience to the Gospel and without the Eucharist it is impossible to live the Word, He also asks the Apostles to show him their choice. What do they decide: remaining welcoming the mystery of the bread of life or leaving? Peter chooses to stay and gives the reasons for his choice. Faith in the Eucharist is not born of an understanding of the mystery that is beyond every created mind. It is born of the Word of Jesus. If Jesus said it, it is truth.

*Since Jesus knew that his disciples were murmuring about this, he said to them, "Does this shock you? What if you were to see the Son of Man ascending to where he was before? It is the spirit that gives life, while the flesh is of no avail. The words I have spoken to you are spirit and life. But there are some of you who do not believe." Jesus knew from the beginning the ones who would not believe and the one who would betray him. And he said, "For this reason I have told you that no one can come to me unless it is granted him by my Father." As a result of this, many (of) his disciples returned to their former way of life and no longer accompanied him. Jesus then said to the Twelve, "Do you also want to leave?" Simon Peter answered him, "Master, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. We have come to believe and are convinced that you are the Holy One of God."*

Today, Peter gives the whole world the only rule on which faith is based: on the Word. But it is up to those who say the Word to show that He is worthy of faith. Moses attests that his Word is worthy of faith. The prophets do the same. Jesus does this with ways never existed before. Even the Apostles and every disciple of Jesus is obliged to make his person credible. Faith needs the person, because it is always welcoming the Word. The Word is of God. It is of Christ. It is of the disciple.

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

## HAS NO CONCERN FOR THE SHEEP

## At 4,8-12; Ps 117; 1 Jn 3,1-2; Jn 10,11 -18

### 22 APRIL – IV SUNDAY OF EASTER – B

God is the Pastor of Israel since always. Prophetic and priestly mediation is born with Moses. Royal mediation will be born with Samuel. Being both the priestly and royal mediation by descent according to the flesh, these two ways from ways of salvation for the government of the people became ways of perdition for all the people. The Lord has always intervened to straighten them, but in vain. His pain reaches the peak of suffering in the prophet Ezekiel. Not only does God decide to govern the flock himself. He promises it a shepherd who will be in the person of his Messiah.

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

*As for you, my sheep, says the Lord God, I will judge between one sheep and another, between rams and goats. Was it not enough for you to graze on the best pasture, that you had to trample the rest of your pastures with your feet? Was it not enough for you to drink the clearest water, that you had to foul the remainder with your feet? Thus my sheep had to graze on what your feet had trampled and drink what your feet had fouled. Therefore thus says the Lord God: Now will I judge between the fat and the lean sheep. Because you push with side and shoulder, and butt all the weak sheep with your horns until you have driven them out, I will save my sheep so that they may no longer be despoiled, and I will judge between one sheep and another. I will appoint one shepherd over them to pasture them, my servant David; he shall pasture them and be their shepherd. I, the Lord, will be their God, and my servant David shall be prince among them. I, the Lord, have spoken. I will make a covenant of peace with them, and rid the country of ravenous beasts, that they may dwell securely in the desert and sleep in the forests (Cf. Ez 34,1-31).*

Jesus announces and reveals himself as the true shepherd of the Father. He also makes the difference with the mercenary. This only looks after his profit. He cares nothing about the sheep. Before the wolf, between his life and that of the sheep, he chooses to save himself and abandons the sheep to be torn to pieces. Instead, Jesus not only defends the sheep, interposing himself between them and the wolf, he also gives his life to them and for them. We know how Jesus gives his life: from the cross for the forgiveness of sins and reconciliation with God. In the Eucharist as bread of eternal life so that the sheep also live for him and as He lives for the Father. Jesus will take back his life given on the cross with his glorious resurrection. While he will never recover the life that he gives in the Eucharist. His life will always be given so that every disciple makes of his life a gift to the Father for the redemption of his brothers. Salvation is only from the life given.

*I am the good shepherd. A good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. A hired man, who is not a shepherd and whose sheep are not his own, sees a wolf coming and leaves the sheep and runs away, and the wolf catches and scatters them. This is because he works for pay and has no concern for the sheep. I am the good shepherd, and I know mine and mine know me, just as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I will lay down my life for the sheep. I have other sheep that do not belong to this fold. These also I must lead, and they will hear my voice, and there will be one flock, one shepherd. This is why the Father loves me, because I lay down my life in order to take it up again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down on my own. I have power to lay it down, and power to take it up again. This command I have received from my Father."*

Every pastor in Christ and for Christ, if he wants to be a good shepherd too, must give his life for the sheep. But how do you give your life for the sheep? Living to fulfil every Word of Jesus, just as Jesus lived to fulfil every Word of the Father.

Virgin Mary, Mother of the Redemption, Angels and Saints, give us shepherds faithful to Christ.

## A THIEF COMES ONLY TO STEAL

## At 11,1-18; Ps 41; Jn 10,1-10

### 23 APRIL

Not only the denounced by prophets. Let us listen about two of these condemnations: the first is cried out by Hosea, the second by Ezekiel. They spiritual, but also the material disasters caused in the flock by bad shepherds have always been offer a clear idea of ​​the evils generated.

*Hear the word of the Lord, O people of Israel, for the Lord has a grievance against the inhabitants of the land: There is no fidelity, no mercy, no knowledge of God in the land. False swearing, lying, murder, stealing and adultery! in their lawlessness, bloodshed follows bloodshed. Therefore the land mourns, and everything that dwells in it languishes: The beasts of the field, the birds of the air, and even the fish of the sea perish. But let no one protest, let no one complain; with you is my grievance, O priests! You shall stumble in the day, and the prophets shall stumble with you at night; I will destroy your mother. My people perish for want of knowledge! Since you have rejected knowledge, I will reject you from my priesthood; Since you have ignored the law of your God, I will also ignore your sons. One and all they sin against me, exchanging their glory for shame. They feed on the sin of my people, and are greedy for their guilt. The priests shall fare no better than the people: I will punish them for their ways, and repay them for their deeds. They shall eat but not be satisfied, they shall play the harlot but not increase, Because they have abandoned the Lord to practice harlotry. Old wine and new deprive my people of understanding (Hos 4.1-11).*

*Thus the word of the Lord came to me: Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel, in these words prophesy to them (to the shepherds): Thus says the Lord God: Woe to the shepherds of Israel who have been pasturing themselves! Should not shepherds, rather, pasture sheep? You have fed off their milk, worn their wool, and slaughtered the fatlings, but the sheep you have not pastured. You did not strengthen the weak nor heal the sick nor bind up the injured. You did not bring back the strayed nor seek the lost, but you lorded it over them harshly and brutally. So they were scattered for lack of a shepherd, and became food for all the wild beasts. My sheep were scattered and wandered over all the mountains and high hills; my sheep were scattered over the whole earth, with no one to look after them or to search for them. Therefore, shepherds, hear the word of the Lord: As I live, says the Lord God, because my sheep have been given over to pillage, and because my sheep have become food for every wild beast, for lack of a shepherd; because my shepherds did not look after my sheep, but pastured themselves and did not pasture my sheep (Ez 34,1-8).*

What Jesus says about himself concerning the sheep: He is the door through which to go out and enter to find grazing, is valid for all the shepherds in Him and with Him. If the shepherd in Him and for Him becomes an autonomous door, independent of the door that it is Christ, he is the first to remain without any real pasture and always makes all the sheep entrusted to him stay without. The pastor must always be a door in the door of Christ. He leads to Christ, always bringing himself to Christ. If He does not bring himself to Christ, until he becomes one with him, even visibly, as Christ and the Father are one, no sheep will go to Christ and he will remain without true pasture and will not even enter eternal pastures. The rule of Jesus is perfect. He is a shepherd in him who is a door in him.

*"Amen, amen, I say to you, whoever does not enter a sheepfold through the gate but climbs over elsewhere is a thief and a robber. But whoever enters through the gate is the shepherd of the sheep. The gatekeeper opens it for him, and the sheep hear his voice, as he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. When he has driven out all his own, he walks ahead of them, and the sheep follow him, because they recognize his voice. But they will not follow a stranger; they will run away from him, because they do not recognize the voice of strangers." Although Jesus used this figure of speech, they did not realize what he was trying to tell them. So Jesus said again, "Amen, amen, I say to you, I am the gate for the sheep. All who came [before me] are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not listen to them. I am the gate. Whoever enters through me will be saved, and will come in and go out and find pasture. A thief comes only to steal and slaughter and destroy; I came so that they might have life and have it more abundantly.*

Christ is the life of the Father in his life for the sheep. The Pastor in Christ is the life of Christ in his life for the sheep. If he is not the life of Christ, never might he be life for the sheep.

Virgin Mary, Mother of the Redemption, Angels and Saints make shepherds the life of Christ.

## IF YOU ARE THE MESSIAH, TELL US PLAINLY

## At 11,19-26; Ps 86; Jn 10,22-30

### 24 APRIL

The Jews ask Jesus a very clear question: *"How long will you keep us uncertain? You are the Christ, tell us openly"*. Apparently it is a question to know who He really is to be able to dissolve all uncertainty. In reality it is a real trap, set on the path of Jesus to make him fall. There is no answer to the question, because there is no possibility of dialogue in the search for truth. The Jews await a Messiah according to human thoughts and ways. Instead, Jesus is Messiah according to divine modes and ways, established by the Father since eternity. Jesus explains this difference to Pilate, when by now he knows that the truth is needed by history and the future, but not the present, because the present is closed to every supernatural light.

*So Pilate went back into the praetorium and summoned Jesus and said to him, "Are you the King of the Jews?" Jesus answered, "Do you say this on your own or have others told you about me?" Pilate answered, "I am not a Jew, am I? Your own nation and the chief priests handed you over to me. What have you done?" Jesus answered, "My kingdom does not belong to this world. If my kingdom did belong to this world, my attendants (would) be fighting to keep me from being handed over to the Jews. But as it is, my kingdom is not here." So Pilate said to him, "Then you are a king?" Jesus answered, "You say I am a king. For this I was born and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who belongs to the truth listens to my voice." Pilate said to him, "What is truth?" When he had said this, he again went out to the Jews and said to them, "I find no guilt in him (Jn 18,33-38).*

Jesus' answer is immediate: *"I told you it and you do not believe; the works that I perform in the name of my Father, these bear witness to me"*. If you want to know who I Am, look at my works. Because they are greater than those made by Moses and even greater than any other man sent by God, I Am greater than all of them. If those who have preceded me come from God, I too come from God. This is the first truth to put in the heart. Once you believe that I Am from God, then every other dialogue will be possible. But if you do not believe that I Am from God, on what basis can we discuss or dialogue?

In fact, Jesus immediately adds: *"But you do not believe because you are not part of my sheep. My sheep listen to my voice and I know them and they follow me"*. Every sheep is given to Christ by his Father. Why were not the Jews given to Christ by the Father? The Father wished He could give them all to Christ, but they did not want to. The Father gives to Christ for faith in Him. Faith is also a rational act. Jesus asks them nothing but this faith. Examine the Scriptures, scrutinize all the works of every man of God, you will know that my works more than any other ones, attest that I am from God. Having put this truth in the heart, every other dialogue will be possible. But the Jews want in every way, even by stifling the truth, to deny and destroy this origin.

*The feast of the Dedication was then taking place in Jerusalem. It was winter. And Jesus walked about in the temple area on the Portico of Solomon. So the Jews gathered around him and said to him, "How long are you going to keep us in suspense? If you are the Messiah, tell us plainly." Jesus answered them, "I told you and you do not believe. The works I do in my Father's name testify to me. But you do not believe, because you are not among my sheep. My sheep hear my voice; I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish. No one can take them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all, and no one can take them out of the Father's hand. The Father and I are one."*

When through the path of faith the Father gives us to Christ, there are no powers either on earth, in the heavens, or in the underworld that can tear us from Him. Only the sheep can move away from Him and she moves away when she stops walking in the Word of Jesus. For the works it is believed that Jesus is from the Father. By obedience to the Word of Jesus one remains with him. When the disciple obeys, no one will snatch him from his Master. Only through disobedience and non-listening we can separate ourselves from Christ the Lord.

Virgin Mary, Mother of the Redemption, Angels and Saints make us true listeners of Christ.

## WHILE THE LORD WORKED WITH THEM

## 1Pt 5,5b-14; Ps 88; Mk 16,15-20

### 25 APRIL

The Word of God always starts from the heart of God. It is always the Lord the one that speaks. The Word of Jesus is also the Word of God and it comes from his heart. God speaks through him, just as he has spoken previously through the prophets. The Word is from the Father.

*In times past, God spoke in partial and various ways to our ancestors through the prophets; in these last days, he spoke to us through a son, whom he made heir of all things and through whom he created the universe, who is the refulgence of his glory, the very imprint of his being, and who sustains all things by his mighty word. When he had accomplished purification from sins, he took his seat at the right hand of the Majesty on high, as far superior to the angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs (Heb 1,1-4).*

When the Word from the Father's heart reaches the heart of man, those who listen to the Word must confirm it with their life. Their faith gives life to the Word. Without the faith of those who make it echo in the world, it is a word without life. Paul reveals to us that the Word must be given with profound conviction of faith, otherwise it is not the Word of life.

*To Greeks and non-Greeks alike, to the wise and the ignorant, I am under obligation; that is why I am eager to preach the gospel also to you in Rome. For I am not ashamed of the gospel. It is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: for Jew first, and then Greek. For in it is revealed the righteousness of God from faith to faith; as it is written, "The one who is righteous by faith will live" (Rm 1,14-17). To be a minister of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles in performing the priestly service of the gospel of God, so that the offering up of the Gentiles may be acceptable, sanctified by the holy Spirit. In Christ Jesus, then, I have reason to boast in what pertains to God. For I will not dare to speak of anything except what Christ has accomplished through me to lead the Gentiles to obedience by word and deed, by the power of signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit (of God), so that from Jerusalem all the way around to Illyricum I have finished preaching the gospel of Christ (Rm 15,16-19).*

To the Word that comes from the heart of the Father, is poured into the heart of Christ, through the Holy Spirit, from the heart of Christ, always through the Holy Spirit, into the heart of the disciples, something is still lacking which is necessary, indeed indispensable. God is at the beginning and God must be at the end. How? By giving testimony with signs and wonders and miracles of every kind and gift of the Holy Spirit, distributed according to his will. If God is not at the beginning and at the end, never might the Word produce salvation. God is missing it.

*Therefore, we must attend all the more to what we have heard, so that we may not be carried away. For if the word announced through angels proved firm, and every transgression and disobedience received its just recompense, how shall we escape if we ignore so great a salvation? Announced originally through the Lord, it was confirmed for us by those who had heard. God added his testimony by signs, wonders, various acts of power, and distribution of the gifts of the holy Spirit according to his will (Heb 2,1-4).*

The Apostles are sent into the world. They must always have God with them. How will God be with them? If they will be in Christ for faith and obedience to the Word. They give all their faith to the Word and God will give all of himself to the Word. If they do not give faith not even God will give himself and the Word is more than sand. No seed of eternal life is in it. And no faith will be born of it in the hearts.

*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.*

The faith of who announces the Word creates communion between God and the listener. Life is born.

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

## HAS RAISED HIS HEEL AGAINST ME

## At 13,13-26; Ps 88; Jn 13,16-20

### 26 APRIL

The reference is clearly to the Psalm. To physical pain, to the body suffering, the tribulation of the spirit and of the heart are added. Who betrays Jesus is not a stranger. He is not even an acquaintance of his or a friend of his. Instead, it is one of his Apostles. It is one that Jesus called and constituted to be his heart in the world.

#### For the choir director. A Psalm of David. How blessed is he who considers the helpless; The Lord will deliver him in a day of trouble. The Lord will protect him and keep him alive, And he shall be called blessed upon the earth; And do not give him over to the desire of his enemies. The Lord will sustain him upon his sickbed; In his illness, You restore him to health. As for me, I said, “O Lord, be gracious to me; Heal my soul, for I have sinned against You.” My enemies speak evil against me, “When will he die, and his name perish?”And when he comes to see me, he speaks falsehood; His heart gathers wickedness to itself; When he goes outside, he tells it. All who hate me whisper together against me; Against me they devise my hurt, saying, “A wicked thing is poured out upon him, That when he lies down, he will not rise up again.” Even my close friend in whom I trusted, Who ate my bread, Has lifted up his heel against me.But You, O Lord, be gracious to me and raise me up, That I may repay them.By this I know that You are pleased with me, Because my enemy does not shout in triumph over me. As for me, You uphold me in my integrity, And You set me in Your presence forever. Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel, From everlasting to everlasting. Amen and Amen. (Ps 41 (40) 1-14).

The historical reference is clearly to Achitòfel, who from the adviser of David, is made also adviser of his son Assalonne, suggesting him the war moves to kill his father.

*Absalom sent spies throughout the tribes of Israel to say, "When you hear the sound of the horn, declare Absalom king in Hebron." Two hundred men had accompanied Absalom from Jerusalem. They had been invited and went in good faith, knowing nothing of the plan. Absalom also sent to Ahithophel the Gilonite, David's counselor, an invitation to come from his town, Giloh, for the sacrifices he was about to offer. So the conspiracy gained strength, and the people with Absalom increased in numbers (2Sam 15,7-12). Then Absalom said to Ahithophel, "Offer your counsel on what we should do." Ahithophel replied to Absalom: "Have relations with your father's concubines, whom he left behind to take care of the palace. When all Israel hears how odious you have made yourself to your father, all your partisans will take courage." So a tent was pitched on the roof for Absalom, and he visited his father's concubines in view of all Israel. Now the counsel given by Ahithophel at that time was as though one had sought divine revelation. Such was all his counsel both to David and to Absalom. Ahithophel went on to say to Absalom: "Please let me choose twelve thousand men, and be off in pursuit of David tonight. If I come upon him when he is weary and discouraged, I shall cause him panic. When all the people with him flee, I shall strike down the king alone. Then I can bring back the rest of the people to you, as a bride returns to her husband. It is the death of only one man you are seeking; then all the people will be at peace." This plan was agreeable to Absalom and to all the elders of Israel. Then Absalom said, "Now call Hushai the Archite also; let us hear what he too has to say." When Hushai came to Absalom, Absalom said to him: "This is what Ahithophel proposed. Shall we follow his proposal? If not, speak up." When Ahithophel saw that his counsel was not acted upon, he saddled his ass and departed, going to his home in his own city. Then, having left orders concerning his family, he hanged himself. And so he died and was buried in his father's tomb (2Sam 16,20-17,6.23).*

Judas betrays his Master, delivering him to his enemies, to those who want to get rid of him. His end was the same as Achitòfel’s. He hanged himself from a tree.

*Amen, amen, I say to you, no slave is greater than his master nor any messenger greater than the one who sent him. If you understand this, blessed are you if you do it. I am not speaking of all of you. I know those whom I have chosen. But so that the scripture might be fulfilled, 'The one who ate my food has raised his heel against me.' From now on I am telling you before it happens, so that when it happens you may believe that I AM. Amen, amen, I say to you, whoever receives the one I send receives me, and whoever receives me receives the one who sent me."*

The pain of Christ is perfect in the soul, in the spirit and in the body. No man, either yesterday, or today, or might ever say to Christ: *"You have not proved this pain"*. Every sorrow, every suffering, all the sin of the world has beat down on Jesus the Lord.

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

##  I AM THE WAY AND THE TRUTH AND THE LIFE

## At 13,26-33; Ps 2; Jn 14,1-6

### 27 APRIL

The way on which to walk to reach each one's own true humanity is the Word of the Lord revealed in his Law, in his Commandments and in his Statutes.

*But following exactly the way prescribed for you by the Lord, your God, that you may live and prosper, and may have long life in the land which you are to occupy (Dt 5, 33).* *The Lord said to me, 'Go down from here now, quickly, for your people whom you have brought out of Egypt have become depraved; they have already turned aside from the way I pointed out to them and have made for themselves a molten idol (Dt 9, 12).* *I saw how you had sinned against the Lord, your God: you had already turned aside from the way which the Lord had pointed out to you by making for yourselves a molten calf! (Dt 9, 16).* *A curse if you do not obey the commandments of the Lord, your God, but turn aside from the way I ordain for you today, to follow other gods, whom you have not known (Dt 11, 28). For I know that after my death you are sure to become corrupt and to turn aside from the way along which I directed you, so that evil will befall you in some future age because you have done evil in the Lord's sight, and provoked him by your deeds" (Dt 31, 29).*

The truth of man is God and it’s from him. The divine Word tells man what makes him a true man and what instead makes him a false man in his nature and in everything he works.

*Lead me in Your truth and teach me, For You are the God of my salvation; For You I wait all the day (Ps 25, 5). All the paths of the Lord are loving kindness and truth To those who keep His covenant and His testimonies (Ps 25, 10). O send out Your light and Your truth, let them lead me; Let them bring me to Your holy hill And to Your dwelling places (Ps 43, 3). Ride on victoriously, For the cause of truth and meekness and righteousness (Ps 44, 5). Loving kindness and truth have met together; Righteousness and peace have kissed each other (Ps 84, 11). Teach me Your way, O Lord; I will walk in Your truth; Unite my heart to fear Your name (Ps 86, 11). Before the Lord, for He is coming, For He is coming to judge the earth. He will judge the world in righteousness And the peoples in His faithfulness (Ps 96, 13). The works of His hands are truth and justice; All His precepts are sure (Psl 111, 7). All Your commandments are faithful; They have persecuted me with a lie; help me! (Ps 119, 86). Your righteousness is an everlasting righteousness, And Your law is truth (Ps 119, 142). The sum of Your word is truth, And every one of Your righteous ordinances is everlasting (Ps 119, 160).*

Through the Word, man becomes truth and lives in the truth. Out of the Word he becomes falsehood and dies in falsehood. Life is a gift that God bestows upon those who walk in his Word and become truth. Way, truth and life are always one.

*For the life was made visible; we have seen it and testify to it and proclaim to you the eternal life that was with the Father and was made visible to us (1Jn 1, 2). And this is the promise that he made us: eternal life (1Jn 2, 25). Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life remaining in him (1Jn 3, 15). And this is the testimony: God gave us eternal life, and this life is in his Son (1Jn 5, 11). I write these things to you so that you may know that you have eternal life, you who believe in the name of the Son of God (1Jn 5, 13). We also know that the Son of God has come and has given us discernment to know the one who is true. And we are in the one who is true, in his Son Jesus Christ. He is the true God and eternal life (1Jn 5, 20).*

What changes in Christ in relation to the Old Testament? The change is substantial. Not only is Christ Jesus the perfection of the way, of the truth and of life. Way, truth, life can be lived only in him, for him and with him, becoming with him only one body. Nothing exists outside of Him. Everything is given for Him, but everything is also given in Him.

*"Do not let your hearts be troubled. You have faith in God; have faith also in me. In my Father's house there are many dwelling places. If there were not, would I have told you that I am going to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back again and take you to myself, so that where I am you also may be. Where (I) am going you know the way." Thomas said to him, "Master, we do not know where you are going; how can we know the way?" Jesus said to him, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.*

We do not live the Gospel outside of Him, but in Him. We do not receive grace out of Him, but for Him to be one in Him and with Him. We are not the truth outside of Him, but only in Him.

Virgin Mary, Mother of the Redemption, Angels and Saints make us one with Christ.

## WHOEVER HAS SEEN ME HAS SEEN THE FATHER

## At 13,44-52; Ps 97; Jn 14,7-14

### 28 APRIL

By comparing all the Old Testament men of God, all have shown who one virtue and who another, who one truth and who another, who a fragment of the face of God and who another. Many things have not been manifested at all. On the other hand, even if God wanted to manifest himself in everything, he could not even have done it. The truth of every truth, the life of every life, the hope of every hope, the love of every love and the charity of every charity were missing. The Only Son given by the Father from the Cross in sacrifice and in holocaust of expiation for the sins of the world was still missing. God without the Crucifix is *​​"terribly lacking"*. The Crucifix, indeed the Crucified God, reveals to us how great, immense and infinite the love of the Father is. Now God can say: *"I loved you to death. Until I let myself be crucified for you, to expiate your sins, to erase your sins, to pour upon you all the power and omnipotence of my Holy Spirit and of eternal life"*. Now we know how great the love of God is. Now, from the Golgotha, from the Crucifix, the words of Jesus are well understood.

*No one has gone up to heaven except the one who has come down from heaven, the Son of Man. And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the desert, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, so that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life." For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him might not perish but might have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through him. Whoever believes in him will not be condemned, but whoever does not believe has already been condemned, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God. And this is the verdict, that the light came into the world, but people preferred darkness to light, because their works were evil. For everyone who does wicked things hates the light and does not come toward the light, so that his works might not be exposed. But whoever lives the truth comes to the light, so that his works may be clearly seen as done in God (Jn 3,13-21).*

After that Jesus has risen and ascended into Heaven, the Father no longer has anything to reveal about himself. Everything is in Christ. Now it is the Holy Spirit the one that must introduce us and lead us to the whole truth of God, which has been revealed and manifested, rather given in Christ, with Christ and through Christ. But Jesus does not make a discourse of identity of a divine nature to the disciples. It would have been very difficult to understand it. His speech is on works. Can God do greater works than those performed by Jesus? No. Never. Never might God die on the Cross for us. He is God and cannot die. Instead the Son dies for love. Without Christ, the Father's love would lack this essentiality that gives him absolute perfection. None of the ancient mediators between God and the people has ever seen, what the Apostles see today. Nobody has seen God in them in a perfect way. The Apostles are seeing him in Christ. Christ is the unattainable. He is the Eternal and Infinite Love of the Crucified Father.

*If you know me, then you will also know my Father. From now on you do know him and have seen him." Philip said to him, "Master, show us the Father, and that will be enough for us." Jesus said to him, "Have I been with you for so long a time and you still do not know me, Philip? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'? Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I speak to you I do not speak on my own. The Father who dwells in me is doing his works. Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me, or else, believe because of the works themselves. Amen, amen, I say to you, whoever believes in me will do the works that I do, and will do greater ones than these, because I am going to the Father. And whatever you ask in my name, I will do, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask anything of me in my name, I will do it.*

This is the "grace" granted by the Father to Christ. Since Jesus allowed the Father to give absolute and unattainable perfection to his love, the Father grants Christ to grant every prayer made in his name. The Father wants the whole world to know who Jesus is in his eyes. He is the universal Mediator through whom He works everything. Answering every prayer, Jesus reveals what the Father has done for him. Everyone must know that the Father hears and answers only the prayers addressed to him through the Son.

Virgin Mary, Mother of the Redemption, Angels, Saints, make us true body of Christ.

## I AM THE TRUE VINE

## At 9,26-31; Ps 21; 1 Jn 3,18-24; Jn 15,1-8

### 29 APRIL – V SUNDAY OF EASTER – B

The image of the vine gives a substantial change of essence to the whole of the Old Testament. The Old Covenant is unity of the Twelve Tribes in one people kept united by the Law of the Lord alone. One God, one people, one Law, one Vineyard with many vines. The fruit that the vineyard should have brought was obedience to every word of its Lord. Justice and love in the people are born with obedience. Every injustice, abuse and hatred of man for man is produced with disobedience. The vineyard does not produce fruits of obedience and God must intervene with a strong hand. Jerusalem is destroyed and the people deported into exile.

*Let me now sing of my friend, my friend's song concerning his vineyard. My friend had a vineyard on a fertile hillside; He spaded it, cleared it of stones, and planted the choicest vines; Within it he built a watchtower, and hewed out a wine press. Then he looked for the crop of grapes, but what it yielded was wild grapes. Now, inhabitants of Jerusalem and men of Judah, judge between me and my vineyard: What more was there to do for my vineyard that I had not done? Why, when I looked for the crop of grapes, did it bring forth wild grapes? Now, I will let you know what I mean to do to my vineyard: Take away its hedge, give it to grazing, break through its wall, let it be trampled! Yes, I will make it a ruin: it shall not be pruned or hoed, but overgrown with thorns and briers; I will command the clouds not to send rain upon it. The vineyard of the Lord of hosts is the house of Israel, and the men of Judah are his cherished plant; He looked for judgment, but see, bloodshed! for justice, but hark, the outcry! (Is 5,1-7).*

With Jesus, change is substantial. The Lord plants on his hill only one true vine, Lord Jesus, which will remain true forever. This vine will produce to him every fruit of justice for the redemption and the salvation of humanity. God will never eradicate this vine, never abandon it to wild animals, it will always be the one and only true vine. Christ Jesus is the eternity and immutability of the gift of the Father. Successor in Abraham's blessing is Isaac, Jacob, Judah and David. Jesus has no successors. He is the only one, the eternal, the unchanging over the centuries. He is the unmodifiable perennity of the Father, in the Holy Spirit. Jesus is the eternal true life of the Father. There are no others, never will there be any. This truth today is urgent to the Church and to every disciple of Jesus. The recommendation of the Letter to the Hebrews is also valid for us: *"Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever! Do not be led astray by various and foreign doctrines, because it is good that the heart be sustained by grace and not by foods that have never benefited those who use it"* (Hebrews 13: 8-9).

*"I am the true vine, and my Father is the vine grower. He takes away every branch in me that does not bear fruit, and everyone that does he prunes so that it bears more fruit. You are already pruned because of the word that I spoke to you. Remain in me, as I remain in you. Just as a branch cannot bear fruit on its own unless it remains on the vine, so neither can you unless you remain in me. I am the vine, you are the branches. Whoever remains in me and I in him will bear much fruit, because without me you can do nothing. Anyone who does not remain in me will be thrown out like a branch and wither; people will gather them and throw them into a fire and they will be burned. If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask for whatever you want and it will be done for you. By this is my Father glorified, that you bear much fruit and become my disciples.*

If one is the true vine, if there are no other true vines planted by the Lord on his holy hill, who is the disciple of Jesus before God and the world? He is a branch of this true vine. The consequences are of essence and not only of superficial or extrinsic morality. Who is inserted in Christ, through obedience to his Word, produces fruits of eternal life for himself and for the world. Who is inserted in Christ, but does not obey his word, not only does not produce any fruit, the Father comes and cuts him as a branch. Separated "naturally" from the true vine, it dries and is burned in the fire. While the branch that produces, the Father prunes it so that it may bear more fruit. Obedience to the Word produces fruits of Christ in Christ. The unity of essence with Christ is the only source of life.

Virgin Mary, Mother of the Redemption, Angels, Saints, make us live branches of the true vine.

## I WILL LOVE HIM AND REVEAL MYSELF TO HIM

## At 14,5-18; Ps 113B; Jn 14,21-26

### 30 APRIL

Love for the Lord is not only the most pure and uncontaminated obedience to his Word, but it is also from man a *"study in the Holy Spirit"* to give to our obedience soul, spirit, body, heart, desires and will at the highest of their possibilities. We find this law of *"study"* in Deuteronomy. First the Lord tells Moses that nothing must be added and nothing taken away from his Commandments and Statutes. Then Moses remembers all the Law of Sinai, indicating the modalities of *"study"* for its perfect obedience. Perfection is in love transformed into obedience and in the obedience that makes itself love. Love and obedience are one thing. Never two things can be made of them. Does not one want love without obedience today?

*"Now, Israel, hear the statutes and decrees which I am teaching you to observe, that you may live, and may enter in and take possession of the land which the Lord, the God of your fathers, is giving you. In your observance of the commandments of the Lord, your God, which I enjoin upon you, you shall not add to what I command you nor subtract from it. Therefore, I teach you the statutes and decrees as the Lord, my God, has commanded me, that you may observe them in the land you are entering to occupy. Observe them carefully, for thus will you give evidence of your wisdom and intelligence to the nations, who will hear of all these statutes and say, 'This great nation is truly a wise and intelligent people.' Or what great nation has statutes and decrees that are as just as this whole law which I am setting before you today? (Cf. Dt 4,1-8). "These then are the commandments, the statutes and decrees which the Lord, your God, has ordered that you be taught to observe in the land into which you are crossing for conquest, so that you and your son and your grandson may fear the Lord, your God, and keep, throughout the days of your lives, all his statutes and commandments which I enjoin on you, and thus have long life. Hear then, Israel, and be careful to observe them, that you may grow and prosper the more, in keeping with the promise of the Lord, the God of your fathers, to give you a land flowing with milk and honey. "Hear, O Israel! The Lord is our God, the Lord alone! Therefore, you shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength. Take to heart these words which I enjoin on you today. Drill them into your children. Speak of them at home and abroad, whether you are busy or at rest. Bind them at your wrist as a sign and let them be as a pendant on your forehead.* *Write them on the doorposts of your houses and on your gates (Dt 6,1-8).*

With Jesus both the modality of obedience and its substance change. The modality changes because it is not the man the one who must study how to observe the Law, but it is the Holy Spirit that guides every disciple of Jesus, in Jesus, in the full accomplishment of the Father's will on Him. Without the Holy Spirit the perennial communion with the desire of the Father is lacking. The substance of the Law also changes. It is no longer a commandment to be observed, but letting a life to be lived. Christ is the life of the Father in the flesh. The Christian must be the life of Christ in his body. The Gospel reveals to us what is not the life of Christ in our body. But the life of Christ is infinitely beyond the Gospel just as the life of the Father in Christ is eternally beyond the Commandments.

*Whoever has my commandments and observes them is the one who loves me. And whoever loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and reveal myself to him." Judas, not the Iscariot, said to him, "Master, (then) what happened that you will reveal yourself to us and not to the world?" Jesus answered and said to him, "Whoever loves me will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our dwelling with him. Whoever does not love me does not keep my words; yet the word you hear is not mine but that of the Father who sent me. "I have told you this while I am with you. The Advocate, the holy Spirit that the Father will send in my name - he will teach you everything and remind you of all that (I) told you.*

Every day the Spirit comes and transforms the life of the disciple into the life of Christ. The Spirit can do this only in those who dwell in the Word of Jesus, in those who live his Gospel and his Commandment. The Holy Spirit comes to those who live in the Word and little by little transforms them into the perfect life of Christ. This is the new essence and the new mode. But everything is the work of the Spirit who becomes the sole Creator of the life of Christ in the disciple.

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