**OCTOBER 2018**

## FIRST DECADE OF OCTOBER

# WHOEVER IS NOT AGAINST YOU IS FOR YOU

# Jb 1,6-22; Ps 16; Lk 9,46-50

### 1 OCTOBER

Tomorrow the Apostles will be sent into the world to build the kingdom of God. For this work it is necessary that one works in communion with all the forces that believe in Christ Jesus. Each one must put at the service of the kingdom all of himself: soul, spirit, body, ministry, charismas, vocation and particular vocation. The kingdom must be built by feeling every Christian an essential part of the Body of Christ, which is the Church.

*There are different kinds of spiritual gifts but the same Spirit; there are different forms of service but the same Lord; there are different workings but the same God who produces all of them in everyone. As a body is one though it has many parts, and all the parts of the body, though many, are one body, so also Christ. As a body is one though it has many parts, and all the parts of the body, though many, are one body, so also Christ. For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, slaves or free persons, and we were all given to drink of one Spirit. Now you are Christ's body, and individually parts of it. Some people God has designated in the church to be, first, apostles; second, prophets; third, teachers; then, mighty deeds; then, gifts of healing, assistance, administration, and varieties of tongues. Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work mighty deeds? Do all have gifts of healing? Do all speak in tongues? Do all interpret? (Cf. 1Cor 12,1-31). One body and one Spirit, as you were also called to the one hope of your call; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all. But grace was given to each of us according to the measure of Christ's gift. And he gave some as apostles, others as prophets, others as evangelists, others as pastors and teachers, to equip the holy ones for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ until we all attain to the unity of faith and knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the extent of the full stature of Christ, so that we may no longer be infants, tossed by waves and swept along by every wind of teaching arising from human trickery, from their cunning in the interests of deceitful scheming. Rather, living the truth in love, we should grow in every way into him who is the head, Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, with the proper functioning of each part, brings about the body's growth and builds itself up in love (Cf. Eph 4,1-16).*

These forces alone are not enough, they are not sufficient. The disciple of Jesus must ask the Holy Spirit to flood him with his wisdom and intelligence, so that he may the one to use every other force that the Father in heaven wants to associate to their work, even if through other paths and ways. Not all those who did good to Christ Jesus were his followers, yet the Lord always let himself be done some good and always let them do good. There is nothing more wrong in the apostolic work than spiritual myopia. It consists in seeing each one only himself or at most those of his small circle. Jesus wants his disciples farsighted, wise and intelligent. First of all, they must promote the good from whatever person it is done. Secondly, they will never have to prevent or hinder the good is done. This law requires openness of mind and breadth of heart.

*An argument arose among the disciples about which of them was the greatest. Jesus realized the intention of their hearts and took a child and placed it by his side and said to them, "Whoever receives this child in my name receives me, and whoever receives me receives the one who sent me. For the one who is least among all of you is the one who is the greatest." Then John said in reply, "Master, we saw someone casting out demons in your name and we tried to prevent him because he does not follow in our company." Jesus said to him, "Do not prevent him, for whoever is not against you is for you."*

But as it can be seen from the Gospel text, if the disciples still quarrel among themselves for questions of hierarchy and human greatness, can we claim that we have the eyes of Christ and his heart, to see all the good, every good and put ourselves in its service? Here is the true ministry of the Christian: working him all good, putting himself at the service of every other good. Serving the good is his vocation. A very high mission.

Mother of God, Angels and Saints, make us servants of good as Christ Jesus is the servant of good.

# THEIR ANGELS IN HEAVEN

# Ex 23,20-23; Ps 90; Mt 18,1-5.10

### 2 OCTOBER

The Holy Scripture reveals to us that not only man is assisted by the Angels, but the Lord as well. The Gospel shows us that Jesus, God and Son of the Father, was served by them from the moment of the annunciation to his resurrection. An event of the Old Testament lived by the prophet Elisha introduces us to this mystery that many today deny.

*When the king of Aram was waging war on Israel, he would make plans with his servants to attack a particular place. But the man of God would send word to the king of Israel, "Be careful! Do not pass by this place, for Aram will attack there." So the king of Israel would send word to the place which the man of God had indicated, and alert it; then they would be on guard. This happened several times. Greatly disturbed over this, the king of Aram called together his officers. "Will you not tell me," he asked them, "who among us is for the king of Israel?" "No one, my lord king," answered one of the officers. "The Israelite prophet Elisha can tell the king of Israel the very words you speak in your bedroom." "Go, find out where he is," he said, "so that I may take him captive." Informed that Elisha was in Dothan, he sent there a strong force with horses and chariots. They arrived by night and surrounded the city.*

*Early the next morning, when the attendant of the man of God arose and went out, he saw the force with its horses and chariots surrounding the city. "Alas!" he said to Elisha. "What shall we do, my lord?" "Do not be afraid," Elisha answered. "Our side outnumbers theirs." Then he prayed, "O Lord, open his eyes, that he may see." And the Lord opened the eyes of the servant, so that he saw the mountainside filled with horses and fiery chariots around Elisha. When the Arameans came down to get him, Elisha prayed to the Lord, "Strike this people blind, I pray you." And in answer to the prophet's prayer the Lord struck them blind. Then Elisha said to them: "This is the wrong road, and this is the wrong city. Follow me! I will take you to the man you want." And he led them to Samaria. When they entered Samaria, Elisha prayed, "O Lord, open their eyes that they may see." The Lord opened their eyes, and they saw that they were inside Samaria (2Kings 6,8-20).*

Tobias makes his long journey along very impervious roads accompanied by the Angelo Raphael. The Book of Ezekiel begins with the description of the chariot of God, a singular, very special carriage. It was composed of cherubs. The Angel Gabriel guides Daniel for the understanding of his visions. It is He who announces the birth of John the Baptist by explaining and illuminating every detail of that event. Even the Virgin Mary in the house of Nazareth receives the visit of the Angel Gabriel that announces her the virginal conception by the work of the Holy Spirit. The Angels communicate to the shepherds the birth of the Redeemer in Bethlehem and to women his glorious resurrection. Jesus in the desert was served by the Angels and in the Garden of Olives was comforted by one of them. Denying the existence of the Angels is like removing a pillar from a viaduct. The whole edifice of Scripture collapses. Nothing is more understandable. Nothing could be explained about the life of the Virgin Mary and of Joseph. Was not Peter released from prison by the Angels?

*At that time the disciples approached Jesus and said, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" He called a child over, placed it in their midst, and said, "Amen, I say to you, unless you turn and become like children, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven. Whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. And whoever receives one child such as this in my name receives me. "See that you do not despise one of these little ones, for I say to you that their angels in heaven always look upon the face of my heavenly Father.*

What does Jesus want to teach us saying: *"Be careful not to despise one of these little ones, because I tell you that their Angels in heaven always see the face of my Father who is in heaven?"* Jesus warns us. The little ones must be respected. To guard them and defend them at any moment the Lord will give the Angels a command and for us it will be trouble. We are warned. History is an infallible witness. Society, families scandalize children, the Angels come and take peace and joy away.

Mother of God, Angels and Saints ensure that no scandal destroys a young life.

# HAS NOWHERE TO REST HIS HEAD

# Jb 9,1-12.14-16; Ps 87; Lk 9,57-62

### 3 OCTOBER

Sometimes it is necessary to read the Gospel using examples that are too material, but which express in fullness of truth what is hidden in every Word of Jesus the Lord. A man enters a shop. He buys an item. Once he has paid the corresponding price, the object is his and can use it according to his will. It no longer belongs to the owner of before. God comes to the store of our lives, asks that we sell him our lives. He does not pay us today, at the moment of the sale. He will pay us at the moment of our entry into eternity. Even if on earth he gives us a hundred times as much as we have left. From the moment when our life is sold to Him, it no longer belongs to us. He can use it as he likes according to his will. After all, even the Alliance, both the Old and the New one, is a sale. God sells us all his eternal life, we sell him the life of time. He gives us himself for eternity. We give him all of us so that he can continue his mission of salvation and redemption on our earth, through our body.

A man asks to *"sell himself"* to Christ Jesus. The Lord is honest with him. He tells him what the conditions are. If you sell yourself, not only the body must sell, but also the soul, the spirit, the will, the thoughts, every desire and aspiration. If you sold everything, nothing more belongs to you. Everything is of my Father. He will be your thought and He will be your will. Obedience to his voice will have to be perfect, always and in every command. Observe the Son of man. He gave his whole life to the Father. Nothing that is on earth belongs to him, not even a nest or a den or a stone on which to rest the head. Here the reference is to Jacob. Of him it is expressly said that after a long journey, in the evening he takes a stone and uses it as a pillow. At least he had something.

*Jacob departed from Beer-sheba and proceeded toward Haran. When he came upon a certain shrine, as the sun had already set, he stopped there for the night. Taking one of the stones at the shrine, he put it under his head and lay down to sleep at that spot. Then he had a dream: a stairway rested on the ground, with its top reaching to the heavens; and God's messengers were going up and down on it. And there was the LORD standing beside him and saying: "I, the Lord, am the God of your forefather Abraham and the God of Isaac; the land on which you are lying I will give to you and your descendants. These shall be as plentiful as the dust of the earth, and through them you shall spread out east and west, north and south. In you and your descendants all the nations of the earth shall find blessing. Know that I am with you; I will protect you wherever you go, and bring you back to this land. I will never leave you until I have done what I promised you." When Jacob awoke from his sleep, he exclaimed, "Truly, the LORD is in this spot, although I did not know it!" In solemn wonder he cried out: "How awesome is this shrine! This is nothing else but an abode of God, and that is the gateway to heaven!" Early the next morning Jacob took the stone that he had put under his head, set it up as a memorial stone, and poured oil on top of it. He called that site Bethel, whereas the former name of the town had been Luz. (Gen 28,10-19).*

The Son of man only on the cross might lean his head and in the sepulchre. the Father has not granted him other things on earth and he might not have anything else. He is entirely and only of his Father.

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

The same conditions apply to every other that is called or offered to Christ for the building up of the kingdom of God, to be one of his missionaries. The rule is one and it is for everyone: the *"sale"* to Christ of one's life. Everything is sold and nothing belongs to us anymore.

Virgin Servant of the Lord, Angels and Saints ensure that every Christian ise only of Christ.

# YOU HAVE REVEALED THEM TO THE CHILDLIKE

# Gal 6,14-18; Ps 15; Mt 11,25-30

### 4 OCTOBER

To operate the salvation of man, the Lord uses man. He chooses neither kings nor emperors, nor learned and wise persons. Instead he call humble, small and poor people. Saint Paul reveals this truth to the Corinthians. If the Lord chooses little ones, they must always remain little ones. If you become great, He might no longer operate. Human greatness obscures the glory of the Lord, while it must always be evident that everything comes from him and not from man. Man must be only a bearer of God to his brothers.*The message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. For it is written: "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and the learning of the learned I will set aside." Where is the wise one? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made the wisdom of the world foolish? For since in the wisdom of God the world did not come to know God through wisdom, it was the will of God through the foolishness of the proclamation to save those who have faith. For Jews demand signs and Greeks look for wisdom, but we proclaim Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, but to those who are called, Jews and Greeks alike, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. For the foolishness of God is wiser than human wisdom, and the weakness of God is stronger than human strength. Consider your own calling, brothers. Not many of you were wise by human standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. Rather, God chose the foolish of the world to shame the wise, and God chose the weak of the world to shame the strong, and God chose the lowly and despised of the world, those who count for nothing, to reduce to nothing those who are something, so that no human being might boast before God. It is due to him that you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God, as well as righteousness, sanctification, and redemption, so that, as it is written, "Whoever boasts, should boast in the Lord" (1Cor 1,18-31).*

*For God who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," has shone in our hearts to bring to light the knowledge of the glory of God on the face of (Jesus) Christ. But we hold this treasure in earthen vessels, that the surpassing power may be of God and not from us. We are afflicted in every way, but not constrained; perplexed, but not driven to despair; persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed; always carrying about in the body the dying of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be manifested in our body. For we who live are constantly being given up to death for the sake of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may be manifested in our mortal flesh. So death is at work in us, but life in you. Since, then, we have the same spirit of faith, according to what is written, "I believed, therefore I spoke," we too believe and therefore speak, knowing that the one who raised the Lord Jesus will raise us also with Jesus and place us with you in his presence. Everything indeed is for you, so that the grace bestowed in abundance on more and more people may cause the thanksgiving to overflow for the glory of God. Therefore, we are not discouraged; rather, although our outer self is wasting away, our inner self is being renewed day by day. For this momentary light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison, as we look not to what is seen but to what is unseen; for what is seen is transitory, but what is unseen is eternal (2Cor 4,3-18).*

God not only chooses the little and simple ones. He wants them to always remain small and simple. Never must pride belong to those whom God has chosen.

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

The soul of those whom God chooses must be their great humility combined with meekness.

Humble Virgin, Angels and Saints, free the disciples of Jesus from all pride of life.

# YOU WILL GO DOWN TO THE NETHERWORLD

# Jb 38,1.12-21; 40,3-5; Ps 138; Lk 10,13-16

### 5 OCTOBER

Jesus reveals to the city of Capernaum that it will have the same fate as that of Babylon, the superb and arrogant city. Instead of acting as a true instrument in the hands of God to correct peoples with mercy and compassion, it had become superb, arrogant, wicked and cruel. It had placed itself above God and that is why it was precipitated into the underworld. When a heart lets itself be governed by pride, it dies to its humanity. It becomes ruthless, without any compassion and devoid of any mercy.

*How the oppressor has reached his end! how the turmoil is stilled! The Lord has broken the rod of the wicked, the staff of the tyrants That struck the peoples in wrath relentless blows; That beat down the nations in anger, with oppression unchecked. The whole earth rests peacefully, song breaks forth; The very cypresses rejoice over you, and the cedars of Lebanon: "Now that you are laid to rest, there will be none to cut us down." The nether world below is all astir preparing for your coming; It awakens the shades to greet you, all the leaders of the earth; It has the kings of all nations rise from their thrones. All of them speak out and say to you, "You too have become weak like us, you are the same as we. Down to the nether world your pomp is brought, the music of your harps. The couch beneath you is the maggot, your covering, the worm." How have you fallen from the heavens, O morning star, son of the dawn! How are you cut down to the ground, you who mowed down the nations! You said in your heart: "I will scale the heavens; Above the stars of God I will set up my throne; I will take my seat on the Mount of Assembly, in the recesses of the North. I will ascend above the tops of the clouds; I will be like the Most High!" Yet down to the nether world you go to the recesses of the pit! (Is 14,4-15).*

*Every man is stupid, ignorant; every artisan is put to shame by his idol: He moulded a fraud, without breath of life. Nothingness are they, a ridiculous work, that will perish in their time of punishment. Not like these is the portion of Jacob, he is the creator of all things; Israel is his very own tribe, Lord of hosts is his name. You are my hammer, my weapon for war; With you I shatter nations, with you I destroy kingdoms. With you I shatter horse and rider, with you I shatter chariot and driver. With you I shatter man and wife, with you I shatter old and young, with you I shatter the youth and maiden. With you I shatter the shepherd and his flock, with you I shatter the farmer and his team, with you I shatter satraps and prefects (Jer 51,17-23).*

Nothing is more pleasing to the Lord than humility. But when are we really humble? When we see ourselves as God's work, instruments of God and servants of the Lord; when we are clay in his hands, so that he can make of us what he wants. The humble is a listener of the Word of his God. Corazìn, Bethsaida and Capernaum go to Jesus, ask miracles to Jesus, but do not listen to Jesus. They do not get converted to his Word. They are superb and arrogant, egotistical and overconfident cities. There is no place for them in the kingdom of God. Their condemnation will be severe. If God has punished the pagan nations with great justice, he will punish these cities with great justice. The justice of the Lord is related to the gifts of grace, ministries, charismas and every other charisma received from our God. Who has received the Gospel, will be judged according to the Gospel and who has received the gift of the episcopate will be judged according to this gift. The same is valid for every other sacrament.

*"Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the mighty deeds done in your midst had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would long ago have repented, sitting in sackcloth and ashes. But it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the judgment than for you. And as for you, Capernaum, 'Will you be exalted to heaven? You will go down to the netherworld.'" Whoever listens to you listens to me. Whoever rejects you rejects me. And whoever rejects me rejects the one who sent me."*

To whom much was given, much will be required. Many miracles have been given to these cities. Jesus revealed to them that he was a true prophet of the living God. They will be judged according to this wealth offered them. Only God can judge. Only he understands and knows.

Mother of God, Angels and Saints ensure that we do not despise even one single gift from God.

# BECAUSE YOUR NAMES ARE WRITTEN IN HEAVEN

# Jb 42,1 -3.5-6.12-17; Ps 118; Lk 10,17-24

### 6 OCTOBER

Jesus never allowed illusion and deception to enter the hearts of his disciples. He always enlightened them with the splendour of his eternal truth. The following of Jesus is not in miracles, but in humility and meekness. It is in the cross.

*"Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father in heaven. Many will say to me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name? Did we not drive out demons in your name? Did we not do mighty deeds in your name?' Then I will declare to them solemnly, 'I never knew you. Depart from me, you evildoers’ (Mt 7,21-23*). *Then Jesus said to his disciples, "Whoever wishes to come after me must deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me. For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it. What profit would there be for one to gain the whole world and forfeit his life? Or what can one give in exchange for his life? For the Son of Man will come with his angels in his Father's glory, and then he will repay everyone according to his conduct (Mt 16,24-27).*

Saint Paul places charity as the only way to be pleasing to God and to be able to write the personal name in heaven. He excludes even alms from this finality.

*If I speak in human and angelic tongues but do not have love, I am a resounding gong or a clashing cymbal. And if I have the gift of prophecy and comprehend all mysteries and all knowledge; if I have all faith so as to move mountains but do not have love, I am nothing. If I give away everything I own, and if I hand my body over so that I may boast but do not have love, I gain nothing. Love is patient, love is kind. It is not jealous, (love) is not pompous, it is not inflated, it is not rude, it does not seek its own interests, it is not quick-tempered, it does not brood over injury, it does not rejoice over wrongdoing but rejoices with the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things (1Cor 13,1-7).*

It is easy to fall into exaltation, pride and illusion: *"Since I can do great things, I am saved, I am perfect and I am a good disciple of Jesus"*. Christ the Lord does not think so. The names are written in the heavens and remain written, until the disciples remain in the Word of Christ the Lord and live it as their Master lived the Word of the Father: in the humility of the heart and in meekness, pouring on it their own blood.

*The seventy (-two) returned rejoicing, and said, "Lord, even the demons are subject to us because of your name." Jesus said, "I have observed Satan fall like lightning from the sky. Behold, I have given you the power 'to tread upon serpents' and scorpions and upon the full force of the enemy and nothing will harm you. Nevertheless, do not rejoice because the spirits are subject to you, but rejoice because your names are written in heaven." At that very moment he rejoiced (in) the holy Spirit and said, "I give you praise, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, for although you have hidden these things from the wise and the learned you have revealed them to the childlike. Yes, Father, such has been your gracious will. All things have been handed over to me by my Father. No one knows who the Son is except the Father, and who the Father is except the Son and anyone to whom the Son wishes to reveal him." Turning to the disciples in private he said, "Blessed are the eyes that see what you see. For I say to you, many prophets and kings desired to see what you see, but did not see it, and to hear what you hear, but did not hear it."*

Is there a sure way so that today our name can be written in the skies? We do know one way and it is the safest of all, safer than the same charity, indicated as an infallible way by St. Paul. Our way is the inscription of Christ in the hearts of men. Whoever writes the heart of Christ in the hearts of men will have his name written in the heavens. Whoever does not write the name of Christ in the hearts of men, he will not have written even his name in the heavens. He might even live of great charity. But he does not save it. Charity has only one purpose. Being used by us as ink to write the name of Jesus in everyone's heart.

Mother of God, Angels and Saints, help Christians to write the name of Jesus in their hearts.

# WHAT DID MOSES COMMAND YOU?

# Gn 2,18-24; Ps 127; Heb 2,9-11; Mk 10,2-16

### 7 OCTOBER

Between what God says and what man understands there is often an eternal abyss. First let us read what Moses really permitted the children of Israel and then we might enter into the dialogue between Jesus and the Pharisees. In fact, these are not completely honest towards Moses.

*"When a man, after marrying a woman and having relations with her, is later displeased with her because he finds in her something indecent, and therefore he writes out a bill of divorce and hands it to her, thus dismissing her from his house: if on leaving his house she goes and becomes the wife of another man, and the second husband, too, comes to dislike her and dismisses her from his house by handing her a written bill of divorce; or if this second man who has married her, dies; then her former husband, who dismissed her, may not again take her as his wife after she has become defiled. That would be an abomination before the Lord, and you shall not bring such guilt upon the land which the Lord, your God, is giving you as a heritage (Dt 24,1-4).*

Moses had not said what was reported by the Pharisees: *"Moses allowed us to write an act of repudiation and to repudiate her"*. Instead he had said, *"If then it happens that she does not find grace in his eyes, because he has found something shameful in her"*. Faithfulness to the written Word makes us honest. Faith makes us believers. Even if faith is not for everyone, honesty must be of every heart. The same rule applies today to Christians.

*"It was also said, 'Whoever divorces his wife must give her a bill of divorce.' But I say to you, whoever divorces his wife (unless the marriage is unlawful) causes her to commit adultery, and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery (Mt 5,31-32).*

The Christian might also live without faith. He becomes a non-Christian. But if he lives without honesty, he becomes a non-man. For Jesus, repudiation is permitted only in the case of an illegitimate union, that is, of a union not according to the Law of the Lord. There are no other cases to grant a divorce. Granting it would be contradicting his Law and his Word. But Jesus goes far beyond legal issues. He brings the man back to his true essence. The Father created man male and female, to be one flesh. Sin has broken and infringes this law. Jesus came to take away the sin of the world. By removing the law that breaks the conjugal union, this will necessarily shine for its unity, stability and fidelity. If sin remains in the heart, then division remains.

*The Pharisees approached and asked, "Is it lawful for a husband to divorce his wife?" They were testing him. He said to them in reply, "What did Moses command you?" They replied, "Moses permitted him to write a bill of divorce and dismiss her." But Jesus told them, "Because of the hardness of your hearts he wrote you this commandment. But from the beginning of creation, 'God made them male and female. For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother (and be joined to his wife), and the two shall become one flesh.' So they are no longer two but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, no human being must separate." In the house the disciples again questioned him about this. He said to them, "Whoever divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery against her; and if she divorces her husband and marries another, she commits adultery." And people were bringing children to him that he might touch them, but the disciples rebuked them. When Jesus saw this he became indignant and said to them, "Let the children come to me; do not prevent them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. Amen, I say to you, whoever does not accept the kingdom of God like a child will not enter it." Then he embraced them and blessed them, placing his hands on them.*

Today the Church is seriously worried about the destruction and devastation of the family. Divorce is not the cause of the ruin. Instead it is a consequence. The cause is the loss of faith in Christ Jesus and the estrangement of his grace together with the abandonment of his Word. If man lives in sin, he will be governed by sin. If instead he dwells in the light, he will be conducted by the light.

Immaculate Virgin, Angels and Saints make Christians true children of light in Christ Jesus.

# YOU HAVE ANSWERED CORRECTLY; DO THIS AND YOU WILL LIVE

# Gal 1,6-12; Ps 110; Lk 10,25-37

### 8 OCTOBER

Life is not in the study of the law and not even in its teaching. Life is in the choice of the Law as the one and only principle of action and thought. We can summarize all the Old Testament in the words spoken by God to the children of Israel.

*"Here, then, I have today set before you life and prosperity, death and doom. If you obey the commandments of the Lord, your God, which I enjoin on you today, loving him, and walking in his ways, and keeping his commandments, statutes and decrees, you will live and grow numerous, and the Lord, your God, will bless you in the land you are entering to occupy. If, however, you turn away your hearts and will not listen, but are led astray and adore and serve other gods, I tell you now that you will certainly perish; you will not have a long life on the land which you are crossing the Jordan to enter and occupy. I call heaven and earth today to witness against you: I have set before you life and death, the blessing and the curse. Choose life, then, that you and your descendants may live, by loving the Lord, your God, heeding his voice, and holding fast to him. For that will mean life for you, a long life for you to live on the land which the Lord swore he would give to your fathers Abraham, Isaac and Jacob" (Dt 30,15-20).*

The same truth is announced by the Apostle James to the disciples of Jesus. They must never become just listeners of the Word, deceiving themselves.

*Know this, my dear brothers: everyone should be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath, for the wrath of a man does not accomplish the righteousness of God. Therefore, put away all filth and evil excess and humbly welcome the word that has been planted in you and is able to save your souls. Be doers of the word and not hearers only, deluding yourselves. For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks at his own face in a mirror. He sees himself, then goes off and promptly forgets what he looked like. But the one who peers into the perfect law of freedom and perseveres, and is not a hearer who forgets but a doer who acts, such a one shall be blessed in what he does (Jm 1,19-25).*

The doctor of the Law knows the two commandments of love or charity. Now he also knows that next is every needy man before his eyes. If he wants life, he must only observe what the Lord has commanded him. The Word of God must be known to be observed. He must see every man as his true neighbour. He will have to love and serve him as he loves and serves himself.

*There was a scholar of the law who stood up to test him and said, "Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?" Jesus said to him, "What is written in the law? How do you read it?" He said in reply, "You shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, with all your being, with all your strength, and with all your mind, and your neighbour as yourself." He replied to him, "You have answered correctly; do this and you will live." But because he wished to justify himself, he said to Jesus, "And who is my neighbour?" Jesus replied, "A man fell victim to robbers as he went down from Jerusalem to Jericho. They stripped and beat him and went off leaving him half-dead. A priest happened to be going down that road, but when he saw him, he passed by on the opposite side. Likewise a Levite came to the place, and when he saw him, he passed by on the opposite side. But a Samaritan traveller who came upon him was moved with compassion at the sight. He approached the victim, poured oil and wine over his wounds and bandaged them. Then he lifted him up on his own animal, took him to an inn and cared for him. The next day he took out two silver coins and gave them to the innkeeper with the instruction, 'Take care of him. If you spend more than what I have given you, I shall repay you on my way back.' Which of these three, in your opinion, was neighbour to the robbers' victim?" He answered, "The one who treated him with mercy." Jesus said to him, "Go and do likewise."*

In the parable of Jesus two essential truths are revealed: next is every man, even if he is an enemy and a persecutor. Faced with an urgent need of the neighbour, all ritual laws fall. Next to Jesus is every sinner. They are also his persecutors and executioners. For the former he expiates sins, for the latter he also asks for forgiveness.

Mother of mercy, Angels and Saints ensure that every man is next to every man.

# YOU ARE ANXIOUS AND WORRIED ABOUT MANY THINGS

# Gal 1,13-24; Ps 138; Lk 10,38-42

### 9 OCTOBER

Marta is somehow a figure of humanity, all agitated in the construction of its tower. Even Marta wants to build a tower that reaches the heart of Christ. Instead, Jesus reveals her that it is not her false tower that must reach the heart of the Master. Instead it is the true tower of the Master that must reach his heart. Whoever wants to go up and remain in the heart of the Master, must always climb through the ladder that Jesus gives.

*The whole world spoke the same language, using the same words. While men were migrating in the east, they came upon a valley in the land of Shinar and settled there. They said to one another, "Come, let us mould bricks and harden them with fire." They used bricks for stone, and bitumen for mortar. Then they said, "Come, let us build ourselves a city and a tower with its top in the sky, and so make a name for ourselves; otherwise we shall be scattered all over the earth." Lord came down to see the city and the tower that the men had built. Then the Lordsaid: "If now, while they are one people, all speaking the same language, they have started to do this, nothing will later stop them from doing whatever they presume to do. Let us then go down and there confuse their language, so that one will not understand what another says." Thus the Lord scattered them from there all over the earth, and they stopped building the city. That is why it was called Babel, because there the Lord confused the speech of all the world. It was from that place that he scattered them all over the earth (Gen 11,1-9).*

Marta is a figure of man according to the description given to us by the prophet Micah. It is about a man who wants to think himself what is and what is not pleasing to the Lord. His God replies him that only listening to his voice is pleasing to him. If the Lord is in dispute with his people it is precisely because it no longer listens to his voice. This very high truth is also revealed by the Psalm. Life is from obedience to the Law.

*“Hear, O My people, and I will speak; O Israel, I will testify against you; I am God, your God.**“I do not reprove you for your sacrifices, And your burnt offerings are continually before Me.**“I shall take no young bull out of your house Nor male goats out of your folds.**“For every beast of the forest is Mine, The cattle on a thousand hills.**“I know every bird of the mountains, And everything that moves in the field is Mine.**“If I were hungry I would not tell you, For the world is Mine, and all it contains.**“Shall I eat the flesh of bulls Or drink the blood of male goats?**“Offer to God a sacrifice of thanksgiving And pay your vows to the Most High;**Call upon Me in the day of trouble; I shall rescue you, and you will honour Me.”**But to the wicked God says, “What right have you to tell of My statutes And to take My covenant in your mouth?**“For you hate discipline,* *And you cast My words behind you.**“When you see a thief, you are pleased with him, And you associate with adulterers.**“You let your mouth loose in evil And your tongue frames deceit.**“You sit and speak against your brother; You slander your own mother’s son.**“These things you have done and I kept silence; You thought that I was just like you; I will reprove you and state the case in order before your eyes.* *“Now consider this, you who forget God, Or I will tear you in pieces, and there will be none to deliver.**“He who offers a sacrifice of thanksgiving honours Me; And to him who orders his way aright I shall show the salvation of God” (Ps 50 (49) 7-23).*

Mary is the image of the true disciple of Lord Jesus. True discipleship is listening, obedience and sequel. If listening is lacking, following is lacking, obedience is lacking. To listen, it is necessary to sit at the feet of Jesus and let him speak to the heart.

*As they continued their journey he entered a village where a woman whose name was Martha welcomed him. She had a sister named Mary (who) sat beside the Lord at his feet listening to him speak. Martha, burdened with much serving, came to him and said, "Lord, do you not care that my sister has left me by myself to do the serving? Tell her to help me." The Lord said to her in reply, "Martha, Martha, you are anxious and worried about many things. There is need of only one thing. Mary has chosen the better part and it will not be taken from her."*

 Mother of God, Angels and Saints, make us of most pure obedience to every Word of Jesus.

# LORD, TEACH US TO PRAY

# Gal 2,1-2.7-14; Ps 116; Lk 11,1-4

### 10 OCTOBER

Prayer is the fruit of two truths. In the absence of even one truth, our prayer either is false or it is not perfectly true. For his prayer to be true, man must know both God and himself according to truth. Who is God? It is the source of the truth of man. What is the man? He is a person who can be true only by the truth of his God. Here is then prayer: request from God for every truth so that we may come into possession of the truth that makes us true in order to fulfil our truth which is in the image and likeness of the truth of our Creator and Lord. Man is not. This is his truth. God is. This is his truth. Man asks his being to God. God gives it to him. Man begins to live according to the true being received from God. Since being is not given once and for all, but is drawn in the same way that the tree draws its life from the earth and the sun, man must always ask his Creator to feed him with his eternal and divine truth. Only in this way he might live according to purity and fullness of truth. He moves away from his God, he enters into falsehood and death. The Old Testament reveals to us some prayer intentions. It shows us that there is a prayer of intercession. But never is the people taught a special, particular prayer to be raised to the Lord for every moment of his life.

*Then Pharaoh summoned Moses and Aaron and said, "Pray the Lord to remove the frogs from me and my subjects, and I will let the people go to offer sacrifice to the Lord" (Ex 8, 4).* *"Well, then," said Pharaoh, "I will let you go to offer sacrifice to the Lord, your God, in the desert, provided that you do not go too far away and that you pray for me" (Ex 8, 24).* *Pray to the Lord, for we have had enough of God's thunder and hail. Then I will let you go; you need stay no longer" (Ex 9, 28).* *But now, do forgive me my sin once more, and pray the LORD, your God, to take at least this deadly pest from me" (Ex 10, 17).* *Promote the welfare of the city to which I have exiled you; pray for it to the Lord, for upon its welfare depends your own (Jer 29, 7).* *Pray for the life of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, and that of Belshazzar, his son, that their lifetimes may equal the duration of the heavens above the earth (Bar 1, 11).* *Pray that the Lord may give us strength, and light to our eyes, that we may live under the protective shadow of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, and that of Belshazzar, his son, and serve them long, finding favour in their sight (Bar 1, 12). "Pray for us also to the Lord, our God; for we have sinned against the Lord, our God, and the wrath and anger of the Lord have not yet been withdrawn from us at the present day (Bar 1, 13).*

This is the extraordinary beauty and simplicity of the prayer taught by Lord Jesus. It is a complete and perfect prayer, valid for every moment of our life. Because of its extreme simplicity everyone can put it in the heart. It requires neither science nor great intelligence to understand what the Lord is asked for it: every true good for the soul, the spirit, the body, time, eternity, the present, the future, for us and for the others. In very few, brief words there is the whole truth of God and of man. For it to be heard, man must raise it to the Lord in fullness of faith, in a state of grace, with the heart and hands engaged in the service of charity to God and to men.

*He was praying in a certain place, and when he had finished, one of his disciples said to him, "Lord, teach us to pray just as John taught his disciples." He said to them, "When you pray, say: Father, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come. Give us each day our daily bread and forgive us our sins for we ourselves forgive everyone in debt to us, and do not subject us to the final test."*

We can define the Christian as the curator of three great interests: of God, of himself and of neighbour. He will take care of himself and his neighbour, only if he will be able to cure the interests of his God at the height of his strength. If he cures the interests of God, God will cure his interests and those of his neighbour through him. The Lord does all things for him that cures the interests of the Lord. But who is the true man according to Jesus? He who asks God to make him an instrument to cure divine interests.

Most pure Mother, Angels and Saints ensure that God can take care of his every interest through us.

**OCTOBER 2018**

## SECOND DECADE OF OCTOBER

# AND I TELL YOU, ASK AND YOU WILL RECEIVE

# Gal 3,1-5; C Lk 1,69-75; Lk 11,5-13

### 11 OCTOBER

To understand well, according to divine light, the teaching of Jesus, it is good to relate it to the request made by Solomon to his God and Lord. He did not ask for special goods. He asked for the source and the font from which springs every true good that is Wisdom. We know the king's prayer to ask for Wisdom.

*God of my fathers, Lord of mercy. you who have made all things by your word And in your wisdom have established man to rule the creatures produced by you, To govern the world in holiness and justice, and to render judgment in integrity of heart: Give me Wisdom, the attendant at your throne, and reject me not from among your children; For I am your servant, the son of your handmaid, a man weak and short-lived and lacking in comprehension of judgment and of laws. Indeed, though one be perfect among the sons of men, if Wisdom, who comes from you, be not with him, he shall be held in no esteem. You have chosen me king over your people and magistrate for your sons and daughters. You have bid me build a temple on your holy mountain and an altar in the city that is your dwelling place, a copy of the holy tabernacle which you had established from of old. Now with you is Wisdom, who knows your works and was present when you made the world; Who understands what is pleasing in your eyes and what is conformable with your commands.*

*Send her forth from your holy heavens and from your glorious throne dispatch her That she may be with me and work with me, that I may know what is your pleasure. For she knows and understands all things, and will guide me discreetly in my affairs and safeguard me by her glory; Thus my deeds will be acceptable, and I shall judge your people justly and be worthy of my father's throne. For what man knows God's counsel, or who can conceive what our Lord intends? For the deliberations of mortals are timid, and unsure are our plans. For the corruptible body burdens the soul and the earthen shelter weighs down the mind that has many concerns. And scarce do we guess the things on earth, and what is within our grasp we find with difficulty; but when things are in heaven, who can search them out? Or who ever knew your counsel, except you had given Wisdom and sent your holy spirit from on high? And thus were the paths of those on earth made straight, and men learned what was your pleasure, and were saved by Wisdom (Wis 9,1-19).*

Even if Jesus leaves the heart free so that it asks all material and spiritual good to the Father, he suggests in a very *"delicate"* way that the true good always to be asked of the Father is the Holy Spirit, that is the Eternal Wisdom that assists God in all his works. Even Christ Jesus, in his mission as Saviour and Redeemer of man, is perennially assisted by the Spirit of the Lord. The Holy Spirit is wisdom, intellect, counsel, fortitude, science, piety and fear of the Lord. With him that governs our life, everything will be transformed for us into good. With him, we do not need anything.

*And he said to them, "Suppose one of you has a friend to whom he goes at midnight and says, 'Friend, lend me three loaves of bread, for a friend of mine has arrived at my house from a journey and I have nothing to offer him,' and he says in reply from within, 'Do not bother me; the door has already been locked and my children and I are already in bed. I cannot get up to give you anything.' I tell you, if he does not get up to give him the loaves because of their friendship, he will get up to give him whatever he needs because of his persistence. "And I tell you, ask and you will receive; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks, receives; and the one who seeks, finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened. What father among you would hand his son a snake when he asks for a fish? Or hand him a scorpion when he asks for an egg? If you then, who are wicked, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the Father in heaven give the holy Spirit to those who ask him?"*

Without the wisdom that comes from the Holy Spirit, man consumes his energies in vain. After having worked, having laboured and having consumed all his energies, he puts the good earned in a laundry bag, ruled by people who in their folly only know how to enlarge the holes, rather than close them. At the end of his life, without the Holy Spirit, he will end up in the sack of Hell's fire, from which no one ever goes out. Nothing is more necessary to man than the Holy Spirit. It must be asked insistently.

Wise Virgin, Angels and Saints, obtain for us the Holy Spirit without measure.

# WHEN ONE STRONGER THAN HE ATTACKS AND OVERCOMES HIM

# Gal 3,7-14; Ps 110; Lk 11,15-26

### 12 OCTOBER

Satan is the strong one. He will always win over man. Jesus is the strongest, rather he is the Strong of God and also the Strong God, he will always win over Satan. By believing in the Word of Jesus and letting one be made one body with Him, through the work of the Holy Spirit, man will also be clothed with the same strength as Christ Jesus. He will also be the strongest. He will win over Satan. Saint Paul reveals to us the perfect ways to dwell in Christ, to be his true body and to defeat Satan. These modes must always be observed.

*Finally, draw your strength from the Lord and from his mighty power. Put on the armour of God so that you may be able to stand firm against the tactics of the devil. For our struggle is not with flesh and blood but with the principalities, with the powers, with the world rulers of this present darkness, with the evil spirits in the heavens. Therefore, put on the armour of God, that you may be able to resist on the evil day and, having done everything, to hold your ground. So stand fast with your loins girded in truth, clothed with righteousness as a breastplate, and your feet shod in readiness for the gospel of peace. In all circumstances, hold faith as a shield, to quench all (the) flaming arrows of the evil one. And take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. With all prayer and supplication, pray at every opportunity in the Spirit. To that end, be watchful with all perseverance and supplication for all the holy ones and also for me, that speech may be given me to open my mouth, to make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel for which I am an ambassador in chains, so that I may have the courage to speak as I must (Eph 6,10-20).*

Even the Apostle Peter reveals both the aggression of Satan towards the disciples of Jesus as well as the ways to be able to overcome him. The rules exist and must be respected.

*So I exhort the presbyters among you, as a fellow presbyter and witness to the sufferings of Christ and one who has a share in the glory to be revealed. Tend the flock of God in your midst, (overseeing) not by constraint but willingly, as God would have it, not for shameful profit but eagerly. Do not lord it over those assigned to you, but be examples to the flock. And when the chief Shepherd is revealed, you will receive the unfading crown of glory. Likewise, you younger members, be subject to the presbyters. And all of you, clothe yourselves with humility in your dealings with one another, for: "God opposes the proud but bestows favour on the humble." So humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time. Cast all your worries upon him because he cares for you. Be sober and vigilant. Your opponent the devil is prowling around like a roaring lion looking for (someone) to devour. Resist him, steadfast in faith, knowing that your fellow believers throughout the world undergo the same sufferings. The God of all grace who called you to his eternal glory through Christ (Jesus) will himself restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish you after you have suffered a little. To him be dominion forever. Amen (1Pt 5,1-11).*

Here is the winning weapon against Satan: humility, submission to God. In God to the brothers.

*Some of them said, "By the power of Beelzebul, the prince of demons, he drives out demons." Others, to test him, asked him for a sign from heaven. But he knew their thoughts and said to them, "Every kingdom divided against itself will be laid waste and house will fall against house. And if Satan is divided against himself, how will his kingdom stand? For you say that it is by Beelzebul that I drive out demons. If I, then, drive out demons by Beelzebul, by whom do your own people drive them out? Therefore they will be your judges. But if it is by the finger of God that (I) drive out demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you. When a strong man fully armed guards his palace, his possessions are safe. But when one stronger than he attacks and overcomes him, he takes away the armour on which he relied and distributes the spoils. Whoever is not with me is against me, and whoever does not gather with me scatters. "When an unclean spirit goes out of someone, it roams through arid regions searching for rest but, finding none, it says, 'I shall return to my home from which I came.' But upon returning, it finds it swept clean and put in order. Then it goes and brings back seven other spirits more wicked than itself who move in and dwell there, and the last condition of that person is worse than the first."*

Mother of God, Angels and Saints make us strong in Jesus to be forever victorious over Satan.

# BLESSED IS THE WOMB THAT CARRIED YOU

# Gal 3,22-29; Ps 104; Lk 11,27-28

### 13 OCTOBER

The Queen of Sheba admires the wisdom of Solomon and blesses his God and Lord.

*The queen of Sheba, having heard of Solomon's fame, came to test him with subtle questions. She arrived in Jerusalem with a very numerous retinue, and with camels bearing spices, a large amount of gold, and precious stones. She came to Solomon and questioned him on every subject in which she was interested. King Solomon explained everything she asked about, and there remained nothing hidden from him that he could not explain to her. When the queen of Sheba witnessed Solomon's great wisdom, the palace he had built, the food at his table, the seating of his ministers, the attendance and garb of his waiters, his banquet service, and the holocausts he offered in the temple of the Lord, she was breathless. "The report I heard in my country about your deeds and your wisdom is true," she told the king. "Though I did not believe the report until I came and saw with my own eyes, I have discovered that they were not telling me the half. Your wisdom and prosperity surpass the report I heard. Happy are your men, happy these servants of yours, who stand before you always and listen to your wisdom. Blessed be the Lord, your God, whom it has pleased to place you on the throne of Israel. In his enduring love for Israel, the Lord has made you king to carry out judgment and justice" (1Kings 10,1-9).*

Anna became a mother through the fulfilment of her prayer. She blesses and praises her God, confessing him as the source of all good and the Lord of history.

*And as she worshiped the Lord, she said: "My heart exults in the Lord, my horn is exalted in my God. I have swallowed up my enemies; I rejoice in my victory. There is no Holy One like the Lord; there in no Rock like our God. "Speak boastfully no longer, nor let arrogance issue from your mouths. For an all-knowing God is the Lord, a God who judges deeds. The bows of the mighty are broken, while the tottering gird on strength. he well-fed hire themselves out for bread, while the hungry batten on spoil. The barren wife bears seven sons, while the mother of many languishes. "The Lord puts to death and gives life; he casts down to the nether world; he raises up again. The Lord makes poor and makes rich, he humbles, he also exalts. He raises the needy from the dust; from the ash heap he lifts up the poor, To seat them with nobles and make a glorious throne their heritage. He gives to the vower his vow, and blesses the sleep of the just. "For the pillars of the earth are the Lord’s, and he has set the world upon them. He will guard the footsteps of his faithful ones, but the wicked shall perish in the darkness. For not by strength does man prevail; the Lord’s foes shall be shattered. The Most High in heaven thunders; The Lord judges the ends of the earth, Now may he give strength to his king, and exalt the horn of his anointed!" (1Sam 2,1-10).*

The Virgin Mary sees herself as the exclusive work of God. She magnifies her Lord and proclaims him the God who never forgets his mercy. Everything is from him.

*And Mary said: "My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord; my spirit rejoices in God my saviour. For he has looked upon his handmaid's lowliness; behold, from now on will all ages call me blessed. The Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name. His mercy is from age to age to those who fear him. He has shown might with his arm, dispersed the arrogant of mind and heart. He has thrown down the rulers from their thrones but lifted up the lowly. The hungry he has filled with good things; the rich he has sent away empty. He has helped Israel his servant, remembering his mercy, according to his promise to our fathers, to Abraham and to his descendants forever" (Lk 1,46-55).*

This woman sees Jesus wise, strong and intelligent. She lacks in real supernatural vision. She attributes the greatness of Jesus to the mother that generated him.

*While he was speaking, a woman from the crowd called out and said to him, "Blessed is the womb that carried you and the breasts at which you nursed." He replied, "Rather, blessed are those who hear the word of God and observe it."*

Jesus enlightens the woman, telling her that bliss does not come from nature and from men. It comes from the purest faith, listening and observance of the Word of the Lord.

Mother of Jesus, Angels and Saints, obtain us a supernatural vision for everything.

# ALL THINGS ARE POSSIBLE FOR GOD

# Wis 7,7-11; Ps 89; Heb 4,12-13; Mk 10,17-30

### 14 OCTOBER

Wealth in the thought of God and of Christ Jesus is not an end, but only a means. It is a means to love according to truth the Creator and Lord of man and also every other man. If it is only a means to love, it must be abandoned when the Lord gives man a greater, more sublime and higher means of loving Him according to his heart, his will, his desires and according to his will, his heart and his desires to love every other man. When man renounces a means indicated to him by God to love according to most pure truth because he has transformed the means into an end, it is then that wealth and every other means hinder or even prevent eternal salvation. No human means can be transformed into an end. If this happens, the hole to sink into idolatry is always before us. Even man, from the end, is transformed into a means. A means at the service of our greed and voracity.

This happens because only God is the source of wisdom, intelligence, truth and light so that we remain in respect of every true purpose given to our person. When we make of a means - even spiritual - the end of our life God Himself is also downgraded to a means. What are the fruits of this downgrading? The non possibility for Him to pour upon us all his gifts, with which alone it is possible for us to reach the true end. God, downgraded to a means, will never be placed at the service of our false and phony purposes. He, true end, primary and ultimate end, natural and supernatural end, historical end and eternal end, will never support our transformed means as the end of the personal life. He lavishes the grace, truth, intelligence, wisdom and every other celestial gift so that the end is reached by man. If we have transformed the means into an end, He withdraws his gifts and man finds himself in the confusion and in the spiritual and material chaos. For this reason Jesus says that a rich man will hardly enter the kingdom of heaven. The kingdom is no longer the end of his life. End of his life are the means, it is wealth. Serving wealth does not save. It does not lead into the eternal kingdom. It immerses in the matter.

*As he was setting out on a journey, a man ran up, knelt down before him, and asked him, "Good teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?" Jesus answered him, "Why do you call me good? No one is good but God alone. You know the commandments: 'You shall not kill; you shall not commit adultery; you shall not steal; you shall not bear false witness; you shall not defraud; honour your father and your mother.'" He replied and said to him, "Teacher, all of these I have observed from my youth." Jesus, looking at him, loved him and said to him, "You are lacking in one thing. Go, sell what you have, and give to (the) poor and you will have treasure in heaven; then come, follow me." At that statement his face fell, and he went away sad, for he had many possessions.*

*Jesus looked around and said to his disciples, "How hard it is for those who have wealth to enter the kingdom of God!" The disciples were amazed at his words. So Jesus again said to them in reply, "Children, how hard it is to enter the kingdom of God! It is easier for a camel to pass through (the) eye of (a) needle than for one who is rich to enter the kingdom of God." They were exceedingly astonished and said among themselves, "Then who can be saved?" Jesus looked at them and said, "For human beings it is impossible, but not for God. All things are possible for God." Peter began to say to him, "We have given up everything and followed you." Jesus said, "Amen, I say to you, there is no one who has given up house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or lands for my sake and for the sake of the gospel who will not receive a hundred times more now in this present age: houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands, with persecutions, and eternal life in the age to come.*

Jesus does not close the door of his kingdom to any man that has transformed the means in the end. But conversion is urgent. What is the conversion for a rich person? Giving back to the end its dignity of an end. Giving back to means the value of means. Abandoning all means, if the Lord gives us another means for achieving the end, for us and for others.

Mother of God, Angels and Saints ensure that every man never transforms means into the end of life.

# AND THERE IS SOMETHING GREATER THAN JONAH HERE

# Gal 4,22-24.26-27.31-5,1; Ps 112; Lk 11,29-32

### 15 OCTOBER

Jonah was sent by the Lord to Nineveh to announce to the great city that the day of his destruction was by now, imminent. Even the animals were forced to fast, in order to obtain from the Lord the forgiveness of their sins. Thus the city would have been spared. The Lord would have seen their conversion and would have forgiven their sin. A thing that actually happened. The word of prophecy is also valid for Nineveh: "I do not want the death of the sinner but that he gets converted and lives".

*You ask: "Why is not the son charged with the guilt of his father?" Because the son has done what is right and just, and has been careful to observe all my statutes, he shall surely live. Only the one who sins shall die. The son shall not be charged with the guilt of his father, nor shall the father be charged with the guilt of his son. The virtuous man's virtue shall be his own, as the wicked man's wickedness shall be his own. But if the wicked man turns away from all the sins he committed, if he keeps all my statutes and does what is right and just, he shall surely live, he shall not die. None of the crimes he committed shall be remembered against him; he shall live because of the virtue he has practiced. Do I indeed derive any pleasure from the death of the wicked? says the Lord God. Do I not rather rejoice when he turns from his evil way that he may live? And if the virtuous man turns from the path of virtue to do evil, the same kind of abominable things that the wicked man does, can he do this and still live? None of his virtuous deeds shall be remembered, because he has broken faith and committed sin; because of this, he shall die.*

*You say, "The Lord’s way is not fair!" Hear now, house of Israel: Is it my way that is unfair, or rather, are not your ways unfair? When a virtuous man turns away from virtue to commit iniquity, and dies, it is because of the iniquity he committed that he must die. But if a wicked man, turning from the wickedness he has committed, does what is right and just, he shall preserve his life; since he has turned away from all the sins which he committed, he shall surely live, he shall not die. And yet the house of Israel says, "The Lord’s way is not fair!" Is it my way that is not fair, house of Israel, or rather, is it not that your ways are not fair? Therefore I will judge you, house of Israel, each one according to his ways, says the Lord God. Turn and be converted from all your crimes, that they may be no cause of guilt for you. Cast away from you all the crimes you have committed, and make for yourselves a new heart and a new spirit. Why should you die, O house of Israel? For I have no pleasure in the death of anyone who dies, says the Lord God. Return and live! (See Ez 18,1-32).*

Jonah literally said only seven words: *"Yet forty days and Nineveh will be destroyed".* Seven words were enough for everyone to be converted. Jonah has made no sign. He gave no proof of his being a prophet of the Living God. Instead, Jesus has performed signs, miracles and prodigies of all kinds, far superior to those performed by Moses, Elijah, Elisha and all the others sent by God in the midst of his people. What was the response of your generation? Not only total deafness, but also fierce opposition that came to a death sentence by crucifixion.

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

Deafness before Christ Jesus, the God made flesh for the salvation of man, reveals that the heart is by now lost behind idolatry. This is the true mystery of iniquity. Total closure of the mind and heart to God and his envoys. We are responsible for the refused gift. On the day of judgment we will be judged also for every refused grace.

Most Pure Mother, Angels and Saints give the people of God the Spirit of true conversion.

# HE ENTERED AND RECLINED AT TABLE TO EAT

# Gal 5,1-6; Ps 118; Lk 11,37-41

### 16 OCTOBER

The Gospel often shows us the fruits of corrupt religion and religion is always corrupt when it replaces the Commandments of the Lord with human customs. It is also corrupt when the cult takes the place of the Law, the Word and Obedience. True religion is very pure listening to every Word that comes out of the mouth of God. In the days of the ancient prophets, the religious sacrifices had replaced the Law. The Lord intervenes firmly and cries that He does not want sacrifices, but mercy. He does not want the blood of bulls and calves. He wants love for man.

*In their affliction, they shall look for me: "Come, let us return to the Lord, For it is he who has rent, but he will heal us; he has struck us, but he will bind our wounds. He will revive us after two days; on the third day he will raise us up, to live in his presence. Let us know, let us strive to know the Lord; as certain as the dawn is his coming, and his judgment shines forth like the light of day! He will come to us like the rain, like spring rain that waters the earth." What can I do with you, Ephraim? What can I do with you, Judah? Your piety is like a morning cloud, like the dew that early passes away. For this reason I smote them through the prophets, I slew them by the words of my mouth; For it is love that I desire, not sacrifice, and knowledge of God rather than holocausts. But they, in their land, violated the covenant; there they were untrue to me. Gilead is a city of evildoers, tracked with blood. As brigands ambush a man, a band of priests slay on the way to Shechem, committing monstrous crime. In the house of Israel I have seen a horrible thing: there harlotry is found in Ephraim, Israel is defiled. For you also, O Judah, a harvest has been appointed (Hos 6,1-11).*

Jesus is invited to lunch. He welcomes the invitation and sits at the table. The Pharisee who had invited him, saw that He had not done the ablutions and was surprised. How is it? Does not a Master in Israel observe the tradition of the ancients? But what religion is his? He certainly will not be a credible Master. He does not observe what the fathers have handed down to us. Jesus does not miss the opportunity to reiterate what the true religion of his Father is. This is the great, abysmal difference between Him and them. They observe the tradition of their fathers. He observes the tradition of his Father. They clean the outside of the glass and the outside of the body, leaving every impurity and rotting in them. Instead he came to teach every man how to clean the interior and how to prepare a worthy habitation for his Father. What is the tradition of his Father? The purest and most faithful obedience to his Law. The most devout homage to his manifested will and the preservation of his Word in the highest purity. Cleaning or not cleaning one’s hands does not make a man unclean, because this tradition does not belong to his Father.

*After he had spoken, a Pharisee invited him to dine at his home. He entered and reclined at table to eat. The Pharisee was amazed to see that he did not observe the prescribed washing before the meal. The Lord said to him, "Oh you Pharisees! Although you cleanse the outside of the cup and the dish, inside you are filled with plunder and evil. You fools! Did not the maker of the outside also make the inside? But as to what is within, give alms, and behold, everything will be clean for you.*

Jesus reveals what is inside the glass, that is, in the heart, which must be purified. It is full of greed and malice. This is the sign that God does not live in it. If he does not live in the heart, he does not live in the mind either. If he does not live in the mind, there is not even place on their lips for the Lord, their God. How do you clean your heart? Donating in alms every fruit of greed. Undressing of what is not the result of their work. One is cleaned by removing wickedness and replacing it with goodness, mercy, great charity, a word always of benevolence and great understanding. Religion is always corrupt when the "cleansing" of the soul is replaced by the "cleansing" of the body. The soul is purified by freeing it even from the smallest venial sins. It is made beautiful by adorning it with every virtue. Greed is a vice. Malice is also a vice. They are vices that make the soul unrecognizable before God and men, today and for eternity.

Most Pure Virgin, Angels and Saints, help us to make our soul beautiful for our God.

# YOU IMPOSE ON PEOPLE BURDENS HARD TO CARRY

# Gal 5,18-25; Ps 1; Lk 11,42-46

### 17 OCTOBER

Religion is always corrupt, when two substitutions are made: the tradition of men takes the place of the Law of God; the glory of men cancels and eliminates the glory of the Lord. This is what happened at the time of Jesus. Today we can say that true religion always corrupts itself when theology takes the place of the Gospel, of the Word and when the moral Law is replaced with the liturgy. In either case religion is corrupted because the means take the place of the end. Theology is service to the Word. The liturgy is a means to obtain every grace in view of full obedience to the Moral law. But there is a third corruption of true religion. It occurs when the thought of man enters into the Moral law and takes the place of the Holy Spirit, the only one that can illuminate the moral law according to the very pure truth set by Him in it. This third corruption is very frequent. It is the fruit of the first two corruptions: the corruption of theology and liturgy.

*But understand this: there will be terrifying times in the last days. People will be self-centred and lovers of money, proud, haughty, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, irreligious, callous, implacable, slanderous, licentious, brutal, hating what is good, traitors, reckless, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, as they make a pretence of religion but deny its power. Reject them. For some of these slip into homes and make captives of women weighed down by sins, led by various desires, always trying to learn but never able to reach a knowledge of the truth. Just as Jannes and Jambres opposed Moses, so they also oppose the truth - people of depraved mind, unqualified in the faith. But they will not make further progress, for their foolishness will be plain to all, as it was with those two. You have followed my teaching, way of life, purpose, faith, patience, love, endurance, persecutions, and sufferings, such as happened to me in Antioch, Iconium, and Lystra, persecutions that I endured. Yet from all these things the Lord delivered me. In fact, all who want to live religiously in Christ Jesus will be persecuted. But wicked people and charlatans will go from bad to worse, deceivers and deceived. But you, remain faithful to what you have learned and believed, because you know from whom you learned it, and that from infancy you have known (the) sacred scriptures, which are capable of giving you wisdom for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. All scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching, for refutation, for correction, and for training in righteousness, so that one who belongs to God may be competent, equipped for every good work (2Tm 3,1-17).*

Pharisees and scribes attest and reveal this third corruption of religion. They do not know the Moral law, the true one. They replaced themselves to the Holy Spirit. They are masters of double weight and double measure. A light measure and weight for them. An unbearable burden and measure for others. If they swallow a camel they do not commit any sin. If, by chance, others were to swallow a midge, they would be declared criminals before the Lord and men. When the corruption of the moral Law occurs, it is the sign that the rottenness governs the hearts.

*Woe to you Pharisees! You pay tithes of mint and of rue and of every garden herb, but you pay no attention to judgment and to love for God. These you should have done, without overlooking the others. Woe to you Pharisees! You love the seat of honour in synagogues and greetings in marketplaces. Woe to you! You are like unseen graves over which people unknowingly walk." Then one of the scholars of the law said to him in reply, "Teacher, by saying this you are insulting us too." And he said, "Woe also to you scholars of the law! You impose on people burdens hard to carry, but you yourselves do not lift one finger to touch them.*

Everyone is obliged to make every effort so that for his work and his words the true religion is always preserved in its purity. The salvation of man demands it. The glory of the Lord requires it. Charity for souls requires it.

Most Pure Mother, Angels and Saints ensure that no Christian corrupts true religion.

**THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS AT HAND FOR YOU**

# 2 Tm 4,10-17b; Ps 144; Lk 10,1-9

### 18 OCTOBER

Jesus does not send his disciples into the world to say the mystery of the kingdom, announcing its coming. They have to go to say the kingdom and also to show it accomplished in their person. It can manifest itself present in the world in many ways, even with miracles, signs and wonders. But there is a universal way, effective for every time and place. This mode is the perfect exemplariness in everything. It is our whole life interwoven with obedience to every Word of Jesus the Lord. This path is highly recommended by St. Paul. Here is how He manifests it to the Corinthians.

*For the love of Christ impels us, once we have come to the conviction that one died for all; therefore, all have died. He indeed died for all, so that those who live might no longer live for themselves but for him who for their sake died and was raised. Consequently, from now on we regard no one according to the flesh; even if we once knew Christ according to the flesh, yet now we know him so no longer. So whoever is in Christ is a new creation: the old things have passed away; behold, new things have come. And all this is from God, who has reconciled us to himself through Christ and given us the ministry of reconciliation, namely, God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting their trespasses against them and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation. So we are ambassadors for Christ, as if God were appealing through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. For our sake he made him to be sin who did not know sin, so that we might become the righteousness of God in him. We cause no one to stumble in anything, in order that no fault may be found with our ministry; on the contrary, in everything we commend ourselves as ministers of God, through much endurance, in afflictions, hardships, constraints, beatings, imprisonments, riots, labours, vigils, fasts; by purity, knowledge, patience, kindness, in a holy spirit, in unfeigned love, in truthful speech, in the power of God; with weapons of righteousness at the right and at the left; through glory and dishonour, insult and praise. We are treated as deceivers and yet are truthful; as unrecognized and yet acknowledged; as dying and behold we live; as chastised and yet not put to death; as sorrowful yet always rejoicing; as poor yet enriching many; as having nothing and yet possessing all things (2Cor 5,14-21; 6,3-10).*

According to the Gospel of Luke, in their first mission, how must the seventy-two say and manifest the kingdom of God? First of all, praying incessantly and without interruption so that the Lord sends workers to his harvest. Persevering prayer is the first sign that we believe in the kingdom of God. No one might say and manifest according to truth the kingdom from a false faith in the kingdom. True faith and true mission. False faith and false mission. The second is the man with the gift of peace. The before of the missionary's coming and the after will have to be different. The difference is given by the gift of peace. Thirdly with the explicit announcement that the kingdom is near. The three things must become one thing in the heart of the missionary. One prays, gives and announces.

*After this the Lord appointed seventy (-two) others whom he sent ahead of him in pairs to every town and place he intended to visit. He said to them, "The harvest is abundant but the labourers are few; so ask the master of the harvest to send out labourers for his harvest. Go on your way; behold, I am sending you like lambs among wolves. Carry no money bag, no sack, no sandals; and greet no one along the way. Into whatever house you enter, first say, 'Peace to this household.' If a peaceful person lives there, your peace will rest on him; but if not, it will return to you. Stay in the same house and eat and drink what is offered to you, for the labourer deserves his payment. Do not move about from one house to another. Whatever town you enter and they welcome you, eat what is set before you, cure the sick in it and say to them, 'The kingdom of God is at hand for you.'*

If one of the three modes that are also the essence of the mission is missing, there is no true evangelizing mission. Either because the missionary's faith is lacking, or because there is no difference between the before and the after or because there is not even any speaking about the kingdom.

Mother of Jesus, Angels and Saints make every Christian a true missionary of the kingdom of God.

**BEWARE OF THE LEAVEN OF THE PHARISEES**

# Eph 1.11-14; Ps 32; Lk 12.1-7

### 19 OCTOBER

A few grams of yeast are sufficient in the dough and it all ferments. Jesus sees the kingdom of God as true leaven in the world's pasta. Concretely leaven of the kingdom is the disciple of the Lord in turn leavened with the leaven of the heart of Christ Jesus, the leaven of truth, charity, eternal life, Holy Spirit and most pure Gospel.

*He spoke to them another parable. "The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed with three measures of wheat flour until the whole batch was leavened" (Mt 13,33).*

Saint Paul knows the power of leaven not only in good, but also in evil, he invites the community of Corinth to get rid from its breast of all yeast of immorality.

*It is widely reported that there is immorality among you, and immorality of a kind not found even among pagans - a man living with his father's wife. And you are inflated with pride. Should you not rather have been sorrowful? The one who did this deed should be expelled from your midst. I, for my part, although absent in body but present in spirit, have already, as if present, pronounced judgment on the one who has committed this deed, in the name of (our) Lord Jesus: when you have gathered together and I am with you in spirit with the power of the Lord Jesus, you are to deliver this man to Satan for the destruction of his flesh, so that his spirit may be saved on the day of the Lord. Your boasting is not appropriate. Do you not know that a little yeast leavens all the dough? Clear out the old yeast, so that you may become a fresh batch of dough, inasmuch as you are unleavened. For our paschal lamb, Christ, has been sacrificed. Therefore let us celebrate the feast, not with the old yeast, the yeast of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth. I wrote you in my letter not to associate with immoral people, not at all referring to the immoral of this world or the greedy and robbers or idolaters; for you would then have to leave the world. But I now write to you not to associate with anyone named a brother, if he is immoral, greedy, an idolater, a slanderer, a drunkard, or a robber, not even to eat with such a person. For why should I be judging outsiders? Is it not your business to judge those within? God will judge those outside. "Purge the evil person from your midst" (1Cor 5,1-13).*

Jesus warns his apostles. He invites them to beware of the yeast of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy. Image of the hypocrite is the whitewashed sepulchre. Outside he is wonderfully beautiful, he is often also monumental. Instead, in his bosom there are filth and bones. Thus the Pharisees are civilly without any stain. Instead, within the heart, there is every wickedness and iniquity. Jesus does not need a religion of hypocrites. The world has a particular nose to sense hypocrisy. It senses its smell miles away. It might never believe in the Gospel of Christ Jesus if it is announced by hypocritical apostles, who say one thing and do another. They take care of their exterior, while the interior is full of horrible misdeeds.

*Meanwhile, so many people were crowding together that they were trampling one another underfoot. He began to speak, first to his disciples, "Beware of the leaven - that is, the hypocrisy - of the Pharisees. "There is nothing concealed that will not be revealed, nor secret that will not be known. Therefore whatever you have said in the darkness will be heard in the light, and what you have whispered behind closed doors will be proclaimed on the housetops. I tell you, my friends, do not be afraid of those who kill the body but after that can do no more. I shall show you whom to fear. Be afraid of the one who after killing has the power to cast into Gehenna; yes, I tell you, be afraid of that one. Are not five sparrows sold for two small coins? Yet not one of them has escaped the notice of God. Even the hairs of your head have all been counted. Do not be afraid. You are worth more than many sparrows.*

Another thing from which every Apostle and disciple of Jesus must always remain far is the fear of men, which prevents the straight and visible confession of Lord Jesus. A disciple of Jesus must always be a disciple. It is not his heart that is a disciple and consequently he can hide. It is his body that is a disciple. How do you hide an evangelical body? If the gospel body is hidden, it means that the heart is not evangelical. The body is the truth of our being disciples of the Lord.

Mother of God, Angels and Saints ensure that we are always with our body leaven of the kingdom.

# EVERYONE WHO ACKNOWLEDGES ME BEFORE OTHERS

# Eph 1,15-23; Ps 8; Lk 12,8-12

### 20 OCTOBER

Martyrdom for the right faith was not born with Christ Jesus, but with Abel himself, at the origins of man's creation. He was killed in envy by his brother Cain.

*In the course of time Cain brought an offering to the Lord from the fruit of the soil, while Abel, for his part, brought one of the best firstlings of his flock. The Lord looked with favour on Abel and his offering, but on Cain and his offering he did not. Cain greatly resented this and was crestfallen. So the Lord said to Cain: "Why are you so resentful and crestfallen? If you do well, you can hold up your head; but if not, sin is a demon lurking at the door: his urge is toward you, yet you can be his master." Cain said to his brother Abel, "Let us go out in the field." When they were in the field, Cain attacked his brother Abel and killed him (Gen 4,3-8).*

Abel does not say a word to his brother. However, he does works pleasing to the Lord. Cain cannot bear that God likes his brother's works and refuses his. The Book of Wisdom reveals that the mere presence of the righteous annoys the wicked, in whose heart a desire arises to do evil, which also reaches the point of physical elimination.

*Let us beset the just one, because he is obnoxious to us; he sets himself against our doings, Reproaches us for transgressions of the law and charges us with violations of our training. He professes to have knowledge of God and styles himself a child of the Lord. To us he is the censure of our thoughts; merely to see him is a hardship for us, Because his life is not like other men's, and different are his ways. He judges us debased; he holds aloof from our paths as from things impure. He calls blest the destiny of the just and boasts that God is his Father. Let us see whether his words be true; let us find out what will happen to him. For if the just one be the son of God, he will defend him and deliver him from the hand of his foes. With revilement and torture let us put him to the test that we may have proof of his gentleness and try his patience. Let us condemn him to a shameful death; for according to his own words, God will take care of him" (Wis 2,12-20).*

Jesus sends his apostles into the world. They will have to not only proclaim the Gospel, they must first of all live it. They will have to testify before every word, law, thought, will, unjust desire of the men that they are governed by the Word of their Master and Lord. Every temptation to evil must be rejected by them. They cannot. "I am a disciple of Christ Jesus": this must be their one and only answer. The world does not accept contradictions and different distant ways from its discordant thought and often intervenes also inflicting death.

*I tell you, everyone who acknowledges me before others the Son of Man will acknowledge before the angels of God. But whoever denies me before others will be denied before the angels of God. "Everyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven, but the one who blasphemes against the holy Spirit will not be forgiven. When they take you before synagogues and before rulers and authorities, do not worry about how or what your defence will be or about what you are to say. For the holy Spirit will teach you at that moment what you should say."*

Jesus speaks to his disciples with divine clarity. If they do not recognize him before men, He will not recognize them before the angels of God. He will be recognized and welcomed in his eternal kingdom who on earth will testify that only He is his way, his truth, his life, his light and his hope. His presence as a true disciple of the Lord annoys the world. A single Christian in a city is enough to illuminate it with divine light. This light annoys the world of darkness and certainly it will do everything to shut it down. Knowing this, the Christian perseveres in his testimony as son of the light, confessing Jesus his eternal Light. It is not the disciple the one who will have to choose martyrdom. That is why in the courts he must let the Holy Spirit speak. It is the Spirit of God who decides who must pass through violent death and who instead must continue to be clearly visible light in the midst of men.

Immaculate Mother, Angels and Saints make us true witnesses of Jesus with words and deeds.

# BUT IT SHALL NOT BE SO AMONG YOU

# Is 53,10-11; Ps 32; Heb 4,14-16; Mk 10,35-45

### 21 OCTOBER

To have a place of command, during the reign of David, his son Absalom revolted against king David, causing an internal war to break out. So much was his thirst for power that the head of his army, fearing that the king could give his place to the head of Saul's army, killed him treacherously. To occupy a place one is also willing to murder, to war and to slander. We know that scribes and Pharisees, fearing to lose authority before the people, decided to kill the Son of God.

*Just then David's servants and Joab were coming in from an expedition, bringing much plunder with them. Abner, having been dismissed by David, was no longer with him in Hebron but had gone his way in peace. When Joab and the whole force he had with him arrived, he was informed, "Abner, son of Ner, came to David; he has been sent on his way in peace." So Joab went to the king and said: "What have you done? Abner came to you. Why did you let him go peacefully on his way? Are you not aware that Abner came to deceive you and to learn the ins and outs of all that you are doing?" Joab then left David, and without David's knowledge sent messengers after Abner, who brought him back from the cistern of Sirah. When Abner returned to Hebron, Joab took him aside within the city gate as though to speak with him privately. There he stabbed him in the abdomen, and he died in revenge for the killing of Joab's brother Asahel. Later David heard of it and said: "Before the Lord; I and my kingdom are forever innocent. May the full responsibility for the death of Abner, son of Ner, be laid to Joab and to all his family. May the men of Joab's family never be without one suffering from a discharge, or a leper, or one unmanly, one falling by the sword, or one in need of bread!" (2Sam 3,22-29).*

*After this Absalom provided himself with chariots, horses, and fifty henchmen. Moreover, Absalom used to rise early and stand alongside the road leading to the gate. If someone had a lawsuit to be decided by the king, Absalom would call to him and say, "From what city are you?" And when he replied, "Your servant is of such and such a tribe of Israel," Absalom would say to him, "Your suit is good and just, but there is no one to hear you in the king's name." And he would continue: "If only I could be appointed judge in the land! Then everyone who has a lawsuit to be decided might come to me and I would render him justice." Whenever a man approached him to show homage, he would extend his hand, hold him, and kiss him. By behaving in this way toward all the Israelites who came to the king for judgment, Absalom was stealing away the loyalties of the men of Israel (Cf. 2Sam 15,1-18,32).*

Jesus does not want these or other worst things to happen in his kingdom. This is why he overturns the laws of the government. The most remarkable is not the one placed at the top, but instead the one that is placed at the bottom. The greatest will be the smallest. Instead of commanding, one has to serve in his kingdom. Instead of taking, one gives. Instead of rising, one must lower himself. Jesus gives himself as an example always to be followed. Who is Jesus? He who did not come to be served, but to serve and give his life in ransom.

*Then James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came to him and said to him, "Teacher, we want you to do for us whatever we ask of you." He replied, "What do you wish (me) to do for you?" They answered him, "Grant that in your glory we may sit one at your right and the other at your left." Jesus said to them, "You do not know what you are asking. Can you drink the cup that I drink or be baptized with the baptism with which I am baptized?" They said to him, "We can." Jesus said to them, "The cup that I drink, you will drink, and with the baptism with which I am baptized, you will be baptized; but to sit at my right or at my left is not mine to give but is for those for whom it has been prepared." When the ten heard this, they became indignant at James and John. Jesus summoned them and said to them, "You know that those who are recognized as rulers over the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones make their authority over them felt. But it shall not be so among you. Rather, whoever wishes to be great among you will be your servant; whoever wishes to be first among you will be the slave of all. For the Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many."*

Another great advantage gives the law of Christ. Whoever stands low, will never sell his conscience, his intelligence, his truth and his heart to have a place at the top. Jesus did not get rid of his truth, but of his clothes to be crucified.

Faithful Virgin, Angels and Saints make us reign of God according to the rules of Christ Jesus.

**OCTOBER 2018**

## THIRD DECADE OF OCTOBER

# BUT IT SHALL NOT BE SO AMONG YOU

# Is 53,10-11; Ps 32; Heb 4,14-16; Mk 10,35-45

### 21 OCTOBER

To have a place of command, during the reign of David, his son Absalom revolted against king David, causing an internal war to break out. So much was his thirst for power that the head of his army, fearing that the king could give his place to the head of Saul's army, killed him treacherously. To occupy a place one is also willing to murder, to war and to slander. We know that scribes and Pharisees, fearing to lose authority before the people, decided to kill the Son of God.

*Just then David's servants and Joab were coming in from an expedition, bringing much plunder with them. Abner, having been dismissed by David, was no longer with him in Hebron but had gone his way in peace. When Joab and the whole force he had with him arrived, he was informed, "Abner, son of Ner, came to David; he has been sent on his way in peace." So Joab went to the king and said: "What have you done? Abner came to you. Why did you let him go peacefully on his way? Are you not aware that Abner came to deceive you and to learn the ins and outs of all that you are doing?" Joab then left David, and without David's knowledge sent messengers after Abner, who brought him back from the cistern of Sirah. When Abner returned to Hebron, Joab took him aside within the city gate as though to speak with him privately. There he stabbed him in the abdomen, and he died in revenge for the killing of Joab's brother Asahel. Later David heard of it and said: "Before the Lord; I and my kingdom are forever innocent. May the full responsibility for the death of Abner, son of Ner, be laid to Joab and to all his family. May the men of Joab's family never be without one suffering from a discharge, or a leper, or one unmanly, one falling by the sword, or one in need of bread!" (2Sam 3,22-29).*

*After this Absalom provided himself with chariots, horses, and fifty henchmen. Moreover, Absalom used to rise early and stand alongside the road leading to the gate. If someone had a lawsuit to be decided by the king, Absalom would call to him and say, "From what city are you?" And when he replied, "Your servant is of such and such a tribe of Israel," Absalom would say to him, "Your suit is good and just, but there is no one to hear you in the king's name." And he would continue: "If only I could be appointed judge in the land! Then everyone who has a lawsuit to be decided might come to me and I would render him justice." Whenever a man approached him to show homage, he would extend his hand, hold him, and kiss him. By behaving in this way toward all the Israelites who came to the king for judgment, Absalom was stealing away the loyalties of the men of Israel (Cf. 2Sam 15,1-18,32).*

Jesus does not want these or other worst things to happen in his kingdom. This is why he overturns the laws of the government. The most remarkable is not the one placed at the top, but instead the one that is placed at the bottom. The greatest will be the smallest. Instead of commanding, one has to serve in his kingdom. Instead of taking, one gives. Instead of rising, one must lower himself. Jesus gives himself as an example always to be followed. Who is Jesus? He who did not come to be served, but to serve and give his life in ransom.

*Then James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came to him and said to him, "Teacher, we want you to do for us whatever we ask of you." He replied, "What do you wish (me) to do for you?" They answered him, "Grant that in your glory we may sit one at your right and the other at your left." Jesus said to them, "You do not know what you are asking. Can you drink the cup that I drink or be baptized with the baptism with which I am baptized?" They said to him, "We can." Jesus said to them, "The cup that I drink, you will drink, and with the baptism with which I am baptized, you will be baptized; but to sit at my right or at my left is not mine to give but is for those for whom it has been prepared." When the ten heard this, they became indignant at James and John. Jesus summoned them and said to them, "You know that those who are recognized as rulers over the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones make their authority over them felt. But it shall not be so among you. Rather, whoever wishes to be great among you will be your servant; whoever wishes to be first among you will be the slave of all. For the Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many."*

Another great advantage gives the law of Christ. Whoever stands low, will never sell his conscience, his intelligence, his truth and his heart to have a place at the top. Jesus did not get rid of his truth, but of his clothes to be crucified.

Faithful Virgin, Angels and Saints make us reign of God according to the rules of Christ Jesus.

# BUT IS NOT RICH IN WHAT MATTERS TO GOD

# Eph 2,1-10; Ps 99; Lk 12,13-21

### 22 OCTOBER

There is only one way to be enriched before God: transforming the riches of the earth into almsgiving. Almsgiving for the Lord is *"his divine bank"*. Whoever puts his money in it, not only receives an eternal interest, which is the divine life he will have as a gift, in addition the money of almsgiving is always available to those who have put it in a quantity multiplied to the infinite. The teaching of Scripture, both of the Old Testament and of the New, is one voice. Almsgiving is the only useful investment for man. All the banks of this world can fail and do fail. Almsgiving never fails.

*Water quenches a flaming fire, and alms atone for sins. He who does a kindness is remembered afterward; when he falls, he finds a support (Sir 3,29-30).* *Be not impatient in prayers, and neglect not the giving of alms (Sir 7, 10).* *No good comes to him who gives comfort to the wicked, nor is it an act of mercy that he does (Sir 12, 3). To a poor man, however, be generous; keep him not waiting for your alms (Sir 29, 8).* *To a poor man, however, be generous; keep him not waiting for your alms; Because of the precept, help the needy, and in their want, do not send them away empty-handed. Spend your money for your brother and friend, and hide it not under a stone to perish; Dispose of your treasure as the Most High commands, for that will profit you more than the gold. Store up almsgiving in your treasure house, and it will save you from every evil; Better than a stout shield and a sturdy spear it will fight for you against the foe (Sir 29,8-13).* *In works of charity one offers fine flour, and when he gives alms he presents his sacrifice of praise (Sir 35, 2).*

*"Through all your days, my son, keep the Lord in mind, and suppress every desire to sin or to break his commandments. Perform good works all the days of your life, and do not tread the paths of wrongdoing. For if you are steadfast in your service, your good works will bring success, not only to you, but also to all those who live uprightly. "Give alms from your possessions. Do not turn your face away from any of the poor, and God's face will not be turned away from you. Son, give alms in proportion to what you own. If you have great wealth, give alms out of your abundance; if you have but little, distribute even some of that. But do not hesitate to give alms; you will be storing up a goodly treasure for yourself against the day of adversity. Almsgiving frees one from death, and keeps one from going into the dark abode. Alms are a worthy offering in the sight of the Most High for all who give them (Tb 4,5-11).*

*Tell the rich in the present age not to be proud and not to rely on so uncertain a thing as wealth but rather on God, who richly provides us with all things for our enjoyment. Tell them to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous, ready to share, thus accumulating as treasure a good foundation for the future, so as to win the life that is true life (1Tm 6.17-18)*

Man's body needs little things. What is given it more it is poison for it. Furthermore, man is not just a body. Even the soul must be nourished. It nourishes and grows with almsgiving, charity and works of mercy. Without alms, the soul dies. A soulless body abandons itself to all debauchery and impurity, every vice and lust. These vices squander all good fortune. Vice is the father of misery.

*Someone in the crowd said to him, "Teacher, tell my brother to share the inheritance with me." He replied to him, "Friend, who appointed me as your judge and arbitrator?" Then he said to the crowd, "Take care to guard against all greed, for though one may be rich, one's life does not consist of possessions." Then he told them a parable. "There was a rich man whose land produced a bountiful harvest. He asked himself, 'What shall I do, for I do not have space to store my harvest?' And he said, 'This is what I shall do: I shall tear down my barns and build larger ones. There I shall store all my grain and other goods and I shall say to myself, "Now as for you, you have so many good things stored up for many years, rest, eat, drink, be merry!" But God said to him, 'You fool, this night your life will be demanded of you; and the things you have prepared, to whom will they belong?' Thus will it be for the one who stores up treasure for himself but is not rich in what matters to God."*

Whoever does not enrich himself before God has no right to enter into eternal joy.

Mirror of Virtues, Angels, Saints, make us be enriched before God with our almsgiving.

# HE WILL GIRD HIMSELF

# Eph 2,12-22; Ps 84; Lk 12,35-38

### 23 OCTOBER

Jesus sees the Christian as if his life on earth was a perennial celebration of Easter. On the night of liberation the children of Israel had to eat the lamb. They ate it standing up, in travel suits, ready to leave everything on the table as soon as the Lord had given the order to leave the land of slavery. The yeast, which is a sign of waiting, was taken out of the houses. When the Lord passes, one must immediately leave everything and go on a journey. The hour is established only by God.

*Tell the whole community of Israel: On the tenth of this month every one of your families must procure for itself a lamb, one apiece for each household. If a family is too small for a whole lamb, it shall join the nearest household in procuring one and shall share in the lamb in proportion to the number of persons who partake of it. The lamb must be a year-old male and without blemish. You may take it from either the sheep or the goats. You shall keep it until the fourteenth day of this month, and then, with the whole assembly of Israel present, it shall be slaughtered during the evening twilight. They shall take some of its blood and apply it to the two doorposts and the lintel of every house in which they partake of the lamb. That same night they shall eat its roasted flesh with unleavened bread and bitter herbs. It shall not be eaten raw or boiled, but roasted whole, with its head and shanks and inner organs. None of it must be kept beyond the next morning; whatever is left over in the morning shall be burned up. "This is how you are to eat it: with your loins girt, sandals on your feet and your staff in hand, you shall eat like those who are in flight. It is the Passover of the Lord. For on this same night I will go through Egypt, striking down every first - born of the land, both man and beast, and executing judgment on all the gods of Egypt-I, the Lord! But the blood will mark the houses where you are. Seeing the blood, I will pass over you; thus, when I strike the land of Egypt, no destructive blow will come upon you* *(Ex 12,3-13).*

Nobody thinks and perhaps does not even know that our Eucharist is celebrated with unleavened bread. We do not have time to linger in the things of this world. We must be ready. Always in travel suit. When the Lord comes, we must be ready to go with him to his eternal sky. If He comes and finds us not ready, He might not take us with Him to his paradise. This truth no longer exists today. It is considered a remnant of a way of seeing things that is by now well out of date. Against all revelation, without any reference to it anymore, the disciples of Jesus became champions of a new preaching. In sharp contrast, in contradiction, in denial of the Gospel and of every other Word of God, they cry out to the whole world that there will be no judgment of God. There is no hell. All will be embraced by the Father's mercy and led into his eternal kingdom. Thus, it becomes useless to stay with the clothes tight at the sides and the lights on. Whether one is asleep or awake, whether good or bad, believer or unbeliever, whether Christian or non-Christian, faithful or unfaithful to the Gospel, it is of no use. All will be welcomed in the light of God.

*"Gird your loins and light your lamps and be like servants who await their master's return from a wedding, ready to open immediately when he comes and knocks. Blessed are those servants whom the master finds vigilant on his arrival. Amen, I say to you, he will gird himself, have them recline at table, and proceed to wait on them. And should he come in the second or third watch and find them prepared in this way, blessed are those servants.*

Knowing this, Jesus warned us. He told us to be careful not to be overwhelmed by the false prophecy. But what is false prophecy and how can we recognize it? Every word that contradicts the Word of Jesus in little or a lot is false prophecy. False prophets are all those who say that there is no judgment of God, there is no hell and no need to believe in Christ to be saved. False prophets are all those who deny obedience to the Gospel as the one and only way of true salvation on earth and in the heavens. It would be enough to tell all the false prophets: *"Christ does not think like you. His Gospel does not speak as you speak. I am on the side of the Gospel "*.

Virgin Most Pure, Angels and Saints, help us to be always with Jesus and with his Word.

# OF THE PERSON ENTRUSTED WITH MUCH

# Eph 3.2-12; C Is 12.2-6; Lk 12,39-48

### 24 OCTOBER

In the Letter to the Romans, St. Paul reveals that the Christian will be judged according to the Gospel, the pagan that has not known the Gospel will be judged according to his personal conscience. Every man is responsible even for the suffocation of his conscience in injustice. Otherwise, beyond this limit, there would be no responsibility. Instead we are responsible, we are guilty of having exceeded the limit of evil.

*All who sin outside the law will also perish without reference to it, and all who sin under the law will be judged in accordance with it. For it is not those who hear the law who are just in the sight of God; rather, those who observe the law will be justified. For when the Gentiles who do not have the law by nature observe the prescriptions of the law, they are a law for themselves even though they do not have the law. They show that the demands of the law are written in their hearts, while their conscience also bears witness and their conflicting thoughts accuse or even defend them on the day when, according to my gospel, God will judge people's hidden works through Christ Jesus (Rm 2,12-16).*

*Therefore, God handed them over to impurity through the lusts of their hearts for the mutual degradation of their bodies. They exchanged the truth of God for a lie and revered and worshiped the creature rather than the creator, who is blessed forever. Amen. Therefore, God handed them over to degrading passions. Their females exchanged natural relations for unnatural, and the males likewise gave up natural relations with females and burned with lust for one another. Males did shameful things with males and thus received in their own persons the due penalty for their perversity. And since they did not see fit to acknowledge God, God handed them over to their undiscerning mind to do what is improper. They are filled with every form of wickedness, evil, greed, and malice; full of envy, murder, rivalry, treachery, and spite. They are gossips and scandalmongers and they hate God. They are insolent, haughty, boastful, ingenious in their wickedness, and rebellious toward their parents. They are senseless, faithless, heartless, ruthless. Although they know the just decree of God that all who practice such things deserve death, they not only do them but give approval to those who practice them (Rm 1,24-32).*

Both judgments will be exercised on the foundation of every spiritual and material good given to every man by the Lord. This means that a pope will be judged as a pope, a bishop as a bishop, a presbyter as a presbyter and a baptized as a baptized person. But also a head of state as a head of state, a responsible as a responsible, a father of a family as a father of a family, a professor as a professor, a judge as a judge. The sins of the personal ministry in actions and in omission will be passed to scrutiny.

*Be sure of this: if the master of the house had known the hour when the thief was coming, he would not have let his house be broken into. You also must be prepared, for at an hour you do not expect, the Son of Man will come." Then Peter said, "Lord, is this parable meant for us or for everyone?" And the Lord replied, "Who, then, is the faithful and prudent steward whom the master will put in charge of his servants to distribute (the) food allowance at the proper time? Blessed is that servant whom his master on arrival finds doing so. Truly, I say to you, he will put him in charge of all his property. But if that servant says to himself, 'My master is delayed in coming,' and begins to beat the menservants and the maidservants, to eat and drink and get drunk, then that servant's master will come on an unexpected day and at an unknown hour and will punish him severely and assign him a place with the unfaithful. That servant who knew his master's will but did not make preparations nor act in accord with his will shall be beaten severely; and the servant who was ignorant of his master's will but acted in a way deserving of a severe beating shall be beaten only lightly. Much will be required of the person entrusted with much, and still more will be demanded of the person entrusted with more.*

But if we are all welcomed into the eternal kingdom of God, what Paul says and Jesus teaches belongs to the genre of the ancient fable. But if Jesus and Paul are the Word of God, even if in very different ways, then it is we who are in error. A pope with one word can save or destroy the Church. He will be judged on this Word. So it is said of bishops or presbyters or for those who exercise government on earth.

Mother of God, Angels and Saints, make us of a strong and invincible faith in the Word of Jesus.

# I HAVE COME TO SET THE EARTH ON FIRE

# Eph 3,14-21; Ps 32; Lk 12,49-53

### 25 OCTOBER

The Letter to the Hebrews reveals the great difference that reigns between the Old and the New Covenant. The Ancient was made of great visible signs. The New is grace that works from within the heart. It reveals its power in the fruits it produces. Is there a greater sign than the Eucharist? It is the mystery of faith. Nothing is seen. Everything is believed.

*You have not approached that which could be touched and a blazing fire and gloomy darkness and storm and a trumpet blast and a voice speaking words such that those who heard begged that no message be further addressed to them, for they could not bear to hear the command: "If even an animal touches the mountain, it shall be stoned." Indeed, so fearful was the spectacle that Moses said, "I am terrified and trembling." No, you have approached Mount Zion and the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and countless angels in festal gathering, and the assembly of the firstborn enrolled in heaven, and God the judge of all, and the spirits of the just made perfect, and Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and the sprinkled blood that speaks more eloquently than that of Abel (Heb 12,18-24).*

Saint Paul asks the disciples of Jesus to annihilate themselves in the humility and meekness of Christ Jesus. Their greatness is in the lowering, not in exaltation or elevation. Inner wealth must be manifested by the fruits that are produced.

*Have among yourselves the same attitude that is also yours in Christ Jesus, Who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God something to be grasped. Rather, he emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, coming in human likeness; and found human in appearance, he humbled himself, becoming obedient to death, even death on a cross. Because of this, God greatly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, of those in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father (Phil 2,1-11).*

It is not the visible fire that Jesus came to pour into the earth. His fire is invisible.

*When the days for his being taken up were fulfilled, he resolutely determined to journey to Jerusalem, and he sent messengers ahead of him. On the way they entered a Samaritan village to prepare for his reception there, but they would not welcome him because the destination of his journey was Jerusalem. When the disciples James and John saw this they asked, "Lord, do you want us to call down fire from heaven to consume them?" Jesus turned and rebuked them, and they journeyed to another village (Lk 9,51-56).*

Here is the fire that Jesus came to bring to earth: the Holy Spirit. It is the invisible fire whose visibility is given by the heart of stone transformed by him into a heart of flesh.

*When the time for Pentecost was fulfilled, they were all in one place together. And suddenly there came from the sky a noise like a strong driving wind, and it filled the entire house in which they were. Then there appeared to them tongues as of fire, which parted and came to rest on each one of them. And they were all filled with the holy Spirit and began to speak in different tongues, as the Spirit enabled them to proclaim (At 2,1-4).*

The division that Jesus will bring to the earth is the fruit of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit comes and separates the heart of stone from the heart of flesh, the heart of faith from the heart of non faith.

*"I have come to set the earth on fire, and how I wish it were already blazing! There is a baptism with which I must be baptized, and how great is my anguish until it is accomplished! Do you think that I have come to establish peace on the earth? No, I tell you, but rather division. From now on a household of five will be divided, three against two and two against three; a father will be divided against his son and a son against his father, a mother against her daughter and a daughter against her mother, a mother-in-law against her daughter-in-law and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law."*

Division is from the different paths of hearts. The way of Christ is different than the way of the world.

Wise Virgin, Angels and Saints ensure that the Christian is always on the path of Christ Jesus.

# MAKE AN EFFORT TO SETTLE THE MATTER

# Eph 4,1-6; Ps 23; Lk 12,54-59

### 26 OCTOBER

Man, created by God in his image and likeness, by his Lord received every gift of grace and truth, so that he could live a life in all in conformity with his nature. The Book of Sirach reveals to us the wonderful inner structure of man.

*The Lord from the earth created man, and in his own image he made him. Limited days of life he gives him and makes him return to earth again. He endows man with a strength of his own, and with power over all things else on earth. He puts the fear of him in all flesh, and gives him rule over beasts and birds. He forms men's tongues and eyes and ears, and imparts to them an understanding heart. With wisdom and knowledge he fills them; good and evil he shows them. He looks with favour upon their hearts, and shows them his glorious works, That they may describe the wonders of his deeds and praise his holy name. He has set before them knowledge, a law of life as their inheritance; An everlasting covenant he has made with them, his commandments he has revealed to them. His majestic glory their eyes beheld, his glorious voice their ears heard. He says to them, "Avoid all evil"; each of them he gives precepts about his fellow men. Their ways are ever known to him, they cannot be hidden from his eyes. Over every nation he places a ruler, but the Lord’s own portion is Israel. All their actions are clear as the sun to him, his eyes are ever upon their ways. Their wickedness cannot be hidden from him; all of their sins are before the Lord. A man's goodness God cherishes like a signet ring, a man's virtue, like the apple of his eye. Later he will rise up and repay them, and requite each one of them as they deserve. But to the penitent he provides a way back, he encourages those who are losing hope! Return to the Lord and give up sin, pray to him and make your offenses few. Turn again to the Most High and away from sin, hate intensely what he loathes; Who in the nether world can glorify the Most High in place of the living who offer their praise? No more can the dead give praise than those who have never lived; they glorify the Lord who are alive and well. How great the mercy of the Lord, his forgiveness of those who return to him! The like cannot be found in men, for not immortal is any son of man. Is anything brighter than the sun? Yet it can be eclipsed. How obscure then the thoughts of flesh and blood! God watches over the hosts of highest heaven, while all men are dust and ashes (Sir 17,1-32).*

Unfortunately this beautiful structure was like shattered by sin. Here is who Christ the Lord is - today this truth must be urgently preached even to the Church that has forgotten it - the one that came, that comes to take away the sin of the world. Having removed sin, the Holy Spirit recreates the unity and man begins to act as a man.

*He also said to the crowds, "When you see (a) cloud rising in the west you say immediately that it is going to rain - and so it does; and when you notice that the wind is blowing from the south you say that it is going to be hot - and so it is. You hypocrites! You know how to interpret the appearance of the earth and the sky; why do you not know how to interpret the present time? "Why do you not judge for yourselves what is right? If you are to go with your opponent before a magistrate, make an effort to settle the matter on the way; otherwise your opponent will turn you over to the judge, and the judge hand you over to the constable, and the constable throw you into prison. I say to you, you will not be released until you have paid the last penny."*

The grace of recomposition of the unity has been fructified by Jesus for every man. Responsible for the missed unity is now the Christian if he fails in the proclamation. Whoever rejects Christ and the Holy Spirit is also responsible. Today man can live as a man. If he does not live as a man, man is directly or indirectly responsible.

Mother of God, Angels and Saints, make us immune from every sin of omission.

# WHY SHOULD IT EXHAUST THE SOIL?

# Eph 4,7-16; Ps 121; Lk 13,1-9

### 27 OCTOBER

The Christian is immersed in history. He must walk in it always operating that sound discernment which is the separation of the thought of God from the thought of men. Saint Paul asks the Corinthians that they have a perfect judgment in order to evaluate if the true purpose of every spiritual gift or charisma lived by them is respected. Everything is given by God for a purpose. Everything is a means in view of the end. If the end is not reached, the means is used badly. It is urgent to make the right correction. The end of God must be achieved.

*So with yourselves: since you strive eagerly for spirits, seek to have an abundance of them for building up the church. Therefore, one who speaks in a tongue should pray to be able to interpret. (For) if I pray in a tongue, my spirit is at prayer but my mind is unproductive. So what is to be done? I will pray with the spirit, but I will also pray with the mind. I will sing praise with the spirit, but I will also sing praise with the mind. Otherwise, if you pronounce a blessing (with) the spirit, how shall one who holds the place of the uninstructed say the "Amen" to your thanksgiving, since he does not know what you are saying? For you may be giving thanks very well, but the other is not built up. I give thanks to God that I speak in tongues more than any of you, but in the church I would rather speak five words with my mind, so as to instruct others also, than ten thousand words in a tongue. Brothers, stop being childish in your thinking. In respect to evil be like infants, but in your thinking be mature. It is written in the law: "By people speaking strange tongues and by the lips of foreigners I will speak to this people, and even so they will not listen to me, says the Lord." Thus, tongues are a sign not for those who believe but for unbelievers, whereas prophecy is not for unbelievers but for those who believe. So if the whole church meets in one place and everyone speaks in tongues, and then uninstructed people or unbelievers should come in, will they not say that you are out of your minds? But if everyone is prophesying, and an unbeliever or uninstructed person should come in, he will be convinced by everyone and judged by everyone, and the secrets of his heart will be disclosed, and so he will fall down and worship God, declaring, "God is really in your midst" (1Cor 14,12-25).*

A tower falls. It does not fall because one is guilty. Falling, it manifests that there is no security in the life of men. In a moment you are in time, the next moment you are in eternity. Jesus asks this wisdom of man. Being life on earth is so fragile, it is right that everyone is always ready to operate the passage for eternity. The passage is prepared with a profound conversion of heart and mind.

*At that time some people who were present there told him about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with the blood of their sacrifices. He said to them in reply, "Do you think that because these Galileans suffered in this way they were greater sinners than all other Galileans? By no means! But I tell you, if you do not repent, you will all perish as they did! Or those eighteen people who were killed when the tower at Siloam fell on them  - do you think they were more guilty than everyone else who lived in Jerusalem? By no means! But I tell you, if you do not repent, you will all perish as they did!" And he told them this parable: "There once was a person who had a fig tree planted in his orchard, and when he came in search of fruit on it but found none, he said to the gardener, 'For three years now I have come in search of fruit on this fig tree but have found none. (So) cut it down. Why should it exhaust the soil?' He said to him in reply, 'Sir, leave it for this year also, and I shall cultivate the ground around it and fertilize it; it may bear fruit in the future. If not you can cut it down.'"*

Another necessary discernment. The owner of the vineyard knows how to distinguish a tree bearing fruit from one that does not bear any fruit. The tree that does not bear fruit must be cut. The land must be exploited to the fullest. The farmer intervenes. Another urgent discernment. Can I do anything so that the tree bears fruit? Can I multiply my strength? I will multiply them. If the tree does not fructify, then it is right to be cut. Discernment is the essence of every man of God. If you plant a structure and it does not produce fruit, then it is right to ask: whose is the non-fruiting responsibility, of the structure work or the peasants that do not know how to cure it?

Mother of God, Angels and Saints, always make the Christian a person with perfect discernment.

# MASTER, I WANT TO SEE

# Jer 31,7-9; Ps 125; Heb 5,1-6; Mk 10,46-52

### 28 OCTOBER

As soon as man was created, he saw with the eyes of God, he thought with the thought of God, he loved with the heart of God and wanted with the will of God. Everything revealed to him the glory of the Lord, his greatness and goodness and the splendour of his omnipotence.

*The Lord God said: "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a suitable partner for him." So the Lord God formed out of the ground various wild animals and various birds of the air, and he brought them to the man to see what he would call them; whatever the man called each of them would be its name. The man gave names to all the cattle, all the birds of the air, and all the wild animals; but none proved to be the suitable partner for the man. So the Lord God cast a deep sleep on the man, and while he was asleep, he took out one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. The Lord God then built up into a woman the rib that he had taken from the man. When he brought her to the man, the man said: "This one, at last, is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; This one shall be called 'woman,' for out of 'her man' this one has been taken." That is why a man leaves his father and mother and clings to his wife, and the two of them become one body. The man and his wife were both naked, yet they felt no shame (Gen 2,18-25).*

Then the man sinned. He lost God’s eyes, thought, heart and will. He became blind. He sees everything as a blind and even thinks as a blind man. Instinct, concupiscence and moral disorder enter his heart. He really made a big decline. He no longer knows himself.

*Now the serpent was the most cunning of all the animals that the Lord God had made. The serpent asked the woman, "Did God really tell you not to eat from any of the trees in the garden?" The woman answered the serpent: "We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden; it is only about the fruit of the tree in the middle of the garden that God said, 'You shall not eat it or even touch it, lest you die.'" But the serpent said to the woman: "You certainly will not die! No, God knows well that the moment you eat of it your eyes will be opened and you will be like gods who know what is good and what is bad." The woman saw that the tree was good for food, pleasing to the eyes, and desirable for gaining wisdom. So she took some of its fruit and ate it; and she also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it. Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized that they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made loincloths for themselves. When they heard the sound of the Lord God moving about in the garden at the breezy time of the day, the man and his wife hid themselves from the Lord God among the trees of the garden. The Lord God then called to the man and asked him, "Where are you?" He answered, "I heard you in the garden; but I was afraid, because I was naked, so I hid myself." Then he asked, "Who told you that you were naked? You have eaten, then, from the tree of which I had forbidden you to eat!" The man replied, "The woman whom you put here with me - she gave me fruit from the tree, so I ate it" (Gen 3,1-12).*

The man, symbolized by the blind man of Jericho, asks Jesus to give him sight again. For this he must take away the sin from his heart. Now he might only give him the sight of the flesh. He follows him to Jerusalem. Only after his death he might give him the eyes of the spirit. It will be just then that he will come return to see again with the eyes of God.

*They came to Jericho. And as he was leaving Jericho with his disciples and a sizable crowd, Bartimaeus, a blind man, the son of Timaeus, sat by the roadside begging. On hearing that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to cry out and say, "Jesus, son of David, have pity on me." And many rebuked him, telling him to be silent. But he kept calling out all the more, "Son of David, have pity on me." Jesus stopped and said, "Call him." So they called the blind man, saying to him, "Take courage; get up, he is calling you." He threw aside his cloak, sprang up, and came to Jesus. Jesus said to him in reply, "What do you want me to do for you?" The blind man replied to him, "Master, I want to see." Jesus told him, "Go your way; your faith has saved you." Immediately he received his sight and followed him on the way.*

Sin and eyes of God do not stay together. You sin, you become blind. You do not see according to God. With sin we take the heart of Satan and see according to Satan.

Virgin Mary, Angels and Saints, give us sight again. Make us see with the eyes of God.

# WOMAN, YOU ARE SET FREE OF YOUR INFIRMITY

# Eph 4,32-5,8; Ps 1; Lk 13,10-17

### 29 OCTOBER

It is right to ask oneself: why only for the third commandment do we have such great terror for its transgression as to reach even to limit or prohibit also the most legitimate and holy things? The answer comes to us from the Second Book of Chronicles.

*Early and often did the Lord, the God of their fathers, send his messengers to them, for he had compassion on his people and his dwelling place. But they mocked the messengers of God, despised his warnings, and scoffed at his prophets, until the anger of the Lord against his people was so inflamed that there was no remedy. Then he brought up against them the king of the Chaldeans, who slew their young men in their own sanctuary building, sparing neither young man nor maiden, neither the aged nor the decrepit; he delivered all of them over into his grip. All the utensils of the house of God, the large and the small, and the treasures of the Lord’s house and of the king and his princes, all these he brought to Babylon. They burnt the house of God, tore down the walls of Jerusalem, set all its palaces afire, and destroyed all its precious objects. Those who escaped the sword he carried captive to Babylon, where they became his and his sons' servants until the kingdom of the Persians came to power. All this was to fulfil the word of the Lord spoken by Jeremiah: "Until the land has retrieved its lost Sabbaths, during all the time it lies waste it shall have rest while seventy years are fulfilled" (2Chr 26: 15-22).*

It is as if exile had been caused by the non-observance of the Sabbath. Nehemiah does not want a second exile and makes a commitment so that the Sabbath is kept holy.

*In those days I perceived that men in Judah were treading the winepresses on the Sabbath; that they were bringing in sheaves of grain, loading them on their asses, together with wine, grapes, figs, and every other kind of burden, and bringing them to Jerusalem on the sabbath day. I warned them to sell none of these victuals. In Jerusalem itself the Tyrians who were resident there were importing fish and every other kind of merchandise and selling it to the Judahites on the Sabbath. I took the nobles of Judah to task, demanding of them: "What is this evil thing that you are doing, profaning the Sabbath day? Did not your fathers act in this same way, with the result that our God has brought all this evil upon us and upon this city? Would you add to the wrath against Israel by once more profaning the Sabbath?" When the shadows were falling on the gates of Jerusalem before the Sabbath, I ordered the doors to be closed and forbade them to be reopened till after the Sabbath. I posted some of my own men at the gates so that no burden might enter on the Sabbath day. The merchants and sellers of various kinds of merchandise spent the night once or twice outside Jerusalem, but then I warned them, saying to them: "Why do you spend the night alongside the wall? If you keep this up, I will lay hands on you!" From that time on, they did not return on the Sabbath. Then I ordered the Levites to purify themselves and to go and watch the gates, so that the Sabbath day might be kept holy (Ne 13,15-22).*

The terror of exile caused the truth of the Sabbath to be entirely falsified. Jesus came to give his divine truth to the whole Law. He knows what the Father wants from men. For this he proclaims himself Lord of the Sabbath. On Sabbaths one can love.

*He was teaching in a synagogue on the Sabbath. And a woman was there who for eighteen years had been crippled by a spirit; she was bent over, completely incapable of standing erect. When Jesus saw her, he called to her and said, "Woman, you are set free of your infirmity." He laid his hands on her, and she at once stood up straight and glorified God. But the leader of the synagogue, indignant that Jesus had cured on the Sabbath, said to the crowd in reply, "There are six days when work should be done. Come on those days to be cured, not on the Sabbath day." The Lord said to him in reply, "Hypocrites! Does not each one of you on the Sabbath untie his ox or his ass from the manger and lead it out for watering? This daughter of Abraham, whom Satan has bound for eighteen years now, ought she not to have been set free on the Sabbath day from this bondage?" When he said this, all his adversaries were humiliated; and the whole crowd rejoiced at all the splendid deeds done by him.*

The full heart of God lives the Law according to the heart of God. The heart of sin lives the Law from its falsity. Jesus with a very pure heart gives most pure truth to the Law.

Mother of the Lord, Angels and Saints, make us a pure heart to live the Law in truth.

# IT IS LIKE A MUSTARD SEED

# Eph 5,21-33; Ps 127; Lk 13,18-21

### 30 OCTOBER

What is there smaller than a word? Yet with one word the earth can be destroyed. One word creates life in a heart. One word causes death.

*If you blow upon a spark, it quickens into flame, if you spit on it, it dies out; yet both you do with your mouth! Cursed be gossips and the double-tongued, for they destroy the peace of many. A meddlesome tongue subverts many, and makes them refugees among the peoples; It destroys walled cities, and overthrows powerful dynasties. A meddlesome tongue can drive virtuous women from their homes and rob them of the fruit of their toil; Whoever heeds it has no rest, nor can he dwell in peace. A blow from a whip raises a welt, but a blow from the tongue smashes bones; Many have fallen by the edge of the sword, but not as many as by the tongue. Happy he who is sheltered from it, and has not endured its wrath; Who has not borne its yoke nor been fettered with its chain; For its yoke is a yoke of iron and its chains are chains of bronze! Dire is the death it inflicts, besides which even the nether world is a gain; It will not take hold among the just nor scorch them in its flame, But those who forsake the Lord will fall victims to it, as it burns among them unquenchably! It will hurl itself against them like a lion; like a panther, it will tear them to pieces. As you hedge round your vineyard with thorns, set barred doors over your mouth; As you seal up your silver and gold, so balance and weigh your words. Take care not to slip by your tongue and fall victim to your foe waiting in ambush (Sir 28,12-28).*

St. James tells us that the word of man draws its power of evil and death from the Gehenna of fire. It is as if the man was connected with the heart of Satan.

*Not many of you should become teachers, my brothers, for you realize that we will be judged more strictly, for we all fall short in many respects. If anyone does not fall short in speech, he is a perfect man, able to bridle his whole body also. If we put bits into the mouths of horses to make them obey us, we also guide their whole bodies. It is the same with ships: even though they are so large and driven by fierce winds, they are steered by a very small rudder wherever the pilot's inclination wishes. In the same way the tongue is a small member and yet has great pretensions. Consider how small a fire can set a huge forest ablaze. The tongue is also a fire. It exists among our members as a world of malice, defiling the whole body and setting the entire course of our lives on fire, itself set on fire by Gehenna. For every kind of beast and bird, of reptile and sea creature, can be tamed and has been tamed by the human species, but no human being can tame the tongue. It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison. With it we bless the Lord and Father, and with it we curse human beings who are made in the likeness of God. From the same mouth come blessing and cursing. This need not be so, my brothers. Does a spring gush forth from the same opening both pure and brackish water? Can a fig tree, my brothers, produce olives, or a grapevine figs? Neither can salt water yield fresh (Jm 3,1-12).*

If the Christian is connected to the heart of Christ, his word, a very small seed and very small yeast, will grow excessively and produce true life. Instead, if his word is connected with the heart of Satan, death will always reign in his footsteps.

*Then he said, "What is the kingdom of God like? To what can I compare it? It is like a mustard seed that a person took and planted in the garden. When it was fully grown, it became a large bush and 'the birds of the sky dwelt in its branches.'" Again he said, "To what shall I compare the kingdom of God? It is like yeast that a woman took and mixed (in) with three measures of wheat flour until the whole batch of dough was leavened."*

The Christian must not worry about the great works to be done and not even wish to see the fruits of his missionary work instantly. Jesus asks him only one thing: spreading the seed of his word in the hearts, put the leaven of his Gospel in the mass of the world. This is enough for Jesus to make his kingdom grow and bear much fruit. Is not the kingdom of God destroyed by the false word of Christians today?

Mother of God, Angels and Saints, unite us to the heart of Christ to always say his Word.

# BUT WILL NOT BE STRONG ENOUGH

# Eph 6.1-9; Ps 144; Lk 13.22-30

### 31 OCTOBER

Jesus, filled with the Spirit of wisdom, intelligence, counsel and knowledge, never lets himself be drawn into vain and idle questions. He always speaks from the science and from the truth of his Father. It is of no use to men to know if those who are saved are few or many. Nor do they need to know if hell is empty or full. By a theological absurd and against the truth of the Gospel which affirms that many are those who are lost, I could be alone tomorrow to be plunged into that place of eternal torment. The word of Jesus is divinely wise and intelligent: *"Strive to enter through the narrow door, because, I tell you, many will try to enter, but they will not succeed".* Here is the first terrifying reality of humanity's eternal future: *"Many will try to enter, but they will not succeed"*. What prevents them from entering, while trying to enter? Reading the Gospel according to Matthew it is clear that many will present themselves with apparently evangelical works, but that in reality they are not at all according to the Gospel.

*"Enter through the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the road broad that leads to destruction, and those who enter through it are many. How narrow the gate and constricted the road that leads to life. And those who find it are few. "Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but underneath are ravenous wolves. By their fruits you will know them. Do people pick grapes from thorn bushes, or figs from thistles? Just so, every good tree bears good fruit, and a rotten tree bears bad fruit. A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a rotten tree bear good fruit. Every tree that does not bear good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire. So by their fruits you will know them. "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father in heaven. Many will say to me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name? Did we not drive out demons in your name? Did we not do mighty deeds in your name?' Then I will declare to them solemnly, 'I never knew you. Depart from me, you evildoers' (Mt 7,13-23).*

According to another Word of Jesus the Lord, the impossibility is given by non-perseverance to the end. You start with the kingdom of God, you end up with the kingdom of Satan.

*"Watch out for yourselves. They will hand you over to the courts. You will be beaten in synagogues. You will be arraigned before governors and kings because of me, as a witness before them. But the gospel must first be preached to all nations. When they lead you away and hand you over, do not worry beforehand about what you are to say. But say whatever will be given to you at that hour. For it will not be you who are speaking but the holy Spirit. Brother will hand over brother to death, and the father his child; children will rise up against parents and have them put to death. You will be hated by all because of my name. But the one who perseveres to the end will be saved (Mk 13,9-13).*

There is only one way to enter the eternal kingdom of God: live forever in his Word. Only the Word is the divine chariot that leads man from earth to heaven.

*He passed through towns and villages, teaching as he went and making his way to Jerusalem. Someone asked him, "Lord, will only a few people be saved?" He answered them, "Strive to enter through the narrow gate, for many, I tell you, will attempt to enter but will not be strong enough. After the master of the house has arisen and locked the door, then will you stand outside knocking and saying, 'Lord, open the door for us.' He will say to you in reply, 'I do not know where you are from.' And you will say, 'We ate and drank in your company and you taught in our streets.' Then he will say to you, 'I do not know where (you) are from. Depart from me, all you evildoers!' And there will be wailing and grinding of teeth when you see Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God and you yourselves cast out. And people will come from the east and the west and from the north and the south and will recline at table in the kingdom of God. For behold, some are last who will be first, and some are first who will be last."*

Every Christian must have little interest to what the other Christian says about the kingdom of heaven. Everyone is asked to put all attention to reach it. It is the truth.

Wise Virgin, Angels and Saints, free us from the foolishness that leads to perdition.