**FEBRUARY 2019**

## FIRST DECADE OF FEBRUARY

## As if a man were to scatter seed on the land

## Heb 10,32-39; Ps 36; Mk 4,26-34

### 1 FEBRUARY

Impatience and haste are the two great temptations of the missionary of Christ the Lord. Against these powerful temptations Saint James exhorts Christians to imitate the patience of the peasant, that knows how to wait for time to gather the precious fruits from his trees.

*Be patient, therefore, brothers, until the coming of the Lord. See how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, being patient with it until it receives the early and the late rains. You too must be patient. Make your hearts firm, because the coming of the Lord is at hand. Do not complain, brothers, about one another, that you may not be judged. Behold, the Judge is standing before the gates. Take as an example of hardship and patience, brothers, the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord. Indeed we call blessed those who have persevered. You have heard of the perseverance of Job, and you have seen the purpose of the Lord, because "the Lord is compassionate and merciful" (Jm 5,7-11).*

Saint Paul sees his life as a race behind Christ. Christ is always before him. He is unattainable. Until death one must have the constancy and the patience to run. Salvation is made of time, often long, indeed very long time. This is why Jesus says that only those who persevere until the end will be saved.

*(But) whatever gains I had, these I have come to consider a loss because of Christ. More than that, I even consider everything as a loss because of the supreme good of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have accepted the loss of all things and I consider them so much rubbish, that I may gain Christ and be found in him, not having any righteousness of my own based on the law but that which comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God, depending on faith to know him and the power of his resurrection and (the) sharing of his sufferings by being conformed to his death, if somehow I may attain the resurrection from the dead. It is not that I have already taken hold of it or have already attained perfect maturity, but I continue my pursuit in hope that I may possess it, since I have indeed been taken possession of by Christ (Jesus). Brothers, I for my part do not consider myself to have taken possession. Just one thing: forgetting what lies behind but straining forward to what lies ahead, I continue my pursuit toward the goal, the prize of God's upward calling, in Christ Jesus. Let us, then, who are "perfectly mature" adopt this attitude. And if you have a different attitude, this too God will reveal to you. Only, with regard to what we have attained, continue on the same course. Join with others in being imitators of me, brothers, and observe those who thus conduct themselves according to the model you have in us. For many, as I have often told you and now tell you even in tears, conduct themselves as enemies of the cross of Christ. Their end is destruction. Their God is their stomach; their glory is in their "shame." Their minds are occupied with earthly things. But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we also await a saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ. He will change our lowly body to conform with his glorified body by the power that enables him also to bring all things into subjection to himself (Phil 3,7-21).*

The beginnings with God are always invisible, like a seed thrown to the ground. Time will turn the seed into a big tree. The weather will make a grain of wheat a ripe ear.

*He said, "This is how it is with the kingdom of God; it is as if a man were to scatter seed on the land and would sleep and rise night and day and the seed would sprout and grow, he knows not how. Of its own accord the land yields fruit, first the blade, then the ear, then the full grain in the ear. And when the grain is ripe, he wields the sickle at once, for the harvest has come." He said, "To what shall we compare the kingdom of God, or what parable can we use for it? It is like a mustard seed that, when it is sown in the ground, is the smallest of all the seeds on the earth. But once it is sown, it springs up and becomes the largest of plants and puts forth large branches, so that the birds of the sky can dwell in its shade." With many such parables he spoke the word to them as they were able to understand it. Without parables he did not speak to them, but to his own disciples he explained everything in private.*

The teaching of Jesus is divine. He asks every one of his disciples for the utmost attention so that he sows only good wheat, his good Word, just as He has sown the Good Word of the Father in their hearts. The seed is the bearer of an invisible life. Since it is true seed, true life, it will grow, it will develop and will become a great tree.

Mother of God, Angels and Saints, make us persevering sowers of the Good Word of Jesus.

## My eyes have seen your salvation

## Ml 3,1-4 opp. Heb 2,14-18; Ps 23; Lk 2,22-40

### 2 FEBRUARY

For the Holy Spirit to move our heart, mind, desires, will, soul, spirit, body, mouth, ears, hands and every cell of our being, it is necessary that we abide in the Law of the Lord. His action is always twofold: first he must lead us from sin to grace, from disobedience to obedience and from death to life. Only then can he take our life in his hands and lead it according to the divine will. But for him to be able to lead us, to move, to push us it is obligatory for us to grow in grace and truth. Sin makes us leaden boulders. We are immovable. Grace makes us like dry leaves. We can remain on the wings of the wind of the Holy Spirit. The more we grow in grace and in wisdom, the more our resistance fails. Jesus was led to the cross, because his growth in obedience was at the most of human possibilities. Simeon is a just man, he lives in fear of the Lord and loves the law of his God. He has consecrated his life to it. Mary and Joseph also love the Law of their God. They observe it in all its precepts. The Holy Spirit can move ones and the others. He can ensure that they meet in the temple of the Lord. We live in the Law, we meet in the house of God, to sing his truth, his love, his justice and his great mercy. This always happens when one dwells in the Law of the Lord. But when one is outside, the Spirit cannot operate and no encounter might ever take place. Who is outside the law does not know the Spirit of God.

*When the days were completed for their purification according to the law of Moses, they took him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord, just as it is written in the law of the Lord, "Every male that opens the womb shall be consecrated to the Lord," and to offer the sacrifice of "a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons," in accordance with the dictate in the law of the Lord. Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon. This man was righteous and devout, awaiting the consolation of Israel, and the holy Spirit was upon him. It had been revealed to him by the holy Spirit that he should not see death before he had seen the Messiah of the Lord. He came in the Spirit into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus to perform the custom of the law in regard to him, he took him into his arms and blessed God, saying: "Now, Master, you may let your servant go in peace, according to your word, for my eyes have seen your salvation, which you prepared in sight of all the peoples, a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and glory for your people Israel."*

*The child's father and mother were amazed at what was said about him; and Simeon blessed them and said to Mary his mother, "Behold, this child is destined for the fall and rise of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be contradicted (and you yourself a sword will pierce) so that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed." There was also a prophetess, Anna, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was advanced in years, having lived seven years with her husband after her marriage, and then as a widow until she was eighty-four. She never left the temple, but worshiped night and day with fasting and prayer. And coming forward at that very time, she gave thanks to God and spoke about the child to all who were awaiting the redemption of Jerusalem. When they had fulfilled all the prescriptions of the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favour of God was upon him.*

Simeon sent by the Spirit of God into the temple, sees with the eyes of the Holy Spirit the Child whom Mary carries in her arms. He recognizes him with the wisdom of the Spirit that is in his heart. He speaks of Him with the mouth of the Spirit that was made his mouth. The Son of Mary is the light that God has sent into the world so that the peoples were illuminated of his true mystery. There is no true knowledge of God except in the light that is Christ Jesus. It is not a light that emanates from Christ, like the light that is emanated from the sun. He knows the Father who becomes with Christ a single body, a single life and a single light. Whoever does not become the light of Christ in the light of Christ never might he know the mystery of the Father. Christ and the Father are one mystery. Christ is in the mystery of the Father and knows the Father. The Christian is in the mystery of Christ, he knows Christ and knows the Father. Christ is the light of the Father. We know the Father if we are the light of Christ.

Mother of God, Angels and Saints, make us light to illuminate from and in the light of Christ.

## Isn't this the son of Joseph?

## Jer 1,4-5.17-19; Ps 70; 1 Cor 12,31-13,13; Lk 4,21-30

### 3 FEBRUARY

The whole Gospel testifies, in every word that Jesus is moved, guided, supported and guarded by the wisdom of the Holy Spirit, that acts in Him with all power of science and revelation. In the synagogue He revealed the fulfilment of Isaiah's prophecy. Thus saying, Jesus manifests himself as the true prophet of the living God with a well-defined mission to fulfil. He keeps away every idea that He can be identified as the Messiah of God, that came among them. In the times of Jesus Messianism was strongly politicized, because of the subjugation to a foreign people of the sons of Israel, whose vocation was the political freedom of every people of the earth. Instead, the prophet is linked to the Word of God. He is always sent to remember the Law of the Covenant, to invite to conversion, to announce the Lord's forgiveness, to call everyone to full obedience to the will of their Lord, just as it is contained in the Law, in the Prophets and in the Psalms. Prophet and Word are one.

Those who listen to him know Jesus from his childhood. They know of his humble origins. He is from a poor, simple and small family. If he wants to be believed, he must perform the miracles performed elsewhere. The prophet is not true because he performs prodigies. He is true because he says the true Word of the Lord. The truth of the Prophet is the Word that is fulfilled. But the truth of the prophet is also the perfect match between the Word that He says and the Word uttered by God and written for his people on Mount Sinai. These two truths must be one truth. The current Word of the prophet might never contradict the Word which is at the foundation of the Covenant and which are the Ten Commandments. If there is difference, discrepancy, opposition, divergence, negation and repeal, then one must strongly doubt the truth of the prophet. He lacks the testimony of the Two Tablets of the Law. But when there is confirmation of the Two Tablets of the Law of God, which are the same life of the Prophet, then there is no reason to doubt.

*He said to them, "Today this scripture passage is fulfilled in your hearing." And all spoke highly of him and were amazed at the gracious words that came from his mouth. They also asked, "Isn't this the son of Joseph?" He said to them, "Surely you will quote me this proverb, 'Physician, cure yourself,' and say, 'Do here in your native place the things that we heard were done in Capernaum.'" And he said, "Amen, I say to you, no prophet is accepted in his own native place. Indeed, I tell you, there were many widows in Israel in the days of Elijah when the sky was closed for three and a half years and a severe famine spread over the entire land. It was to none of these that Elijah was sent, but only to a widow in Zarephath in the land of Sidon. Again, there were many lepers in Israel during the time of Elisha the prophet; yet not one of them was cleansed, but only Naaman the Syrian." When the people in the synagogue heard this, they were all filled with fury. They rose up, drove him out of the town, and led him to the brow of the hill on which their town had been built, to hurl him down headlong. But he passed through the midst of them and went away.*

Jesus defends his truth and also justifies the non-accomplishment of miracles, making an explicit reference to the prophet Elijah and Elisha. Elijah made two great miracles to a widow in Sarepta of Sidon. He made sure that the oil did not run out and the flour did not fail for more than three years. He also resurrected the son of the widow that was dead. Elisha healed only a foreigner from leprosy. If Jesus did some miracles to others and not to his fellow citizens, He does nothing but act according to the style of true prophets. This is a sign of his truth. While it would not be a sign if he performed miracles among them. The people do not accept this justification. On the contrary, it fills with indignation and wants to plunge Jesus from the precipice on which their city was built. But Jesus passes among them and sets off to go elsewhere. But now he knows that there are two ways of being: from God, from the Father, in the Holy Spirit and from the will of men. When He does not say and does not do what men want, he will always be exposed to death. This is why, having to always do the will of his Father, he must be entirely wrapped with the Holy Spirit. The Spirit must take care of Him and also suggest him the simplest words. Jesus cannot walk alone.

Mother of God, Angels and Saints, we want to obey God. Intercede for us, praying.

## Send us into the swine. Let us enter them

## Heb 11,32-40; Ps 30; Mk 5,1-20

### 4 FEBRUARY

Satan is cunning and shrewd. It is a matter of cunning and shrewdness all aimed at doing evil. He knows that with Jesus nothing can be done. He owes him all obedience. If Jesus tells him to get out of the body of the man he keeps under his complete government, he will have to go out. If he goes out, it's a defeat for him. How to ensure that his defeat turns into a victory? How to arrive at so that Jesus is made to get out of that territory in the same way that he will come out of the body of the possessed? By asking Jesus to send the Legion into pigs. Jesus consents and gives permission. The legion leaves the man so far possessed, enters the pigs, these fall from the cliff into the lake and drown in the waters. The herdsmen see what happened, they run to warn those of the city. They rush and ask Jesus to leave their territory. If He still were to let the devils enter some other herd of pigs, it would be the end for their economy. They would die of hunger. Jesus listens to their desire and leaves the territory. Did not Jesus know that he would have been invited to leave that region? Why then does he consent? Why does he let Satan to appear victorious and not won? Jesus is never moved by history either present or future. He is from the sole will of the Father, that knows in his fullness by living and dwelling in the communion of the Holy Spirit. In itself, even Jesus must not understand what he does - even if he understands it because he is in science and knowledge of the Spirit of God - he must only obey what his Father wants him to do. Today he wants the Son to give permission to the Legion to take possession of the pigs and the Son allows it. After the Father asks him that he listens to the voice of those people and the Son obeys. Obedience before and after. Everything in Jesus is from obedience to the command that the Father makes reach to his ear.

*They came to the other side of the sea, to the territory of the Gerasenes. When he got out of the boat, at once a man from the tombs who had an unclean spirit met him. The man had been dwelling among the tombs, and no one could restrain him any longer, even with a chain. In fact, he had frequently been bound with shackles and chains, but the chains had been pulled apart by him and the shackles smashed, and no one was strong enough to subdue him. Night and day among the tombs and on the hillsides he was always crying out and bruising himself with stones. Catching sight of Jesus from a distance, he ran up and prostrated himself before him, crying out in a loud voice, "What have you to do with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I adjure you by God, do not torment me!" (He had been saying to him, "Unclean spirit, come out of the man!") He asked him, "What is your name?" He replied, "Legion is my name. There are many of us." And he pleaded earnestly with him not to drive them away from that territory. Now a large herd of swine was feeding there on the hillside. And they pleaded with him, "Send us into the swine. Let us enter them." And he let them, and the unclean spirits came out and entered the swine. The herd of about two thousand rushed down a steep bank into the sea, where they were drowned. The swineherds ran away and reported the incident in the town and throughout the countryside. And people came out to see what had happened. As they approached Jesus, they caught sight of the man who had been possessed by Legion, sitting there clothed and in his right mind. And they were seized with fear. Those who witnessed the incident explained to them what had happened to the possessed man and to the swine. Then they began to beg him to leave their district. As he was getting into the boat, the man who had been possessed pleaded to remain with him. But he would not permit him but told him instead, "Go home to your family and announce to them all that the Lord in his pity has done for you." Then the man went off and began to proclaim in the Decapolis what Jesus had done for him; and all were amazed.*

The story is just as it was told. What is hidden for us in this story? What teaching must we draw out? Jesus wants to reveal to us a very high truth. The Father's command must always be heard. Immediate obedience must be given to it. What produces the command is not up to us to evaluate it and not even to act according to the fruits it produces. In the Sanhedrin Jesus confesses his truth, just as it is written in the heart of his Father. What does this obedience produce? Death by crucifixion. The after does not belong to Christ, as it does not belong to us. The highest, immediate and pure obedience to every Word of the Lord belongs to us.

Mother of God, Angels and Saints ensure that our way is only obedience. The after is God's.

## She felt in her body that she was healed of her affliction

## Heb 12,1-4; Ps 21; Mk 5,21-43

### 5 FEBRUARY

Faith is a relationship of the purest truth with the Person who is the source of our life. Man is always poor in all life. He lost it with his sin. For his disobedience he entered into death. He might draw life only in his God, who is eternal life and the source of all life. The Father has placed his eternal life in Christ Jesus. For us Christ is the source, the fountain, the well and the cistern from which the living water that gives all life comes. Before Christ, the relationships of faith are many. We can say that every man has his own special and particular relationship. There is a woman. She loses her life every day. Blood is life. She cannot hold life in her body. The world that is in death cannot help her. In fact she consumes her substances running from one doctor to another, but without any success. Life runs away from her body. This woman believes in Christ, the source of life. If she can even touch the hem of his cloak, life will remain in her. The flow of blood will end forever. She approaches and touches the mantle. The blood stops flowing instantly. Jesus wants the faith of this woman to be a model for all of humanity and asks that what has happened in the secret of the heart be brought to light. Now those who are lifeless, know that Christ can give every life. For all He is life and the source of life.

*When Jesus had crossed again (in the boat) to the other side, a large crowd gathered around him, and he stayed close to the sea. One of the synagogue officials, named Jairus, came forward. Seeing him he fell at his feet and pleaded earnestly with him, saying, "My daughter is at the point of death. Please, come lay your hands on her that she may get well and live." He went off with him, and a large crowd followed him and pressed upon him. There was a woman afflicted with haemorrhages for twelve years. She had suffered greatly at the hands of many doctors and had spent all that she had. Yet she was not helped but only grew worse. She had heard about Jesus and came up behind him in the crowd and touched his cloak. She said, "If I but touch his clothes, I shall be cured." Immediately her flow of blood dried up. She felt in her body that she was healed of her affliction. Jesus, aware at once that power had gone out from him, turned around in the crowd and asked, "Who has touched my clothes?" But his disciples said to him, "You see how the crowd is pressing upon you, and yet you ask, 'Who touched me?'" And he looked around to see who had done it. The woman, realizing what had happened to her, approached in fear and trembling. She fell down before Jesus and told him the whole truth. He said to her, "Daughter, your faith has saved you. Go in peace and be cured of your affliction." While he was still speaking, people from the synagogue official's house arrived and said, "Your daughter has died; why trouble the teacher any longer?" Disregarding the message that was reported, Jesus said to the synagogue official, "Do not be afraid; just have faith." He did not allow anyone to accompany him inside except Peter, James, and John, the brother of James. When they arrived at the house of the synagogue official, he caught sight of a commotion, people weeping and wailing loudly. So he went in and said to them, "Why this commotion and weeping? The child is not dead but asleep." And they ridiculed him. Then he put them all out. He took along the child's father and mother and those who were with him and entered the room where the child was. He took the child by the hand and said to her, "Talitha koum," which means, "Little girl, I say to you, arise!" The girl, a child of twelve, arose immediately and walked around. (At that) they were utterly astounded. He gave strict orders that no one should know this and said that she should be given something to eat.*

A father, Jairus, sees that life is abandoning his daughter, seriously ill. He resorts to Jesus and asks that he comes and stops his daughter's life, so that it does not leave. As they move home, the daughter dies. People come to inform him and suggest him not to disturb the Master. By now life is gone and there is nothing He might do. Jesus reassures Jairus. He tells him not to fear, but to have faith. He is not only able to stop life so that it does not leave the body. He is also capable of recalling life to return to its body. That is what happens. Jesus calls life. It comes back into its body. The daughter with life is given back to the Father. Every man can lose his life in many ways and several times. He must know only one thing: only Christ is eternal life and only He is the source constituted by the Father in whom every life is drawn. Who has this faith comes, asks, knocks and comes back to life. Who does not believe, remains in his death.

Mother of God, Angels and Saints, make us of very pure faith in Christ Jesus, the source of life.

## And they took offense at him

## Heb 12,4-7.11-15; Ps 102; Mk 6,1-6

### 6 FEBRUARY

There is a scandal that arises from our sin or that of others and from these scandals we must strictly abstain. The words of Jesus are very clear.

*If your right eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one of your members than to have your whole body thrown into Gehenna. And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one of your members than to have your whole body go into Gehenna (Mt 5,29-30). "Whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to have a great millstone hung around his neck and to be drowned in the depths of the sea. Woe to the world because of things that cause sin! Such things must come, but woe to the one through whom they come! If your hand or foot causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to enter into life maimed or crippled than with two hands or two feet to be thrown into eternal fire. And if your eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away. It is better for you to enter into life with one eye than with two eyes to be thrown into fiery Gehenna. "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 (Mt 18,6-10).*

There is a third scandal that arises from our science that is not confronted with the weak, small brother’s conscience. This scandal must also be avoided with rigor.

*Now in regard to meat sacrificed to idols: we realize that "all of us have knowledge"; knowledge inflates with pride, but love builds up. If anyone supposes he knows something, he does not yet know as he ought to know. But if one loves God, one is known by him. So about the eating of meat sacrificed to idols: we know that "there is no idol in the world," and that "there is no God but one." But not all have this knowledge. There are some who have been so used to idolatry up until now that, when they eat meat sacrificed to idols, their conscience, which is weak, is defiled. Now food will not bring us closer to God. We are no worse off if we do not eat, nor are we better off if we do. But make sure that this liberty of yours in no way becomes a stumbling block to the weak. If someone sees you, with your knowledge, reclining at table in the temple of an idol, may not his conscience too, weak as it is, be "built up" to eat the meat sacrificed to idols? Thus through your knowledge, the weak person is brought to destruction, the brother for whom Christ died. When you sin in this way against your brothers and wound their consciences, weak as they are, you are sinning against Christ. Therefore, if food causes my brother to sin, I will never eat meat again, so that I may not cause my brother to sin (Cf. 1Cor 8.1-13).*

There is a scandal that is born neither from sin nor from science, but from our ignorance of God and his acting in history. We are guilty of this scandal.

*When John heard in prison of the works of the Messiah, he sent his disciples to him with this question, "Are you the one who is to come, or should we look for another?" Jesus said to them in reply, "Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind regain their sight, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have the good news proclaimed to them. And blessed is the one who takes no offense at me." (Mt 11,2-6).*

Jesus for those of Nazareth is a cause for scandal because their human canons do not adapt to the divine canons. This scandal is guilty. Jesus is perfectly inserted in the divine canons of both revelation and the action of God in our history.

*He departed from there and came to his native place, accompanied by his disciples. When the Sabbath came he began to teach in the synagogue, and many who heard him were astonished. They said, "Where did this man get all this? What kind of wisdom has been given him? What mighty deeds are wrought by his hands! Is he not the carpenter, the son of Mary, and the brother of James and Joses and Judas and Simon? And are not his sisters here with us?" And they took offense at him. Jesus said to them, "A prophet is not without honour except in his native place and among his own kin and in his own house." So he was not able to perform any mighty deed there, apart from curing a few sick people by laying his hands on them. He was amazed at their lack of faith. He went around to the villages in the vicinity teaching.*

Each of us has only one obligation: remaining eternally in the divine canons dictated to us by the Holy Spirit. If the divine canons scandalize, we can only help in the truth.

Mother of God, Angels and Saints make sure that no divine canon scandalizes our heart.

## They preached repentance

## Heb 12,18-19.21-24; Ps 47; Mk 6,7-13

### 7 FEBRUARY

Conversion is a perennial change, an uninterrupted journey of every man towards the full light of the mystery of the Father, of Christ Jesus and of the Holy Spirit. Since man is called to a permanent conversion, he must permanently verify his thoughts. The principle of verification of everything is the Word of the Lord, the one contained in the canonical books, which are the Holy Scriptures. Since Holy Scripture has been delivered to the Apostles, their faith must be laid at the foundation of our conversion. The faith of the Apostles is contained in the Tradition of the Church and in its Magisterium. Scripture cannot be read without the very pure faith of the Church. But even it will never be true reading if it contradicts the faith of the Apostles. According to this truth theology must also be converted to the Word. It is born of the Word and of the Gospel, but it must be converted to the Gospel. Never might it be placed over the Word. It must let itself be checked and interpreted by the Word. Thus the theology that interprets the Word, must always be interpreted by the Word. But the truth must also be converted to the Word. How is the truth converted to the Word? Through listening to the Holy Spirit, given by the Father, through Christ, so that he may lead to the whole truth. A truth that does not listen to the Spirit is of yesterday, but not of today. Today the Holy Spirit must be heard for today and tomorrow for tomorrow. It is He who must lead the disciples in the Father's will so that full obedience may be lent to it. Yesterday, we obeyed for yesterday. Today, we obey for today. Tomorrow we will obey for tomorrow. The Spirit asks and the disciple obeys.

The Apostles must go to every man to preach conversion. At that historic moment it consisted of asking people to open themselves to the kingdom of God that was about to break into their lives. We cannot accept the kingdom of God of today, living in the kingdom of God of yesterday. Yesterday, the kingdom of God was imperfect. Today it is perfect. Here is the true conversion: leaving the imperfect kingdom of God, passing into the perfect kingdom of God. Jesus reveals this conversion through a Word, whose light must enlighten believers in Him: "If your righteousness will not exceed that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven". Old justice is not enough to be the real kingdom of God, it is necessary to enter the new one which is the Sermon on the Mount. The old truth, the old love, the old mercy and the old commandment of sanctity are not even enough. One must enter the new truth, love, mercy, law, commandment and holiness. From the Prophets, including Moses, one must pass to Christ the Lord, to his Word, to his Gospel, to his Church and to the purest faith in his Person. Today we must be converted to the mystery of Jesus, making it become our mystery.

*He summoned the Twelve and began to send them out two by two and gave them authority over unclean spirits. He instructed them to take nothing for the journey but a walking stick - no food, no sack, no money in their belts. They were, however, to wear sandals but not a second tunic. He said to them, "Wherever you enter a house, stay there until you leave from there. Whatever place does not welcome you or listen to you, leave there and shake the dust off your feet in testimony against them." So they went off and preached repentance. They drove out many demons, and they anointed with oil many who were sick and cured them.*

The disciples must not only preach conversion to the kingdom of God that is near. They must also show the presence of the kingdom. How will they show the kingdom of God in the middle of the world? With the exercise of the powers that Jesus gave them. They have the government of creation. They can perform every miracle. Nothing is impossible for them. They must also show the whole world that they have no interest in the things of this world. The material "nudity" with which they present themselves must reassure everyone. They do not go into the world to ask, take and extort. They just go to give in the greatest gratuity. By acting in this way, people will see the presence of the kingdom of God and can, if they wish, be converted to it. If the kingdom is not received, the disciples must shake the dust off their feet and go elsewhere.

Mother of God, Angels and Saints, help us so that we too can manifest the kingdom.

## She had an opportunity one day

## Heb 13,1-8; Ps 26; Mk 6,14-29

### 8 FEBRUARY

When Satan rules a heart, he knows how to exploit every moment of history to succeed in his work of death. He knows how to govern his thoughts, directing them all to the fulfilment of his will. Whoever wishes not to be manipulated and exploited by the prince of darkness must pay all attention to remain entirely under the government and the motion of the Holy Spirit. This happens if he lives and dwells in the Word of Jesus. Herodias is a wicked woman. She decided the death of John the Baptist. Her thoughts of death do not find support on Herod. This is afraid of depriving one of God's prophets of life. She knows how to wait. Surely Satan will give her a strong hand so that her death wish will be satisfied. The auspicious day comes. Herod lets the light of his reason to be lost before the daughter of Herodias, who performs an impure and lascivious dance. Among concupiscent fumes and bad desires, he makes her a foolish and insipid oath. He promises to grant her anything she would have asked. Even half of his kingdom. Satan directs her daughter so that she lets herself be advised by her mother. The mother advises her to ask for the head of John the Baptist. With this request, the daughter also reveals all her folly. She could have had half the kingdom, but she is content with a head of a dead man that will not do any good to her, except to satisfy her mother's thirst for hatred. As the Holy Spirit is the Creator of communion in good, in truth, in justice and in holiness. Thus Satan is the fomenter of concord in wickedness, hatred, concupiscence, vice and all sorts of evil. When there is harmony in evil, then Satan manifests his government there.

*King Herod heard about it, for his fame had become widespread, and people were saying, "John the Baptist has been raised from the dead; that is why mighty powers are at work in him." Others were saying, "He is Elijah"; still others, "He is a prophet like any of the prophets." But when Herod learned of it, he said, "It is John whom I beheaded. He has been raised up." Herod was the one who had John arrested and bound in prison on account of Herodias, the wife of his brother Philip, whom he had married. John had said to Herod, "It is not lawful for you to have your brother's wife." Herodias harboured a grudge against him and wanted to kill him but was unable to do so. Herod feared John, knowing him to be a righteous and holy man, and kept him in custody. When he heard him speak he was very much perplexed, yet he liked to listen to him.*

*She had an opportunity one day when Herod, on his birthday, gave a banquet for his courtiers, his military officers, and the leading men of Galilee. Herodias's own daughter came in and performed a dance that delighted Herod and his guests. The king said to the girl, "Ask of me whatever you wish and I will grant it to you." He even swore (many things) to her, "I will grant you whatever you ask of me, even to half of my kingdom." She went out and said to her mother, "What shall I ask for?" She replied, "The head of John the Baptist." The girl hurried back to the king's presence and made her request, "I want you to give me at once on a platter the head of John the Baptist." The king was deeply distressed, but because of his oaths and the guests he did not wish to break his word to her. So he promptly dispatched an executioner with orders to bring back his head. He went off and beheaded him in the prison. He brought in the head on a platter and gave it to the girl. The girl in turn gave it to her mother. When his disciples heard about it, they came and took his body and laid it in a tomb.*

Can we escape the influence of Satan? Can we escape from his government that directs our thoughts to seek agreement in evil with every other man? One can escape only on one condition: that he comes out of his kingdom, his dominion and his empire, which is the kingdom of sin and vice and that he hands himself entirely over to the kingdom of Christ in his thoughts, will, feelings, body, soul and spirit. He surrenders to the kingdom of Christ the Lord, abiding in his Word. It is in the Word of the Gospel that Satan has no power. But he has the power to tempt us so that we come out of the Word. If we fall into his temptation, it is the end for us. He will do everything, he will put all his shrewdness, to make us agree in falseness, in wickedness, in injustice, in hatred and in every other evil. Our life is either governed by the Holy Spirit in truth and justice or it is ruled by Satan in falsity and injustice.

Mother of God, Angels and Saints, do not allow us to leave the Gospel. It is our end.

## His heart was moved with pity for them

## Heb 13,15-17.20-21; Ps 22; Mk 6,30-34

### 9 FEBRUARY

The compassion of Jesus is beyond all possible human compassion. His is a compassion for the assumption of all sins and all the guilt of humanity for their atonement and redemption. Jesus had compassion because he fulfilled our every debt to the Father. His compassion is thus announced by the prophet Isaiah.

*See, my servant shall prosper, he shall be raised high and greatly exalted. Even as many were amazed at him -  so marred was his look beyond that of man, and his appearance beyond that of mortals - So shall he startle many nations, because of him kings shall stand speechless; For those who have not been told shall see, those who have not heard shall ponder it. Who would believe what we have heard? To whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed? He grew up like a sapling before him, like a shoot from the parched earth; There was in him no stately bearing to make us look at him, nor appearance that would attract us to him. He was spurned and avoided by men, a man of suffering, accustomed to infirmity, One of those from whom men hide their faces, spurned, and we held him in no esteem. Yet it was our infirmities that he bore, our sufferings that he endured, While we thought of him as stricken, as one smitten by God and afflicted. But he was pierced for our offenses, crushed for our sins, Upon him was the chastisement that makes us whole, by his stripes we were healed. We had all gone astray like sheep, each following his own way; But the Lord laid upon him the guilt of us all.*

*Though he was harshly treated, he submitted and opened not his mouth; Like a lamb led to the slaughter or a sheep before the shearers, he was silent and opened not his mouth. Oppressed and condemned, he was taken away, and who would have thought any more of his destiny? When he was cut off from the land of the living, and smitten for the sin of his people, A grave was assigned him among the wicked and a burial place with evildoers, Though he had done no wrong nor spoken any falsehood. (But the Lord was pleased to crush him in infirmity.) If he gives his life as an offering for sin, he shall see his descendants in a long life, and the will of the Lord shall be accomplished through him. Because of his affliction he shall see the light in fullness of days; Through his suffering, my servant shall justify many, and their guilt he shall bear. Therefore I will give him his portion among the great, and he shall divide the spoils with the mighty, Because he surrendered himself to death and was counted among the wicked; And he shall take away the sins of many, and win pardon for their offenses (Is 52,13-53,12)*

It is compassion that has asked of Lord Jesus the supreme martyrdom of the cross. Today Jesus assumes of the crowd loss, confusion, spiritual solitude, abandonment to itself, lack of every guide and deprivation of all true spiritual nourishment. He lets the disciples to rest and he puts himself at the service of those who are searching for their spiritual truth. This is the greatest poverty even of the man of our time. He lacks in his truth and end of origin. He does not know where he is from and where he is headed. He is nourished by the poison of infinite false prophecies. He is dominated by error and lies.

*The apostles gathered together with Jesus and reported all they had done and taught. He said to them, "Come away by yourselves to a deserted place and rest a while." People were coming and going in great numbers, and they had no opportunity even to eat. So they went off in the boat by themselves to a deserted place. People saw them leaving and many came to know about it. They hastened there on foot from all the towns and arrived at the place before them. When he disembarked and saw the vast crowd, his heart was moved with pity for them, for they were like sheep without a shepherd; and he began to teach them many things.*

The true shepherd is sent by God, the Lord entrusts his flock to him, so that he leads it in this world of idolatry, falsehood, lie, immorality and vice, always preserving it in his truth, in his law, in his decrees, in his statutes, in his covenant and in his life. The pastor might do this if he keeps himself in God and in his will. If the pastor himself is abandoned to idolatry and immorality, the flock entrusted to him will necessarily be nourished with the poison he feeds on. If the shepherd wants to feed the flock of God, he must nourish himself with God. If he feeds on fairy tales, the flock will also feed on fables. What is Christ's flock fed today?

Mother of God, Angels and Saints ensure that every pastor is nourished with Christ to nourish with Christ.

## At your command I will lower the nets

## Is 6,1-2a.3-8; Ps 137; 1 Cor 15,1-11; Lk 5,1-11

### 10 FEBRUARY

The Gospel is not an event experienced yesterday and today only narrated and reminded. Instead, it is a fact, history, that must be lived today, even if in different ways and forms. The miraculous fishing narrated by the Gospel according to Luke, is inserted by the Gospel according to John in another context, in other very different circumstances, but with the same meaning, the same fruits, the same command of the Lord, as meaning that every moment lived by Jesus with his disciples might be lived by the disciples throughout the whole of history. The ways vary, the substance remains.

*After this, Jesus revealed himself again to his disciples at the Sea of Tiberias. He revealed himself in this way. Together were Simon Peter, Thomas called Didymus, Nathanael from Cana in Galilee, Zebedee's sons, and two others of his disciples. Simon Peter said to them, "I am going fishing." They said to him, "We also will come with you." So they went out and got into the boat, but that night they caught nothing. When it was already dawn, Jesus was standing on the shore; but the disciples did not realize that it was Jesus. Jesus said to them, "Children, have you caught anything to eat?" They answered him, "No." So he said to them, "Cast the net over the right side of the boat and you will find something." So they cast it, and were not able to pull it in because of the number of fish. So the disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, "It is the Lord." When Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he tucked in his garment, for he was lightly clad, and jumped into the sea. The other disciples came in the boat, for they were not far from shore, only about a hundred yards, dragging the net with the fish (Jn 21,1.8).*

What is the truth behind the historical event? The sea is always empty. The net is pulled without fish. The boats are off. Fishermen know their art. These are constant elements of the event. What is missing, both in the story according to Luke and in that according to John? The Word of Christ Jesus is missing. For the net to be filled with big fish, it is necessary to have faith in the Word of Jesus and obedience to his command. Another essential and fundamental variant: in the story according to Luke the main actor is Peter. The Word is addressed to him. He obeys. In the story according to John, the actors are all the disciples present. The Word is addressed to them. They obey. They throw the net. Then each disciple lives with Jesus a particular relationship. That of John is different than that of Peter and of the others.

*While the crowd was pressing in on Jesus and listening to the word of God, he was standing by the Lake of Gennesaret. He saw two boats there alongside the lake; the fishermen had disembarked and were washing their nets. Getting into one of the boats, the one belonging to Simon, he asked him to put out a short distance from the shore. Then he sat down and taught the crowds from the boat. After he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, "Put out into deep water and lower your nets for a catch." Simon said in reply, "Master, we have worked hard all night and have caught nothing, but at your command I will lower the nets." When they had done this, they caught a great number of fish and their nets were tearing. They signalled to their partners in the other boat to come to help them. They came and filled both boats so that they were in danger of sinking. When Simon Peter saw this, he fell at the knees of Jesus and said, "Depart from me, Lord, for I am a sinful man." For astonishment at the catch of fish they had made seized him and all those with him, and likewise James and John, the sons of Zebedee, who were partners of Simon. Jesus said to Simon, "Do not be afraid; from now on you will be catching men." When they brought their boats to the shore, they left everything and followed him.*

This is also an essential truth: Peter is used to returning to the shore with empty nets. This does not discourage him. They struggled all night, but they did not catch anything. The night that follows will certainly be better. A true fisherman does not lose heart. Jesus wants to reassure Peter. In the sea of ​​the kingdom of God this will never happen, if he throw the net of the Word of the Lord. When this net is thrown, it always takes fish for the kingdom. On the day of Pentecost Peter throws the net of the Word and takes at once about three thousand people. It will always be like this. When one does not take fish in the net, it is a sign that not the net of the Word of the Lord, but that of the thought of man has been cast. The fisherman of the kingdom must never make this exchange.

Mother of God, Angels and Saints ensure that we always lower the net of the Word of Jesus.

**FEBRUARY 2019**

## SECOND DECADE OF FEBRUARY

## Wherever they heard he was

## Gn 1,1-19; Ps 103; Mk 6,53-56

### 11 FEBRUARY

The crowd is urged to look for every person capable of solving its physical, material and bodily problems. It is a way aroused by the Lord to reach true faith. But it is necessary that on the other side there is one who always acts in the name of the Lord in the perfect fulfilment of his will. No way of God must be declared useless. If it is aroused by God, it is certainly good. Instead his minister, his prophet, his presbyter and his apostle are not good, if they do not use this way to give true salvation. Did not Naaman the Syrian come to the faith because of his leprosy? Having been healed on the word of Elisha, did he not decide to worship only the God of Israel?

*When Elisha, the man of God, heard that the king of Israel had torn his garments, he sent word to the king: "Why have you torn your garments? Let him come to me and find out that there is a prophet in Israel." Naaman came with his horses and chariots and stopped at the door of Elisha's house. The prophet sent him the message: "Go and wash seven times in the Jordan, and your flesh will heal, and you will be clean." But Naaman went away angry, saying, "I thought that he would surely come out and stand there to invoke the Lord his God, and would move his hand over the spot, and thus cure the leprosy. Are not the rivers of Damascus, the Abana and the Pharpar, better than all the waters of Israel? Could I not wash in them and be cleansed?" With this, he turned about in anger and left. But his servants came up and reasoned with him. "My father," they said, "if the prophet had told you to do something extraordinary, would you not have done it? All the more now, since he said to you, 'Wash and be clean,' should you do as he said." So Naaman went down and plunged into the Jordan seven times at the word of the man of God. His flesh became again like the flesh of a little child, and he was clean. He returned with his whole retinue to the man of God. On his arrival he stood before him and said, "Now I know that there is no God in all the earth, except in Israel. Please accept a gift from your servant." "As the Lord lives whom I serve, I will not take it," Elisha replied; and despite Naaman's urging, he still refused. Naaman said: "If you will not accept, please let me, your servant, have two mule-loads of earth, for I will no longer offer holocaust or sacrifice to any other god except to the Lord. But I trust the Lord will forgive your servant this: when my master enters the temple of Rimmon to worship there, then I, too, as his adjutant, must bow down in the temple of Rimmon. May the Lord forgive your servant this." "Go in peace," Elisha said to him (2Kings 5,8-19).*

How might a minister of God work, so that every man that comes to him for any spiritual, material, body and soul need can listen to the true Word of Christ Jesus, the invitation to conversion, the journey in history as true Body of Christ, working for the Body of Christ, in the body of Christ? There are no prefabricated, pre-packaged answers to this question and not even pastoral rules to be observed. The way for each individual soul must be suggested by the Holy Spirit. If the minister of Jesus is the one to grow every day in grace, wisdom, truth, justice, compassion, mercy, intimate union and communion with Christ, in Christ, the Spirit of Christ will always suggest him the right Word to speak to the heart. Otherwise he will speak from his science or his doctrine, from his heart or from the heart of the world, from this or from that other school of thought, but no salvation will be accomplished. The heart remains empty of longing for salvation and the mind devoid of truth. The minister is poor of the Holy Spirit. The misery of our apostolate always reveals our spiritual misery.

*After making the crossing, they came to land at Gennesaret and tied up there. As they were leaving the boat, people immediately recognized him. They scurried about the surrounding country and began to bring in the sick on mats to wherever they heard he was. Whatever villages or towns or countryside he entered, they laid the sick in the marketplaces and begged him that they might touch only the tassel on his cloak; and as many as touched it were healed.*

Jesus is full of the Holy Spirit. He knows how to speak to every heart. To every single person he indicates the way of life. After Christ the Lord has been met, everyone is accountable before God for his non-faith or non-conversion. Everything has been given to him. There is nothing that God might give him. He spoke to him through his Son full of the Holy Spirit.

Mother of God, Angels and Saints ensure that the Christian always speak full of the Spirit of God.

## And you do many such things

## Gen 1,20-2,4a; Ps 8; Mk 7,1-13

### 12 FEBRUARY

If the Lord condemns the solemn worship that is celebrated in his holy temple, because it is not the fruit of perfect obedience to his Commandments, can he be pleased with the tradition of the ancients that is built on the elimination of the very Law and his Commandments, on which the Alliance has been stipulated? The words of Isaiah show all the disgust of the Lord towards a cult celebrated as a blanket to hide sin, which is universal disobedience to his will and opposition to his Word.

*What care I for the number of your sacrifices? says the Lord. I have had enough of whole-burnt rams and fat of fatlings; In the blood of calves, lambs and goats I find no pleasure. When you come in to visit me, who asks these things of you? Trample my courts no more! Bring no more worthless offerings; your incense is loathsome to me. New moon and Sabbath, calling of assemblies, octaves with wickedness: these I cannot bear. Your new moons and festivals I detest; they weigh me down, I tire of the load. When you spread out your hands, I close my eyes to you; Though you pray the more, I will not listen. Your hands are full of blood! Wash yourselves clean! Put away your misdeeds from before my eyes; cease doing evil; learn to do good. Make justice your aim: redress the wronged, hear the orphan's plea, defend the widow. Come now, let us set things right, says the Lord: Though your sins be like scarlet, they may become white as snow; Though they be crimson red, they may become white as wool. If you are willing, and obey, you shall eat the good things of the land; But if you refuse and resist, the sword shall consume you: for the mouth of the Lord has spoken! (Is 1,11-20).*

At the time of Jesus people had gone much further. They did not act ignoring the Commandments of the Lord, they worked to evade the Law itself. While in ancient times one could have remorse and be converted, with scribes and Pharisees this remorse was annulled, because, circumventing the Word of the Lord, everyone believed to be in justice, in truth and in light. They did not wash their hands before taking food and were accused of serious transgression of tradition. They sinned. A Commandment was eliminated and it did not even come to mind that that was not God's will. Jesus says it very clearly: "*And you do many things like that*". The tithes of the cumin, of the mint or of other herbs were paid, but justice, mercy and fidelity were neglected.

*Now when the Pharisees with some scribes who had come from Jerusalem gathered around him, they observed that some of his disciples ate their meals with unclean, that is, unwashed, hands. (For the Pharisees and, in fact, all Jews, do not eat without carefully washing their hands, keeping the tradition of the elders. And on coming from the marketplace they do not eat without purifying themselves. And there are many other things that they have traditionally observed, the purification of cups and jugs and kettles (and beds).) So the Pharisees and scribes questioned him, "Why do your disciples not follow the tradition of the elders but instead eat a meal with unclean hands?" He responded, "Well did Isaiah prophesy about you hypocrites, as it is written: 'This people honours me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me; In vain do they worship me, teaching as doctrines human precepts.' You disregard God's commandment but cling to human tradition." He went on to say, "How well you have set aside the commandment of God in order to uphold your tradition! For Moses said, 'Honour your father and your mother,' and 'Whoever curses father or mother shall die.' Yet you say, 'If a person says to father or mother, "Any support you might have had from me is qorban"' (meaning, dedicated to God), you allow him to do nothing more for his father or mother. You nullify the word of God in favour of your tradition that you have handed on. And you do many such things."*

Jesus wants a clear distinction to be made between what the Word of the Lord and what personal fulfilment of the Word is, between what the decree of men is and what instead the Gospel is. What comes from God is un-modifiable over the centuries. What comes from the men can never have value of law, unless it is a clear, indeed very evident implementation of the Word of the Lord. The rule also applies to us that nothing is added to the Word and nothing is taken away, being the law of God perfect. The attention must great for all the "translators" into rules of the Word of Christ Jesus.

Mother of God, Angels and Saints ensure that we never elude the Word with our traditions.

## Thus he declared all foods clean

## Gn 2,4-9.1 5-17; Ps 103; Mk 7,14-23

### 13 FEBRUARY

The Book of Leviticus contains a detailed list of both of every animal that a son of Israel could feed and every other from which he had to abstain from eating meat. This list strictly obliged everyone. The unclean animal eaten made the man unclean. Jesus declares this ancient law abrogated against the impurity that was contracted by eating an impure animal. For Jesus impure is what comes out of the heart.

*The LORD said to Moses and Aaron, "Speak to the Israelites and tell them: Of all land animals these are the ones you may eat: any animal that has hoofs you may eat, provided it is cloven-footed and chews the cud. But you shall not eat any of the following that only chew the cud or only have hoofs: the camel, which indeed chews the cud, but does not have hoofs and is therefore unclean for you; the rock badger, which indeed chews the cud, but does not have hoofs and is therefore unclean for you; the hare, which indeed chews the cud, but does not have hoofs and is therefore unclean for you; and the pig, which does indeed have hoofs and is cloven-footed, but does not chew the cud and is therefore unclean for you. Their flesh you shall not eat, and their dead bodies you shall not touch; they are unclean for you. "Of the various creatures that live in the water, you may eat the following: whatever in the seas or in river waters has both fins and scales you may eat. But of the various creatures that crawl or swim in the water, whether in the sea or in the rivers, all those that lack either fins or scales are loathsome for you, and you shall treat them as loathsome. Their flesh you shall not eat, and their dead bodies you shall loathe. Every water creature that lacks fins or scales is loathsome for you. "Of the birds, these you shall loathe and, as loathsome, they shall not be eaten: the eagle, the vulture, the osprey, the kite, the various species of falcons, the various species of crows, the ostrich, the nightjar, the gull, the various species of hawks, the owl, the cormorant, the screech owl, the barn owl, the desert owl, the buzzard, the stork, the various species of herons, the hoopoe, and the bat. "The various winged insects that walk on all fours are loathsome for you. But of the various winged insects that walk on all fours you may eat those that have jointed legs for leaping on the ground; hence of these you may eat the following: the various kinds of locusts, the various kinds of grasshoppers, the various kinds of katydids, and the various kinds of crickets. All other winged insects that have four legs are loathsome for you. "Such is the uncleanness that you contract, that everyone who touches their dead bodies shall be unclean until evening, and everyone who picks up any part of their dead bodies shall wash his garments and be unclean until evening (Lev 11,1-25).*

Jesus manifests himself Lord of the Law of the Father. He knows what has eternal value of it and what instead had a historical and therefore fleeting value. Every Ritual law is abrogated from the Book of Leviticus. Only the moral law remains, which is unchanging over the centuries. The new Law is collected by Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount, which is clothed with eternal immutability. The will of the Father is revealed in it in its highest truth. If someone - even an angel of God - wanted to add something, he could not. It enjoys absolute, divine and eternal perfection. The whole man is in it.

*He summoned the crowd again and said to them, "Hear me, all of you, and understand. Nothing that enters one from outside can defile that person; but the things that come out from within are what defile." When he got home away from the crowd his disciples questioned him about the parable. He said to them, "Are even you likewise without understanding? Do you not realize that everything that goes into a person from outside cannot defile, since it enters not the heart but the stomach and passes out into the latrine?" (Thus he declared all foods clean.) "But what comes out of a person, that is what defiles. From within people, from their hearts, come evil thoughts, unchastity, theft, murder, adultery, greed, malice, deceit, licentiousness, envy, blasphemy, arrogance, folly. All these evils come from within and they defile."*

That of Christ Jesus is the Word of the purity of the heart, mind, thoughts, desires, will, soul, spirit and body. Purity is the use of human nature in all its parts according to the truth of nature. When the truth of nature, created by God in his image and likeness, having become by redemption nature of the body of Christ, nature rendered spiritual by the Holy Spirit, is not respected, then man is unclean. If he is impure, he also does impure things. They come out of his impure nature.

Mother of God, Angels and Saints arrange that we become of very pure nature according to the Word.

## The kingdom of God is at hand for you

## At 13,46-48; Ps 116; Lk 10,1-9

### 14 FEBRUARY

The kingdom of God that Christ Jesus came to bring to our land begins with the New Covenant that God has made with humanity in the blood of his Only Son. When do we become God's kingdom? When with baptism one is generated to new life, being born of water and the Holy Spirit. However, entering the kingdom of God is not enough to be saved; one must live as the true kingdom of God and persevering until the moment of death. One lives as the true kingdom by dwelling in the Word of Christ Jesus, without ever leaving it. If one comes out of the Word, he comes out of the kingdom. The Word is lost, the kingdom is lost. Unfortunately today this truth has been erased, demolished, destroyed and buried by many disciples of Jesus. They declare that the Lord will welcome everyone in his eternal kingdom, regardless if they believed in Christ, if they were converted, if they believed in the Gospel, if they lived according to the rules contained therein. There is no link between the kingdom of the earth and the eternal kingdom. On earth everyone lives as he knows, as he wishes, as he can, even in the transgression of the Commandments. At the moment of death we will all be welcomed into the eternal kingdom of the Father. All. Indistinctly all.

It is evident that there is a striking contrast between the Gospel of Christ the Lord and the word of his disciples. Whom to believe? To Jesus Lord or his disciples? Do we have to follow every norm dictated by the Gospel to enter Paradise or we can live as we wish and we will still have the eternal kingdom of God? If I were a person who hated mankind, I would tell everyone to follow the thought of the disciples and leave the Gospel of Christ the Lord. Since I love humanity and I only want its salvation, against every thought favourable to Paradise for all, I say with true conviction in the Holy Spirit that the thought of these disciples is not only false, it is not only a lie, it is not only the fruit of their impure, wicked and evil heart, but it is also a historical forgery, a slander against the Gospel, an invented testimony, a word that makes Christ Jesus a liar and a deceiver. Since I have too much respect for man and I love his salvation, knowing that perdition produces eternal sadness, I testify that the Gospel is the only Word of truth. Every word contrary to the Gospel is only a harmful lie. It does not even deserve to be taken into consideration. It is a galactic falseness and deception.

*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.'*

The disciples are sent into the world, with precise rules to observe, precisely to help men, with the word and with a new life, lived and manifested in its most sublime novelty, that truly the kingdom of God is near and it is different than every kingdom that has existed, exists and will exist on earth. David's kingdom cannot even be compared to it. The kingdom of heaven is the kingdom of truth, justice, peace, love, light, piety, mercy, compassion, forgiveness, atonement and true salvation. If the kingdom is not manifested, if it is not announced, if we do not invite to it, if we do not get converted to it, the work of the missionaries is in vain. Jesus does not want us to fall into the trap of the separation of the disciple from the kingdom and the Word. Kingdom, Word and disciple must be one and inseparable forever. One cannot accept the disciple and not accept the Word and the kingdom, getting converted to it. But a kingdom from which the Disciple and the Gospel are driven out does not even exist. Might then the true kingdom of God exist by driving Christ out and preaching, teaching that one can go to God without Christ?

Mother of God, Angels, Saints ensure that the Christian abandons the false prophecy on the kingdom.

## He has done all things well

## Gen 3,1-8; Ps 31; Mk 7,31-37

### 15 FEBRUARY

What is confessed on Jesus – he has done everything well: he makes the deaf hear and the dumb speak - must be confessed of every disciple of Jesus. This is the rule to which Saint Paul has obliged himself and who asks the same obligation to every Christian.

*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. We have spoken frankly to you, Corinthians; our heart is open wide. You are not constrained by us; you are constrained by your own affections. As recompense in kind (I speak as to my children), be open yourselves. Do not be yoked with those who are different, with unbelievers. For what partnership do righteousness and lawlessness have? Or what fellowship does light have with darkness? What accord has Christ with Beliar? Or what has a believer in common with an unbeliever? What agreement has the temple of God with idols? For we are the temple of the living God; as God said: "I will live with them and move among them, and I will be their God and they shall be my people. Therefore, come forth from them and be separate," says the Lord, "and touch nothing unclean; then I will receive you and I will be a father to you, and you shall be sons and daughters to me, says the Lord Almighty" (2Cor 6, 3-18).*

The works to be done are different from person to person. Those of Christ are not those of the disciples. Those of John are not those of Paul. Those of Peter are not those of James. The works are the fruit of the ministry that comes from the sacraments received, from the special mission that is given to us, from the gift of the Holy Spirit or from the gifts that are bestowed. However, the attestation remains, the confession of those who see our work. Everyone is obliged to do everything well so that men can give this testimony: "This disciple does all things well". But how is everything done well? Obeying the Word, the sacrament received, the gift of grace which is the patrimony of our ministry and listening to every motion of the Holy Spirit. As soon as we detach ourselves from the Gospel, from the charisma and from the Holy Spirit, things might never be done well. People see it and shout it. Every disciple of Jesus is obliged, for the love of his Master, so that He is believed, when he is announced, to do everything well, always and before the whole world.

*Again he left the district of Tyre and went by way of Sidon to the Sea of Galilee, into the district of the Decapolis. And people brought to him a deaf man who had a speech impediment and begged him to lay his hand on him. He took him off by himself away from the crowd. He put his finger into the man's ears and, spitting, touched his tongue; then he looked up to heaven and groaned, and said to him, "Ephphatha!" (that is, "Be opened!") And (immediately) the man's ears were opened, his speech impediment was removed, and he spoke plainly. He ordered them not to tell anyone. But the more he ordered them not to, the more they proclaimed it. They were exceedingly astonished and they said, "He has done all things well. He makes the deaf hear and (the) mute speak."*

Every disciple of Jesus is called to question and examine his conscience not only in relation to the sins personally committed before God, for having transgressed his Law, but also on the negative effects that his small or serious transgressions produce in relation to the credibility of Christ Jesus and at the birth of faith in him in the hearts. We know that many people do not come to the faith because of the scandal of Christians. What is the use of believing in Christ if you Christians behave in such an immoral way that we Pagans do not even know these things? The Christian scandal is the greatest obstacle to the evangelizing mission. Jesus shows us that everything can be done well. It is sufficient to obey the Holy Spirit and remain in the Gospel as our home, our dwelling and our perennial law of eternal life. If we can, we must.

Mother of God, Angels and Saints, help every disciple of Jesus to do all things well.

## How many loaves do you have?

## Gen 3,9-24; Ps 89; Mk 8,1-10

### 16 FEBRUARY

The Lord wants to satisfy the world’s hunger by feeding it on him. He cannot. He is the eternal and divine infinite. He needs the participation of his little creation. God goes in search of hearts. How many hearts do you have? Few. The first heart that is offered to God, in Holy Scripture, is that of Abel, then follows Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, Joshua, the Judges, Samuel, David, all the prophets and the righteous and wise men of Old Testament. But all these hearts are not enough. Instead of seeking, the Lord creates himself a heart, that of the Virgin Mary and in this heart created most pure, immaculate, spotless, full of grace and of the Holy Spirit by Him, his Only Son, his Eternal Word, is made a human heart to be given to the Father for the redemption of humanity. But even this heart is not enough. Others are needed. The first hearts are those of the Twelve, then those of the seventy-two disciples are added, then others and others come and we must always be the ones to ask the Lord to send other hearts. These few hearts of ours are given to God and the Lord uses them to satisfy the world’s hunger with himself.

But this little human is not sufficient by itself. The little created is needed. In order for God to be able to satisfy the hunger of his humanity of himself, it is necessary that some bread is made available to him. He, through the hands and words of his priests, transforms it into the heart of Christ, the body of Christ and the life of Christ. Not only in all of Christ there is also the whole Father and the Holy Spirit, the whole Church, all of humanity and the man who believes in Christ eats it to be satisfied with God, to become heart of love, heart of grace, heart of communion and heart of eternal life for all his brothers. Who nourishes himself with Christ, nourishes himself with his mystery of death and resurrection in favour of the whole world. The little human and the little material must always be given to God. If the minister does not give his heart to God, his voice and his hands, the Eucharist is not made. If the Eucharist is not made, God cannot give himself in it as eternal life to man. Even if he is born as his true son, he lacks in his true nourishment. He is like a tree planted in a fertile soil, but left to itself and left without water. The Eucharist is the true water of life. Even who receives it must give his little to Christ, he must give him his heart so that he transforms it into a Christic heart capable of loving as He loved and loves.

*In those days when there again was a great crowd without anything to eat, he summoned the disciples and said, "My heart is moved with pity for the crowd, because they have been with me now for three days and have nothing to eat. If I send them away hungry to their homes, they will collapse on the way, and some of them have come a great distance." His disciples answered him, "Where can anyone get enough bread to satisfy them here in this deserted place?" Still he asked them, "How many loaves do you have?" "Seven," they replied. He ordered the crowd to sit down on the ground. Then, taking the seven loaves he gave thanks, broke them, and gave them to his disciples to distribute, and they distributed them to the crowd. They also had a few fish. He said the blessing over them and ordered them distributed also. They ate and were satisfied. They picked up the fragments left over - seven baskets. There were about four thousand people. He dismissed them and got into the boat with his disciples and came to the region of Dalmanutha.*

We must never be discouraged if our little is really little. It is not the little that prevents Christ Jesus from making the transformation, but it is the little not given, given in half, donated and then taken back, given only with words but not with the heart, the will, the mind and the soul. Today, the crisis of faith is not in the lack of workers. It is not their smallness that prevents Christ the Lord from giving himself as food and drink of eternal life. One gives himself to Christ, but the mind pursues its thoughts, the will chases vices, the body follows its flesh, the soul is like death to truth and light. It is as if we gave the Lord some chaff to make good bread. The chaff contains wheat, but it is not wheat. We give our human envelope to the Lord, but we do not give ourselves in the soul, in the spirit, in the body and in all that we are. Our delivery to the Holy Spirit is without any content. We are little. The little must always be given in full. The Apostles gave Jesus the loaves in their entirety. Jesus multiplied them and filled the crowd with them. The little given according to truth always satisfies the world.

Mother of God, Angels and Saints, help us to give our little to Jesus according to truth.

# «Blessed are you who are poor»

## Jer 17,5-8; Ps 1; 1Cor 15,12.16-20; Lk 6,17.20-26

### 17 FEBRUARY

Saint Paul, wishing to exhort the Corinthians to be generous in their charity towards their brothers in Judea who were in great scarcity, gives them the image of Christ, so that he were always before their eyes and they too would behave imitating him.

*We want you to know, brothers, of the grace of God that has been given to the churches of Macedonia, for in a severe test of affliction, the abundance of their joy and their profound poverty overflowed in a wealth of generosity on their part. For according to their means, I can testify, and beyond their means, spontaneously, they begged us insistently for the favor of taking part in the service to the holy ones, and this, not as we expected, but they gave themselves first to the Lord and to us through the will of God, so that we urged Titus that, as he had already begun, he should also complete for you this gracious act also. Now as you excel in every respect, in faith, discourse, knowledge, all earnestness, and in the love we have for you, may you excel in this gracious act also. I say this not by way of command, but to test the genuineness of your love by your concern for others. For you know the gracious act of our Lord Jesus Christ, that for your sake he became poor although he was rich, so that by his poverty you might become rich. And I am giving counsel in this matter, for it is appropriate for you who began not only to act but to act willingly last year: complete it now, so that your eager willingness may be matched by your completion of it out of what you have. For if the eagerness is there, it is acceptable according to what one has, not according to what one does not have; not that others should have relief while you are burdened, but that as a matter of equality your surplus at the present time should supply their needs, so that their surplus may also supply your needs, that there may be equality. As it is written: "Whoever had much did not have more, and whoever had little did not have less" (2Cor 8,1-15).*

It is right to ask oneself: what are poverty and riches according to the Gospel? Poverty is delivery to God, through Christ, in the Holy Spirit, of all that one is and possesses. Nothing is ours, because everything is of God. The mind is of God, the heart is of God, the will is of God and the body is of God. If everything is of God, the use of ourselves and the fruits matured by us are of God. They must always be used according to the will of God. Christ Jesus is all of the Father. His body was also used by him according to the will of the Father. The Father made it a sacrifice of expiation, salvation and redemption in favour of every man.

*And he came down with them and stood on a stretch of level ground. A great crowd of his disciples and a large number of the people from all Judea and Jerusalem and the coastal region of Tyre and Sidon And raising his eyes toward his disciples he said: "Blessed are you who are poor, for the kingdom of God is yours. Blessed are you who are now hungry, for you will be satisfied. Blessed are you who are now weeping, for you will laugh. Blessed are you when people hate you, and when they exclude and insult you, and denounce your name as evil on account of the Son of Man. Rejoice and leap for joy on that day! Behold, your reward will be great in heaven. For their ancestors treated the prophets in the same way. But woe to you who are rich, for you have received your consolation. But woe to you who are filled now, for you will be hungry. Woe to you who laugh now, for you will grieve and weep. Woe to you when all speak well of you, for their ancestors treated the false prophets in this way.*

On the other hand, Wealth is the appropriation of what is God’s by creation. Everything belongs to God. Nothing is given to God. Everything is kept for oneself. Nothing is used according to the will of God. In wealth, God of man is things. Things end up, one remains in eternal poverty. In poverty, God of man is the Lord. The Lord for the man who is delivered to him is not only Providence, but also eternal life and every other good. Whoever gives himself to God with his whole self, is preserved in the casket of life by God. Who withdraws from God and places himself in his hands, in his goods, is placed in the casket of eternal death. Poverty is not lacking in something. Wealth is not even possessing something. Poverty is depriving oneself of the self in order to give himself entirely to God. Wealth is keeping everything for oneself, without giving anything to God. We can be poor in substances, but not being of God.

Mother of God, Angels and Saints ensure that our life is a total gift to Christ the Lord.

## Why does this generation seek a sign?

## Gn 4,1-15.25; Ps 49; Mk 8,11-13

### 18 FEBRUARY

The man of God knows that everything in creation and time tells the glory of his Lord. To see God we need the eyes of faith, which are eyes not covered by sin, by wickedness and by evilness. With his eyes covered by evil, even if the Lord made prodigies so great as to make the whole universe startle, man would always remain blind. Before the Pharaoh, the Lord made ten portentous signs. He has attested to him that all creation is in his hands. He can do whatever he wants with it. What was the result for this hard-hearted man? His death in the Red Sea. Not even before such a prodigious sign, He had eyes to see and the heart to open himself to faith in the God of Abraham and of Moses, the only Lord of heaven and earth. The Book of Wisdom calls fools by nature those who by the visible works of God do not come to the contemplation of his great and invisible beauty.

*For all men were by nature foolish who were in ignorance of God, and who from the good things seen did not succeed in knowing him who is, and from studying the works did not discern the artisan; But either fire, or wind, or the swift air, or the circuit of the stars, or the mighty water, or the luminaries of heaven, the governors of the world, they considered gods. Now if out of joy in their beauty they thought them gods, let them know how far more excellent is the Lord than these; for the original source of beauty fashioned them. Or if they were struck by their might and energy, let them from these things realize how much more powerful is he who made them. For from the greatness and the beauty of created things their original author, by analogy, is seen. But yet, for these the blame is less; For they indeed have gone astray perhaps, though they seek God and wish to find him. For they search busily among his works, but are distracted by what they see, because the things seen are fair. But again, not even these are pardonable. For if they so far succeeded in knowledge that they could speculate about the world, how did they not more quickly find its Lord? But doomed are they, and in dead things are their hopes, who termed gods things made by human hands: Gold and silver, the product of art, and likenesses of beasts, or useless stone, the work of an ancient hand (Wis 13,1-10).*

From the first day of his mission, Jesus performed miracles of all kinds. He has driven away impure spirits, has healed lepers, has given sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf, the tongue to the dumb and life to the dead. People flocked to Him, bringing each his particular disease and he healed, cured and cleansed them all. He multiplied the loaves and fed a multitude with them. If a man is sound of mind and heart, he must necessarily testify that Jesus is different from every other man. He must testify that no one has ever done, not even Moses, not even Elijah and Elisha, the works done by him. He must confess and testify for human honesty. Faith has nothing to do with it here. In the face of history, one must attest to what he sees, hears and lives. That Jesus is the Different than every other man is not a question of faith, but of history. That Moses is greater than the magicians of Egypt is a matter of history and not of faith. Even the pharaoh's magicians found it and affirmed it. Moses is different from us. Jesus is different from scribes, Pharisees, Sadducees, chief priests and elders of the people. Jesus is the Different from any other man. He is the Different in thoughts and in works.

*The Pharisees came forward and began to argue with him, seeking from him a sign from heaven to test him. He sighed from the depth of his spirit and said, "Why does this generation seek a sign? Amen, I say to you, no sign will be given to this generation." Then he left them, got into the boat again, and went off to the other shore.*

The Pharisees ask Jesus to give them a sign seeing which no one might doubt of Him. Jesus replies that no sign will be given to this generation. He leave the Pharisees, get on the boat and leaves for the other shore. The sign is not given because one does not believe in God by challenge. One believed by faith. Faith is not born out of the extraordinary, but of the ordinary. It is the daily life of Christ Jesus, it is the purity of his word, the richness of his love, the hope that He rekindles in the hearts, the care of the body of man that must lead to faith. If he does not do this, other things are not needed.

Mother of God, Angels and Saints ensure that our daily life is a true sign of faith.

## Do you have eyes and not see, ears and not hear?

## Gn 6,5-8; 7,1-5.10; Ps 28; Mk 8,14-21

### 19 FEBRUARY

One can walk with Christ Jesus, behind Him, but as blind and deaf people. You can be God's people, but without any knowledge of the Lord. The Lord God sends Isaiah as his prophet to a people that is deaf, dumb and blind.

*Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send? Who will go for us?" "Here I am," I said; "send me!" And he replied: Go and say to this people: Listen carefully, but you shall not understand! Look intently, but you shall know nothing! You are to make the heart of this people sluggish, to dull their ears and close their eyes; Else their eyes will see, their ears hear, their heart understand, and they will turn and be healed. "How long, O Lord?" I asked. And he replied: Until the cities are desolate, without inhabitants, Houses, without a man, and the earth is a desolate waste. Until the Lord removes men far away, and the land is abandoned more and more. If there be still a tenth part in it, then this in turn shall be laid waste; As with a terebinth or an oak whose trunk remains when its leaves have fallen. (Holy offspring is the trunk.) (Is 6,8-13).*

In the story of the parables of the kingdom, Jesus applies the prophecy of Isaiah to his generation. He was sent as Isaiah to a deaf, dumb and blind people.

*"Why do you speak to them in parables?" He said to them in reply, "Because knowledge of the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven has been granted to you, but to them it has not been granted. To anyone who has, more will be given and he will grow rich; from anyone who has not, even what he has will be taken away. This is why I speak to them in parables, because 'they look but do not see and hear but do not listen or understand.' Isaiah's prophecy is fulfilled in them, which says: 'You shall indeed hear but not understand you shall indeed look but never see. Gross is the heart of this people, they will hardly hear with their ears, they have closed their eyes, lest they see with their eyes and hear with their ears and understand with their heart and be converted, and I heal them.' "But blessed are your eyes, because they see, and your ears, because they hear. Amen, I say to you, many prophets and righteous people longed to see what you see but did not see it, and to hear what you hear but did not hear it (Mt 13,10-17).*

Saint Paul separates himself from the Jews and decides not to preach the Gospel to his people anymore, because they remained still deaf, blind and dumb. They do not want to open themselves to true faith.

*Without reaching any agreement among themselves they began to leave; then Paul made one final statement. "Well did the holy Spirit speak to your ancestors through the prophet Isaiah, saying: 'Go to this people and say: You shall indeed hear but not understand. You shall indeed look but never see. Gross is the heart of this people; they will not hear with their ears; they have closed their eyes, so they may not see with their eyes and hear with their ears and understand with their heart and be converted, and I heal them.' Let it be known to you that this salvation of God has been sent to the Gentiles; they will listen" (At 28,25-28).*

Today Lord Jesus, speaking to his disciples, warns all his Church. It is always possible to become blind, deaf and dumb, even walking behind Jesus, even by receiving the sacraments, even by celebrating, even by reading the Gospel and meditating on it.

*They had forgotten to bring bread, and they had only one loaf with them in the boat. He enjoined them, "Watch out, guard against the leaven of the Pharisees and the leaven of Herod." They concluded among themselves that it was because they had no bread. When he became aware of this he said to them, "Why do you conclude that it is because you have no bread? Do you not yet understand or comprehend? Are your hearts hardened? Do you have eyes and not see, ears and not hear? And do you not remember, when I broke the five loaves for the five thousand, how many wicker baskets full of fragments you picked up?" They answered him, "Twelve." "When I broke the seven loaves for the four thousand, how many full baskets of fragments did you pick up?" They answered (him), "Seven." He said to them, "Do you still not understand?"*

Since it is easy to be deaf, blind and dumb for us that we follow Jesus closely, rather the closer we are to Him and the more this danger looms, it is necessary, indeed it is urgent that everyone puts every effort to grow in wisdom and grace. If this growth is omitted, one always becomes blind, deaf and dumb. It is a great sadness to be disciples of Jesus, ministers, apostles and instruments of his light and grace as blind, deaf and dumb persons.

Mother of God, Angels and Saints, support us with your help so that we may remain in the light.

## I see people looking like trees and walking

## Gn 8,6-13.20-22; Ps 115; Mk 8,22-26

### 20 FEBRUARY

We can compare the healing of the blind man to the creation of the man operated by the Lord. The Holy Scripture tells us in Chapter II of genesis that first God took the dust of the ground and formed the man with it. First phase of his work. Then he breathed the breath of life into his nostrils and man became a living being. Two phases, two moments and two actions of the Lord. To make man, God makes use of creation and of himself.

*Such is the story of the heavens and the earth at their creation. At the time when the Lord God made the earth and the heavens - while as yet there was no field shrub on earth and no grass of the field had sprouted, for the Lord God had sent no rain upon the earth and there was no man to till the soil, but a stream was welling up out of the earth and was watering all the surface of the ground - the Lord God formed man out of the clay of the ground and blew into his nostrils the breath of life, and so man became a living being. Then the Lord God planted a garden in Eden, in the east, and he placed there the man whom he had formed. Out of the ground the Lord God made various trees grow that were delightful to look at and good for food, with the tree of life in the middle of the garden and the tree of the knowledge of good and bad. A river rises in Eden to water the garden; beyond there it divides and becomes four branches. The name of the first is the Pishon; it is the one that winds through the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold. The gold of that land is excellent; bdellium and lapis lazuli are also there. The name of the second river is the Gihon; it is the one that winds all through the land of Cush. The name of the third river is the Tigris; it is the one that flows east of Asshur. The fourth river is the Euphrates. The Lord God then took the man and settled him in the garden of Eden, to cultivate and care for it. The Lord God gave man this order: "You are free to eat from any of the trees of the garden except the tree of knowledge of good and bad. From that tree you shall not eat; the moment you eat from it you are surely doomed to die" (Gen 2,4-17).*

What does Jesus want to teach us through healing the blind in two stages? He takes some men from the dust of humanity. They are his Apostles. He walks about three years with them. Is he able to open their eyes so that they see his mystery? No. But he leads them to see something. They see Christ in the same way as the blind man. They see him as a walking tree. They see a movement. But they do not know how to distinguish the traits of the person. They know that there is a mystery, but they do not know the mystery. They see Jesus, but they are not able to yet identify him. Here is the second moment. Jesus rises again. He opens their minds to the knowledge of Scriptures. They start to see better. The Holy Spirit descends on them, their life begins to become acute. They can distinguish every detail of his being and his life. But all of Ancient Scripture is a perennial addition of light to light, truth to truth, mystery to mystery and revelation to revelation. History belongs to man. The history of conversion, sanctification and purification is long, very long for every man. It begins, but ends only with death. The path of our conformation to Christ never ends. It ends only with our death. Until that moment, you walk towards.

*When they arrived at Bethsaida, they brought to him a blind man and begged him to touch him. He took the blind man by the hand and led him outside the village. Putting spittle on his eyes he laid his hands on him and asked, "Do you see anything?" Looking up he replied, "I see people looking like trees and walking." Then he laid hands on his eyes a second time and he saw clearly; his sight was restored and he could see everything distinctly. Then he sent him home and said, "Do not even go into the village."*

If the Lord has taken about eighteen hundred years to prepare his people so that his Messiah and Saviour would be born from it, if for Jesus it took three years of manifestation and revelation of his mystery so that his Apostles saw him as a walking tree, if he then had to breathe his Holy Spirit on them so that he were seen in his most pure truth, can we think that with some words, and not even evangelical, we can solve the question of the formation of man so that he sees the Father, the Son, the Holy Spirit, the Church, the sacraments, the Gospel and the Word according to very pure truth, in a very short time? A lifetime is not enough. Time is an essential element in giving true sight to the blind.

Mother of God, Angels and Saints make us discover the preciousness in time in the works of God.

**FEBRUARY 2019**

## THIRD DECADE OF FEBRUARY

## Get behind me, Satan

## Gn 9,1-13; Ps 101; Mk 8,27-33

### 21 FEBRUARY

The temptation to take God's place comes many times and in different ways. Indeed it follows every man as the shadow follows or precedes his body. The first who wanted to take God's place, we know that it was Lucifer. He was the most resplendent light of Paradise. Since he was superior to every other light, he wanted to be a superior light to that of his Creator and Lord, a light without God and against God, because above God.

*A great sign appeared in the sky, a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars. She was with child and wailed aloud in pain as she laboured to give birth. Then another sign appeared in the sky; it was a huge red dragon, with seven heads and ten horns, and on its heads were seven diadems. Its tail swept away a third of the stars in the sky and hurled them down to the earth. Then the dragon stood before the woman about to give birth, to devour her child when she gave birth. She gave birth to a son, a male child, destined to rule all the nations with an iron rod. Her child was caught up to God and his throne. The woman herself fled into the desert where she had a place prepared by God, that there she might be taken care of for twelve hundred and sixty days. Then war broke out in heaven; Michael and his angels battled against the dragon. The dragon and its angels fought back, but they did not prevail and there was no longer any place for them in heaven. The huge dragon, the ancient serpent, who is called the Devil and Satan, who deceived the whole world, was thrown down to earth, and its angels were thrown down with it.*

*Then I heard a loud voice in heaven say: "Now have salvation and power come, and the kingdom of our God and the authority of his Anointed. For the accuser of our brothers is cast out, who accuses them before our God day and night. They conquered him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony; love for life did not deter them from death. Therefore, rejoice, you heavens, and you who dwell in them. But woe to you, earth and sea, for the Devil has come down to you in great fury, for he knows he has but a short time." When the dragon saw that it had been thrown down to the earth, it pursued the woman who had given birth to the male child. But the woman was given the two wings of the great eagle, so that she could fly to her place in the desert, where, far from the serpent, she was taken care of for a year, two years, and a half-year. The serpent, however, spewed a torrent of water out of his mouth after the woman to sweep her away with the current. But the earth helped the woman and opened its mouth and swallowed the flood that the dragon spewed out of its mouth. Then the dragon became angry with the woman and went off to wage war against the rest of her offspring, those who keep God's commandments and bear witness to Jesus. It took its position on the sand of the sea (Rev 12,1-18).*

Jesus was also tempted to be God without God, that is without the Father and without the Holy Spirit. But the Son lives in the communion of the Holy Spirit his eternal sonship that is from the Father. He lives in the only divine nature. Never might the Word exist without God, against God, without the Father, against the Father and autonomy of the Father. Peter is tempted today. Being a disciple of Christ, but above Christ, imposing on Christ what to do and what not to do. For this reason Jesus calls him Satan, because he wants to take the place of God, of his Father and of the Holy Spirit in his life. This might never happen. In eternity Jesus must always be from the Father, in the Father and for the Father.

*Now Jesus and his disciples set out for the villages of Caesarea Philippi. Along the way he asked his disciples, "Who do people say that I am?" They said in reply, "John the Baptist, others Elijah, still others one of the prophets." And he asked them, "But who do you say that I am?" Peter said to him in reply, "You are the Messiah." Then he warned them not to tell anyone about him. He began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer greatly and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed, and rise after three days. He spoke this openly. Then Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. At this he turned around and, looking at his disciples, rebuked Peter and said, "Get behind me, Satan. You are thinking not as God does, but as human beings do."*

Today the whole world is turning into Satan. It wants to be God, without God, against God, without Christ and against Christ. When this happens, there is no more salvation.

Mother of God, Angels and Saints ensure that we always remain men, we never make us God.

## You are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church

## 1 Pt 5, 1-4; Ps 22; Mt 16,13-19

### 22 FEBRUARY

A bit of honesty, not supernatural, not of faith, not of religious beliefs, but only intellectual, rational and human, is necessary for every man who lives on our land. This honesty involves two people: Jesus and Peter. Beyond whether the story is true, false, invented and artfully created, in this passage of the Gospel, which is an essential part of the whole Gospel – in fact it does not exist without these two people: Jesus and Peter - we must affirm with total honesty that it is the bearer of two truths: Jesus, the Nazarene, is the Christ of God. Peter is the foundation on which Jesus will build his Church. Honesty wants that Christ and Peter must never be separated. Christ Jesus came to build his Church on earth. Peter is the foundation of his Church. Jesus is invisible foundation and Peter is visible foundation. Invisible and visible foundations are not two foundations, but only one foundation. There are not two Churches, the visible and the other invisible ones, but only one Church. In fact, in the Creed we confess that the Church is one, holy, catholic and apostolic. It is the body of Christ. The body of Christ in history is founded on Peter. Without Peter as foundation, there is no Church of Lord Jesus. Peter is the only foundation on which the Church of Jesus is built.

What are the consequences for Peter of this promise of Jesus? Like Christ, in order to reveal and affirm his truth, went to death on the cross, so Peter, in order to reveal and affirm his truth, must be ready for every martyrdom. Peter is not a man among men. He is not a person that depends on men. He is a person that is only from Christ Jesus, at the service of Christ Jesus, as the visible foundation of his Church. He is not "primus inter pares" the first among equals, not even president of an assembly of Churches, in which each of them lives her life autonomously from Peter, but each one is connected to Peter as the true Church of Christ. Peter is obliged not to recognize as a true Church of Christ Jesus any Church that is not placed on his foundation, any Church that does not live with Him a communion of hierarchical obedience. The forms of communion can vary from place to place and time to time, the essence of communion must remain stable forever. What is the essence of hierarchical communion? That the Church of Christ Jesus is only the one built on Peter.

*When Jesus went into the region of Caesarea Philippi he asked his disciples, "Who do people say that the Son of Man is?" They replied, "Some say John the Baptist, others Elijah, still others Jeremiah or one of the prophets." He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" Simon Peter said in reply, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God." Jesus said to him in reply, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah. For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my heavenly Father. And so I say to you, you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of the netherworld shall not prevail against it. I will give you the keys to the kingdom of heaven. Whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."*

As we must get converted to the Gospel, so it is necessary to be converted to Peter, because Peter is the essence of the Gospel, because he is the essence of the Church of Christ Jesus. Just as the Church of God cannot exist without Christ, so the Church of Christ might never exist. without Peter. One gets converted to Peter, he gets converted to Christ and he gets converted to the true Church. We get converted to the Gospel and we do not get converted to Peter, our conversion is partial. We get converted to a part of the Gospel, but not to the whole Gospel. Either we get converted to the whole Gospel, or our conversion is vain, because it is not true conversion to Lord Jesus. Even Peter must be converted every day to Peter, otherwise his conversion to the Gospel is not true. The Gospel would be lacking in Peter and if it is lacking in Peter, it also lacks in the true Christ. The risk is that of having an idol Christ and a Church that worships idols. Not only Peter, every other disciple of Jesus must be converted to his truth. What is the truth of every disciple? That he must always remain on the foundation of Peter on which the Church of Christ the Lord was built. It is a personal obligation from which no one can free himself.

Mother of God, Angels and Saints, help every Christian to build himself up on Peter.

### This is my beloved Son. Listen to him.

### Mk 9,2-13

### 23 FEBRUARY

In everything the Holy Spirit does in Christ, with Christ, through Christ, narrated in the Gospel, there is an eternal wisdom that He alone can reveal to the heart. Whoever reads does not understand. But not even those who were present at the events realized. We know that not even the Virgin Mary had the knowledge of the mystery hidden in the facts. Then the Spirit of the Lord bursts into the heart with his divine wisdom and everything becomes clear. The event of the transfiguration will become the event on which he will build all his faith in Christ Jesus. As for Paul the Christ Crucified seen in his divine and eternal glory will be the foundation of his preaching. All Scripture is filled with divine and heavenly wisdom. We will acknowledge it when the Spirit reveals it to us.

*We did not follow cleverly devised myths when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we had been eyewitnesses of his majesty. For he received honour and glory from God the Father when that unique declaration came to him from the majestic glory, "This is my Son, my beloved, with whom I am well pleased." We ourselves heard this voice come from heaven while we were with him on the holy mountain. Moreover, we possess the prophetic message that is altogether reliable. You will do well to be attentive to it, as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts. Know this first of all, that there is no prophecy of scripture that is a matter of personal interpretation, for no prophecy ever came through human will; but rather human beings moved by the holy Spirit spoke under the influence of God (2Pt 1,16-21).*

*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 (1Cor 1,20-25).*

With the wisdom of the Holy Spirit every disciple of Jesus is called to find out what the foundation of his faith is. Without a firm foundation, faith has no consistency. It is a set of words that does not transform our lives, that does not help anyone else let himself be enlightened by it. What is the foundation of my faith? What does its truth rest on? Is its foundation firm? We are always bound to answer.

*After six days Jesus took Peter, James, and John and led them up a high mountain apart by themselves. And he was transfigured before them, and his clothes became dazzling white, such as no fuller on earth could bleach them. Then Elijah appeared to them along with Moses, and they were conversing with Jesus. Then Peter said to Jesus in reply, "Rabbi, it is good that we are here! Let us make three tents: one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah." He hardly knew what to say, they were so terrified. Then a cloud came, casting a shadow over them; then from the cloud came a voice, "This is my beloved Son. Listen to him." Suddenly, looking around, they no longer saw anyone but Jesus alone with them. As they were coming down from the mountain, he charged them not to relate what they had seen to anyone, except when the Son of Man had risen from the dead. So they kept the matter to themselves, questioning what rising from the dead meant. Then they asked him, "Why do the scribes say that Elijah must come first?" He told them, "Elijah will indeed come first and restore all things, yet how is it written regarding the Son of Man that he must suffer greatly and be treated with contempt? But I tell you that Elijah has come and they did to him whatever they pleased, as it is written of him."*

On the mount, Moses and Elijah, the Law and the Prophets are with Christ. The Father is also with Christ. Those who are not with Christ are his disciples. The Father invites to listen to his beloved Son. It is a righteous thing to ask: are the disciples of Christ with Christ today? Are they through Him? Are in Him? From their thoughts, choices and decisions, it seems there is an endless separation. It seems that one is on two distant and even opposing worlds.

Mother of God, Angels and Saints ensure that every disciple is with Jesus, through him and in Him.

## Just as (also) your Father is merciful

## 1Sam 26,2.7-9.12-13.22-23; Ps 102; 1Cor 15,45-49: Lk 6,27-38

### 24 FEBRUARY

To understand the beauty, the greatness and the absolute perfection of the Gospel of Jesus, it is a good thing to compare it with the very principle that governs the moral action of the Lord's people: the holiness of God. The holy God wants a holy people.

*The Lord said to Moses, "Speak to the whole Israelite community and tell them: Be holy, for I, the Lord your God, am holy. "When you reap the harvest of your land, you shall not be so thorough that you reap the field to its very edge, nor shall you glean the stray ears of grain. Likewise, you shall not pick your vineyard bare, nor gather up the grapes that have fallen. These things you shall leave for the poor and the alien. "You shall not defraud or rob your neighbour. You shall not withhold overnight the wages of your day labourer. You shall not curse the deaf, or put a stumbling block in front of the blind, but you shall fear your God. I am the Lord. "You shall not act dishonestly in rendering judgment. Show neither partiality to the weak nor deference to the mighty, but judge your fellow men justly. You shall not go about spreading slander among your kinsmen; nor shall you stand by idly when your neighbour’s life is at stake. I am the Lord. "You shall not bear hatred for your brother in your heart. Though you may have to reprove your fellow man, do not incur sin because of him. Take no revenge and cherish no grudge against your fellow countrymen. You shall love your neighbour as yourself. I am the Lord. "When an alien resides with you in your land, do not molest him. You shall treat the alien who resides with you no differently than the natives born among you; have the same love for him as for yourself; for you too were once aliens in the land of Egypt. I, the Lord, am your God. "Do not act dishonestly in using measures of length or weight or capacity. You shall have a true scale and true weights, an honest ephah and an honest hin. I, the Lord, am your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt." (Cf. Lev 19,1-39).*

In the ancient Law, the holiness of God was all turned to the negative. What should have never been done was indicated. Instead, in the Gospel of Jesus, not only is everything positive, but also universal, towards every man. Not only must the disciple of Jesus not know evil, he must do all the good that is in his both spiritual and material possibilities, capabilities. The Father is the one who gave his Only Son. The Son is the one who gives himself from the cross. Who is the disciple? He who imitates the Father and Christ Jesus. He is the one who in Christ gives himself totally to the Father in the body, in the soul, in the spirit and in every part of his being, so that the Father may make of him a gift of love and salvation.

*"But to you who hear I say, love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you. To the person who strikes you on one cheek, offer the other one as well, and from the person who takes your cloak, do not withhold even your tunic. Give to everyone who asks of you, and from the one who takes what is yours do not demand it back. Do to others as you would have them do to you. For if you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? Even sinners love those who love them. And if you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? Even sinners do the same. If you lend money to those from whom you expect repayment, what credit (is) that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners, and get back the same amount. But rather, love your enemies and do good to them, and lend expecting nothing back; then your reward will be great and you will be children of the Most High, for he himself is kind to the ungrateful and the wicked. Be merciful, just as (also) your Father is merciful. "Stop judging and you will not be judged. Stop condemning and you will not be condemned. Forgive and you will be forgiven. Give and gifts will be given to you; a good measure, packed together, shaken down, and overflowing, will be poured into your lap. For the measure with which you measure will in return be measured out to you."*

The Father in giving Christ Jesus to the world is always in the fullness of the wisdom of the Holy Spirit. Even Christ in his giving himself to the Father, so that the Father makes of him a sacrifice of expiation, redemption, salvation and justification, is moved and led by the Holy Spirit. If the Christian wants to live the new law of perfect love, he too must always be moved and guided by the Spirit of God, but for this reason every day he must grow in wisdom and grace. If growth in the Spirit is omitted, the flesh will take possession of the heart and mind and will govern every action of the Christian.

Mother of Jesus, Angels and Saints, do not allow the Christian to be guided by the flesh.

## O faithless generation

## Mk 9,14-29

### 25 FEBRUARY

The cry of Jesus: "*O generation in disbelief! How long will I be with you? How long do I have to bear you*" is a manifestation of his spiritual solitude. The crowd is not with Him. It comes to Him for the miracles of the body. Once obtained it, they turn back on its way. But Jesus did not come to perform miracles. His mission is to lead every man to his Father through the faith in his Word. Not even the disciples walk with Him, in his Word. They follow Him, but they still do not believe according to truth in Him. The fact that they do not believe in Him is attested by the miracle that is not fulfilled. The boy with the impure spirit is brought to the disciples, but they do not heal him, they do not deliver him. The reason is only one: they still do not believe in the powers that Jesus gave them. They use them superficially, as if it were magic. They do not know that every miracle is not only the fruit of their faith in the Word of Jesus, but also the fruit of their prayer of invocation to the Holy Spirit, the only One who gives every strength to carry out according to truth every power bestowed upon them by Jesus. Yet Samson had understood this truth at his own cost. In the temple of Dagon, he prays the Lord, he asks for strength and strength comes to him.

*Samson said to the attendant who was holding his hand, "Put me where I may touch the columns that support the temple and may rest against them." The temple was full of men and women: all the lords of the Philistines were there, and from the roof about three thousand men and women looked on as Samson provided amusement. Samson cried out to the Lord and said, "O Lord God, remember me! Strengthen me, O God, this last time that for my two eyes I may avenge myself once and for all on the Philistines." Samson grasped the two middle columns on which the temple rested and braced himself against them, one at his right hand, the other at his left. And Samson said, "Let me die with the Philistines!" He pushed hard, and the temple fell upon the lords and all the people who were in it. Those he killed at his death were more than those he had killed during his lifetime (Jdg 16,25-31)*.

Jesus tells it to the disciples. This kind of demon cannot be driven out in any way, but through prayer. The disciples always saw that Jesus did everything with his eyes turned to the Father. Can we do anything by ourselves? Never. We always need to draw every strength and every wisdom from the Holy Spirit.

*When they came to the disciples, they saw a large crowd around them and scribes arguing with them. Immediately on seeing him, the whole crowd was utterly amazed. They ran up to him and greeted him. He asked them, "What are you arguing about with them?" Someone from the crowd answered him, "Teacher, I have brought to you my son possessed by a mute spirit. Wherever it seizes him, it throws him down; he foams at the mouth, grinds his teeth, and becomes rigid. I asked your disciples to drive it out, but they were unable to do so." He said to them in reply, "O faithless generation, how long will I be with you? How long will I endure you? Bring him to me." They brought the boy to him. And when he saw him, the spirit immediately threw the boy into convulsions. As he fell to the ground, he began to roll around and foam at the mouth. Then he questioned his father, "How long has this been happening to him?" He replied, "Since childhood. It has often thrown him into fire and into water to kill him. But if you can do anything, have compassion on us and help us." Jesus said to him, " 'If you can!' Everything is possible to one who has faith." Then the boy's father cried out, "I do believe, help my unbelief!" Jesus, on seeing a crowd rapidly gathering, rebuked the unclean spirit and said to it, "Mute and deaf spirit, I command you: come out of him and never enter him again!" Shouting and throwing the boy into convulsions, it came out. He became like a corpse, which caused many to say, "He is dead!" But Jesus took him by the hand, raised him, and he stood up. When he entered the house, his disciples asked him in private, "Why could we not drive it out?" He said to them, "This kind can only come out through prayer."*

Prayer and faith are the perfect weapons of the disciple of Jesus, if he wants to defeat evil. Neither prayer without faith, nor faith without prayer. With faith one believes in the truth of every Word of Christ Jesus. With prayer, one asks for the strength to obey every Word of Christ Jesus. If one separates faith and prayer, both prayer and faith will be ineffective. At the present times, the disciples are both without prayer and without faith. The true soul of the Gospel is still lacking in them.

Mother of God, Angels and Saints, help Christians so that they may be of true faith and prayer.

## Three days after his death he will rise

## Mk 9,30-37

### 26 FEBRUARY

In their first part, the Psalms of the Righteous Sufferer and the other prophecies about the Servant of the Lord describe the passion of the Christ of God as if they were present at the time of arrest, condemnation and crucifixion. Once this first part of the description of the sufferings is ended, they immediately proclaim the new life of the Righteous. Suffering and new life are one mystery, not two. Jesus prophesies the same thing of the Son of man, namely of Himself, adding the exact time of his resurrection: on the third day after his death. The undefined becomes defined. After three days.

*My God, my God, why have You forsaken me? Far from my deliverance are the words of my groaning. O my God, I cry by day, but You do not answer; And by night, but I have no rest. Yet You are holy, O You who are enthroned upon the praises of Israel. In You our fathers trusted; They trusted and You delivered them. To You they cried out and were delivered; In You they trusted and were not disappointed. But I am a worm and not a man, A reproach of men and despised by the people. All who see me sneer at me; They separate with the lip, they wag the head, saying, “Commit yourself to the Lord; let Him deliver him; Let Him rescue him, because He delights in him.” Yet You are He who brought me forth from the womb; You made me trust when upon my mother’s breasts. Upon You I was cast from birth; You have been my God from my mother’s womb. Be not far from me, for trouble is near; For there is none to help. Many bulls have surrounded me; Strong bulls of Bashan have encircled me. They open wide their mouth at me, As a ravening and a roaring lion. I am poured out like water, And all my bones are out of joint; My heart is like wax; It is melted within me. My strength is dried up like a potsherd, And my tongue cleaves to my jaws; And You lay me in the dust of death. For dogs have surrounded me; A band of evildoers has encompassed me; They pierced my hands and my feet.*

*I can count all my bones. They look, they stare at me; They divide my garments among them, And for my clothing they cast lots. But You, O Lord, be not far off; O You my help, hasten to my assistance. Deliver my soul from the sword, My only life from the power of the dog. Save me from the lion’s mouth; From the horns of the wild oxen You answer me. I will tell of Your name to my brethren; In the midst of the assembly I will praise You. You who fear the Lord, praise Him; All you descendants of Jacob, glorify Him, And stand in awe of Him, all you descendants of Israel. For He has not despised nor abhorred the affliction of the afflicted; Nor has He hidden His face from him; But when he cried to Him for help, He heard. From You comes my praise in the great assembly; I shall pay my vows before those who fear Him. The afflicted will eat and be satisfied; Those who seek Him will praise the Lord. Let your heart live forever! All the ends of the earth will remember and turn to the Lord, And all the families of the nations will worship before You. For the kingdom is the Lord’s And He rules over the nations. All the prosperous of the earth will eat and worship, All those who go down to the dust will bow before Him, Even he who cannot keep his soul alive. Posterity will serve Him; It will be told of the Lord to the coming generation. They will come and will declare His righteousness To a people who will be born, that He has performed it (Ps 22 (21) 1-32).*

The resurrection, namely the triumph after suffering, reveals the truth of the Christ of God. In fact, on the Golgotha there are three crucifixes. The Righteous is only one, not just because He dies as a true righteous, but because he is the only one who has risen after three days. Having the prophecy been fulfilled in its entirety, no one will no longer question the messianic state of Jesus.

*They left from there and began a journey through Galilee, but he did not wish anyone to know about it. He was teaching his disciples and telling them, "The Son of Man is to be handed over to men and they will kill him, and three days after his death he will rise." But they did not understand the saying, and they were afraid to question him. They came to Capernaum and, once inside the house, he began to ask them, "What were you arguing about on the way?" But they remained silent. They had been discussing among themselves on the way who was the greatest. Then he sat down, called the Twelve, and said to them, "If anyone wishes to be first, he shall be the last of all and the servant of all." Taking a child he placed it in their midst, and putting his arms around it he said to them, "Whoever receives one child such as this in my name, receives me; and whoever receives me, receives not me but the one who sent me."*

If Jesus is the true Messiah, He is also true prophet. Each of His Word will infallibly be fulfilled. Why then do his disciples today teach falsely against the Word?

Mother of God, Angels and Saints ensure that our word is never against the Word of Jesus.

## Whoever is not against us is for us

## Sir 4,12-22; Ps 118; Mk 9,38-40

### 27 FEBRUARY

Every word of Jesus must be read and understood in the place and moment and according to the circumstances in which it was uttered. In the Gospel according to Matthew, Jesus says: "He who is not with me is against me". The context is the harsh, deaf opposition of the Pharisees. These even to deny the supernatural origin of the works of Jesus, accused him, slandering him, lying and saying false testimony, that He was an ally of Beelzebùl. He acted with the authority and strength of the prince of demons, that is, of Satan. After having defended the supernaturality of his actions, he declares to the Pharisees that they, not being with him, are against him. Not gathering with him, they disperse. Their doctrine, their thoughts and their works are thus declared vain. Everything is vanity in them.

*Then they brought to him a demoniac who was blind and mute. He cured the mute person so that he could speak and see. All the crowd was astounded, and said, "Could this perhaps be the Son of David?" But when the Pharisees heard this, they said, "This man drives out demons only by the power of Beelzebul, the prince of demons." But he knew what they were thinking and said to them, "Every kingdom divided against itself will be laid waste, and no town or house divided against itself will stand. And if Satan drives out Satan, he is divided against himself; how, then, will his kingdom stand? And if I 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 Spirit of God that I drive out demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you. How can anyone enter a strong man's house and steal his property, unless he first ties up the strong man? Then he can plunder his house. Whoever is not with me is against me, and whoever does not gather with me scatters (Mt 12,22-30).*

We find the same context and statements of Jesus in the Gospel according to Luke.

*He was driving out a demon (that was) mute, and when the demon had gone out, the mute person spoke and the crowds were amazed. Some of them said, "By the power of Beelzebul, the prince of demons, he drives out demons." Others, to test him, asked him for a sign from heaven. But he knew their thoughts and said to them, "Every kingdom divided against itself will be laid waste and house will fall against house. And if Satan is divided against himself, how will his kingdom stand? For you say that it is by Beelzebul that I drive out demons. If I, then, drive out demons by Beelzebul, by whom do your own people drive them out? Therefore they will be your judges. But if it is by the finger of God that (I) drive out demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you. When a strong man fully armed guards his palace, his possessions are safe. But when one stronger*[*7*](http://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0839/__PWU.HTM#$3M2)*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 (Lk 11,14-232).*

Instead, the affirmation that we find in the Gospel according to Mark is in a very different context. There is a man who drives out demons in the name of Jesus, but he does not follow Jesus, he does not walk with Him. They wanted to stop him right because of this: he did not go with them. Jesus orders that he is not prevented from expelling demons in his name. The disciples must defend Jesus from those who speak ill of Him, not from those who work in his name. These will never speak badly. They act in his name. In some ways they help Jesus in his mission. In this case, whoever is not against us is for us. He favours us. He makes us be known. He attests for our truth. He must be left to work. Jesus must be defended from the words of lies that are said against him. He is the perfect truth. Those who manifest his truth, even if the modalities do not correspond to our desires, must always be left to work. They are helpful.

*John said to him, "Teacher, we saw someone driving out demons in your name, and we tried to prevent him because he does not follow us." Jesus replied, "Do not prevent him. There is no one who performs a mighty deed in my name who can at the same time speak ill of me. For whoever is not against us is for us.*

Jesus wants his disciples to be always filled with all wisdom. Every word of theirs must be spoken to help Jesus. If a person in some way already helps Jesus, it is good to direct him so that he helps him in a perfect way. This is wisdom.

Mother of God, Angels and Saints, fill us with all wisdom in order to help Jesus.

## Keep salt in yourselves

## Sir 5,1-10; Ps 1; Mk 9,41-50

### 28 FEBRUARY

When does a man have salt in himself? When every moment of his life is spent to achieve the true purpose for which he was created, redeemed, saved and incorporated in Christ Jesus. We must immediately confess that today the Christian is becoming a person without salt. He is changing all the essential ends to the attainment of the primary end in secondary, ephemeral and vain ends. While he is making all the futile ends necessary and essential. This distortion of ends attests that foolishness is invading his heart, his mind and his spirit. Is there greater folly than that which changes good into evil and evil into good? Is there a more elevated insipidity than the one that erases the truth and in its place raises falsehood and lie? What future is there for a people that feeds on vanity, while stays away from what lasts for eternal life? Who wants to find the wisdom, let him know that it is found only in the Word of Jesus. For the whole world and not only for the disciples of Christ the Lord, perfect knowledge is only his Sermon on the Mount. Other perfect wisdom is not found on earth.

Today, Jesus gives his disciples a rule of wisdom that must never be forgotten. It concerns the scandal, or impediment caused to ourselves or to others, which prevents us from remaining in the light, grace, truth and justice. What is the purpose of every disciple of Jesus? Following Him to reach Heaven. Helping every other man, pointing him the way of Paradise and how to run it in order to be able to get to it one day. The scandal is a sin committed by us, seen by others, which tells them that we do not walk towards Heaven. If we do not walk, why should they walk? If we can get out of the light, why should they come in? There is no use going in and out. Even because the one who goes out often no longer returns, remaining forever in darkness. A scandal is also the sin that the other commits and that could lead us to commit it. Jesus wants us to avoid seeing, touching and attending every person, place and situations where sin is easily committed and by inadvertence it could even conquer our hearts. We must confess that today the scandal has refined its technique so marvellously well, as to make all sin, every violation of the law of the Lord, every devastation of nature, every abomination and wickedness, pass as good, love and truth.

*Anyone who gives you a cup of water to drink because you belong to Christ, amen, I say to you, will surely not lose his reward. "Whoever causes one of these little ones who believe (in me) to sin, it would be better for him if a great millstone were put around his neck and he were thrown into the sea. If your hand causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter into life maimed than with two hands to go into Gehenna, into the unquenchable fire. And if your foot causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter into life crippled than with two feet to be thrown into Gehenna. And if your eye causes you to sin, pluck it out. Better for you to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye than with two eyes to be thrown into Gehenna, where 'their worm does not die, and the fire is not quenched.' "Everyone will be salted with fire. Salt is good, but if salt becomes insipid, with what will you restore its flavour? Keep salt in yourselves and you will have peace with one another."*

The children of the Catholic Church in all this are not without any fault. They have abolished the very supernatural end that Jesus asks us to reach. They say that God is only mercy, only forgiveness and only heaven. He is not justice, is not righteous and does not judge anyone. At the moment of death he welcomes everyone in his Paradise. Between the Gospel and what the children of the Catholic Church teach, the difference is greater than that which exists between Heaven and Hell. It is the abyss of the abysses. While every Word of the Gospel is aimed at the attainment of the end, having abolished the end to be achieved, we have declared null and void the whole Gospel. But if the Gospel is null, null is also the Church, grace, truth and justice. Null is all religious practice. Null is the evangelizing mission. Everything becomes a great apparatus of falsehood. This is one of the reasons why from the supernatural we are dedicating ourselves to the natural.

Mother of God, Angels and Saints, help us to give value of eternal truth to the Gospel.