**AUGUST 2019**

***FIRST DECADE OF AUGUST***

## Collects fish of every kind

## Ex 40,16-21.34-38; Ps 83; Mt 13,47-53

### 1 AUGUST

The Church of Christ Jesus, offered to us in the image or figure or similitude of the net thrown into the sea, is the cradle and fertile field of numberless martyrs and confessors of faith, but also the bosom of idolaters, apostates, heresiarchs, scandal and schism operators, cultivators of all immorality, today also of destroyers of the truth of the Gospel in the name of mercy, of acceptance and of compassion for man. The Holy Spirit and Satan work together in the Church of the Lord. He who is not of the Spirit of the Lord is a slave to Satan and his falsehood. This cohabitation will last until the end of the world. Wanting a Church of Cathars is against the Gospel itself and every revelation. This interweaving of good and evil, of virtue and vice, of pride and humility, of the highest morality but also of infernal immorality is not of modern times. But of all time. Within the Apostles of the Lord Judah was already ruled by Satan. Saint John denounces the pride that has already taken root in some Christian communities.

*As a result of this, many (of) his disciples returned to their former way of life and no longer accompanied him. Jesus then said to the Twelve, "Do you also want to leave?" Simon Peter answered him, "Master, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. We have come to believe and are convinced that you are the Holy One of God." Jesus answered them, "Did I not choose you twelve? Yet is not one of you a devil?" He was referring to Judas, son of Simon the Iscariot; it was he who would betray him, one of the Twelve (Jn 6,66-71). Beloved, you are faithful in all you do for the brothers, especially for strangers; they have testified to your love before the church. Please help them in a way worthy of God to continue their journey. For they have set out for the sake of the Name and are accepting nothing from the pagans. Therefore, we ought to support such persons, so that we may be co-workers in the truth. I wrote to the church, but Diotrephes, who loves to dominate, does not acknowledge us. Therefore, if I come, I will draw attention to what he is doing, spreading evil nonsense about us. And not content with that, he will not receive the brothers, hindering those who wish to do so and expelling them from the church. Beloved, do not imitate evil but imitate good. Whoever does what is good is of God; whoever does what is evil has never seen God. Demetrius receives a good report from all, even from the truth itself. We give our testimonial as well, and you know our testimony is true. I have much to write to you, but I do not wish to write with pen and ink. Instead, I hope to see you soon, when we can talk face to face. Peace be with you. The friends greet you; greet the friends there each by name (3Jn 5-15).*

Those who see evil and put it in great evidence in order to hide the sanctity that has always existed and will always exist in the Church, are of a bad faith and consequently bad at heart. The clear eye, formed at the school of the Holy Spirit, always knows how to see the good to thank the Lord and always knows how to grasp evil, in order to offer his life to God for the redemption of every man still distant and far from Him. Jesus in the Spirit of God sees the good and praises the Lord. He sees evil, asks the Father for forgiveness and offers him his life as a sacrifice of expiation and redemption. With the eyes of Satan both good and evil are used to tarnish the Church, transforming good into evil and evil into an accusation to turn away from her.

*Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net thrown into the sea, which collects fish of every kind. When it is full they haul it ashore and sit down to put what is good into buckets. What is bad they throw away. Thus it will be at the end of the age. The angels will go out and separate the wicked from the righteous and throw them into the fiery furnace, where there will be wailing and grinding of teeth. "Do you understand all these things?" They answered, "Yes." And he replied, "Then every scribe who has been instructed in the kingdom of heaven is like the head of a household who brings from his storeroom both the new and the old." When Jesus finished these parables, he went away from there.*

Who walks in the Holy Spirit walks from light to light and from truth to truth. Since he walks, he leaves some things and takes others. He takes of yesterday what is useful today. He takes what is of yesterday that gives life today. The life of the Church of God is in all things like a tree. When a branch is dry and unproductive, it is cut. This way space is left for new branches so that they can develop and produce many fruits.

Mother of God, Angels and Saints arrange that we always see from the Holy Spirit.

## Is he not the carpenter's son?

## Lev 23,1.4-11.25-26.27.34b-37; Ps 80; Mt 13,54-58

### 2 AUGUST

David, the great king of Israel, was so humble as not to be considered worthy to present himself before Samuel, who sought a person to consecrate to the Lord as head of his people. The Lord had chosen him and it was He, the Lord, who rejected the other six sons of Jesse. Eventually even the prophet of God was amazed. You, Lord, send me to consecrate a king to you in the house of Jesse, but then discard all his children. Why do you first send me and then you do not choose anyone? Samuel asks a question to the father: "Are all your children in front of me?" The father replies that the youngest is missing. But nothing can be done about that one. He is a humble shepherd of flocks. He spends the day playing the whistle behind sheep and goats. What does the Lord do with him? This is the true greatness of the king of God's people. But Samuel did not listen to his father. He ordered him that he were to call him in. In truth, the Lord had chosen right him.

*The Lord said to Samuel: "How long will you grieve for Saul, whom I have rejected as king of Israel? Fill your horn with oil, and be on your way. I am sending you to Jesse of Bethlehem, for I have chosen my king from among his sons." But Samuel replied: "How can I go? Saul will hear of it and kill me." To this the Lord answered: "Take a heifer along and say, 'I have come to sacrifice to the Lord.' Invite Jesse to the sacrifice, and I myself will tell you what to do; you are to anoint for me the one I point out to you." Samuel did as the Lord had commanded him. When he entered Bethlehem, the elders of the city came trembling to meet him and inquired, "Is your visit peaceful, O seer?" He replied: "Yes! I have come to sacrifice to the Lord. So cleanse yourselves and join me today for the banquet." He also had Jesse and his sons cleanse themselves and invited them to the sacrifice. As they came, he looked at Eliab and thought, "Surely the Lord’s anointed is here before him." But the Lord said to Samuel: "Do not judge from his appearance or from his lofty stature, because I have rejected him. Not as man sees does God see, because man sees the appearance but the Lord looks into the heart." Then Jesse called Abinadab and presented him before Samuel, who said, "The Lord has not chosen him." Next Jesse presented Shammah, but Samuel said, "The Lord has not chosen this one either." In the same way Jesse presented seven sons before Samuel, but Samuel said to Jesse, "The Lord has not chosen any one of these." Then Samuel asked Jesse, "Are these all the sons you have?" Jesse replied, "There is still the youngest, who is tending the sheep." Samuel said to Jesse, "Send for him; we will not begin the sacrificial banquet until he arrives here." Jesse sent and had the young man brought to them. He was ruddy, a youth handsome to behold and making a splendid appearance. The Lord said, "There-anoint him, for this is he!" Then Samuel, with the horn of oil in hand, anointed him in the midst of his brothers; and from that day on, the spirit of the Lord rushed upon David. When Samuel took his leave, he went to Ramah (1Sam 16,1-13).*

There is an infinite difference between Jesus and David. Jesus is not only the son of Joseph - by generation according to the flesh he is not even the son of Joseph, because he is son by adoption or by spiritual generation from his heart – he is first of all the Eternal Son of the Father, his Only Begotten and his Word. Secondly, for the flesh to be able to do the works of God, it must always be assumed by God and filled by him with grace, truth, light, fortitude and the Holy Spirit. This is a universal and unchangeable rule. This truth is the essence of the faith of all the sons of Abraham. They must know that it is God the one who makes great, because it is He who sends his Spirit with whom every work is done.

*He came to his native place and taught the people in their synagogue. They were astonished and said, "Where did this man get such wisdom and mighty deeds? Is he not the carpenter's son? Is not his mother named Mary and his brothers James, Joseph, Simon, and Judas? Are not his sisters all with us? Where did this man get all this?" And they took offense at him. But Jesus said to them, "A prophet is not without honour except in his native place and in his own house." And he did not work many mighty deeds there because of their lack of faith.*

The inhabitants of Nazareth live a very incomplete faith, lacking in many already revealed truths. Even Moses, the greatest man of God, before John the Baptist, was entirely made by God. He only lent his breath to the Lord. Faith is worth nothing without truth. Since the truths of faith are many, they must all live in the heart. Without the full truth, faith is incapable of true discernment.

Mother of God, Angels and Saints, make sure that no revealed truth is lacking in our faith.

## He feared the people

## Mt 14,1-12

### 3 AUGUST

The law of levirate was given so that no lineage in Israel became extinct. The brother took his brother’s wife for his wife, the offspring was of the dead brother, though, and thus the lineage always remained. It did not become extinct.

*"When brothers live together and one of them dies without a son, the widow of the deceased shall not marry anyone outside the family; but her husband's brother shall go to her and perform the duty of a brother-in-law by marrying her. The first-born son she bears shall continue the line of the deceased brother, that his name may not be blotted out from Israel. If, however, a man does not care to marry his brother's wife, she shall go up to the elders at the gate and declare, 'My brother-in-law does not intend to perform his duty toward me and refuses to perpetuate his brother's name in Israel.' Thereupon the elders of his city shall summon him and admonish him. If he persists in saying, 'I am not willing to marry her,' his sister-in-law, in the presence of the elders, shall go up to him and strip his sandal from his foot and spit in his face, saying publicly, 'This is how one should be treated who will not build up his brother's family!' And his lineage shall be spoken of in Israel as 'the family of the man stripped of his sandal.' (Dt 25,5-10).*

We know that this law was also in the genealogy of Jesus. Boaz marries Ruth in accordance with the law of levirate. It is a law that dates back to the dawn of time.

*Boaz then said to the elders and to all the people, "You are witnesses today that I have acquired from Naomi all the holdings of Elimelech, Chilion and Mahlon. I also take Ruth the Moabite, the widow of Mahlon, as my wife, in order to raise up a family for her late husband on his estate, so that the name of the departed may not perish among his kinsmen and fellow citizens. Do you witness this today?" All those at the gate, including the elders, said, "We do so. May the LORD make this wife come into your house like Rachel and Leah, who between them built up the house of Israel. May you do well in Ephrathah and win fame in Bethlehem. With the offspring the LORD will give you from this girl, may your house become like the house of Perez, whom Tamar bore to Judah." (Rut 4,9-12).*

John the Baptist says to Herod that it was not lawful for him to have his brother’s wife for wife. His brother is not dead. Moreover, he had an offspring. This is why Herod wanted to kill him. He was afraid of the crowd, though. They considered him a prophet. But the fear of the man withstands up to a certain point. An even stronger fear of men comes, and it is the death of John. Every man must form himself not on the fear of men, or of the crowd, but on the fear of the Lord. The fear of God keeps us from every sin. If to a fear of men, another greater one is added, one is capable of any crime. The fear of men has never prevented one only sin. Rather, it adds new ones.

*At that time Herod the tetrarch heard of the reputation of Jesus and said to his servants, "This man is John the Baptist. He has been raised from the dead; that is why mighty powers are at work in him." Now Herod had arrested John, bound (him), and put him in prison on account of Herodias, the wife of his brother Philip, for John had said to him, "It is not lawful for you to have her." Although he wanted to kill him,* *he feared the people, for they regarded him as a prophet. But at a birthday celebration for Herod, the daughter of Herodias performed a dance before the guests and delighted Herod so much that he swore to give her whatever she might ask for. Prompted by her mother, she said, "Give me here on a platter the head of John the Baptist." The king was distressed, but because of his oaths and the guests who were present, he ordered that it be given, and he had John beheaded in the prison. His head was brought in on a platter and given to the girl, who took it to her mother. His disciples came and took away the corpse and buried him; and they went and told Jesus.*

The Scripture teaches that the fear of men sets in a trap. Herod was trapped in the fear of the dignitaries and the notables of his kingdom and was forced to behead the prophet of God. What happened with Herod can happen with every other man. For a less great fear one manages to avoid one thing. For a greater fear, one does that thing. Instead, when one walks with the fear of God, there is no greater fear, and one never commits the sin. Today the fear of God has disappeared.

Mother of God, Angels, Saints, fill the heart of the Christians with the holy fear of the Lord.

## Who appointed me as your judge and arbitrator?

## Qo 1,2; 2,21-23; Ps 89; Col 3,1-5.9-11; Lk 12,13-21

### 4 AUGUST

Jesus is the Mediator, indeed the only one, the only Mediator of light, truth, justice, peace, eternal life, glorious resurrection and every grace of redemption and salvation between God and men. This truth is the essence, substance and foundation not of faith, but of the substance of God and of men. As the whole creation was made by the Father through the Word in the Holy Spirit, so all the redemption and the work of salvation was accomplished by the Father, in the Incarnate Word, through the Holy Spirit. And today it is always realized by the body of Christ, which is his one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church, through the Holy Spirit. Our faith is the confession of this truth. If this truth is not confessed, our faith is dead. It is of no use.

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

*"I have much more to tell you, but you cannot bear it now. But when he comes, the Spirit of truth, he will guide you to all truth. He will not speak on his own, but he will speak what he hears, and will declare to you the things that are coming. He will glorify me, because he will take from what is mine and declare it to you. Everything that the Father has is mine; for this reason I told you that he will take from what is mine and declare it to you (Jn 16,12-15).*

Why then Jesus says "O man, who constituted me judge or mediator above you?" Jesus is the mediator between God and every man, to tell every man the will of his Father and to give every grace of salvation and redemption, in view of eternal life. He is not a mediator between man and man, in the sense that he must say the will of a man to another man, asking him to obey the will of the other. Jesus is not the mediator between human wills. He is the mediator between the will of God and the will of men. He must call every will of men to conform and obey the rules of the will of the Father. This is why he was sent: to show us the heart of the Father so that we welcome him and make him ours in him, with him and through him through the power of the Holy Spirit. That of Jesus is a heavenly, divine mission to bring man back to God.

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

Now Jesus manifests to the man who had asked him to be his mediator with his brother what the end of the things of this world is: making of them a ladder to climb up to heaven. How is this possible? By giving the poor what is superfluous. One hundred tons of wheat are produced. A ton is needed for our life, ninety-nine are given to the poor. The gift given to the poor multiplies God's blessing for us on earth and in addition it gives us the eternal blessing. Instead, this rich man accumulates everything for himself. On the earth, he enjoys nothing of his goods. He enjoys nothing in eternity. He thought of himself. He behaved like a greedy person. Never might he enjoy in the eternal goods of God, because he did not make his poorest brothers rejoice in his goods. Joy for joy, almsgiving for alms and love for love. We love and God loves us. This is his eternal law.

Mother of God, Angels and Saints, make us great operators of mercy. It is the way of heaven.

## Followed him on foot from their towns

## Nm 11,4b-15; Ps 80; Mt 14,13-21

### 5 AUGUST

Jesus is the universal and not the particular pastor. He is the pastor of all, not just a few. He is the shepherd of sheep and lambs. He is the pastor of those who already believe and those who still do not believe, because they have not heard the good news. He is the shepherd on earth and in the heavens. He is the shepherd before his crucifixion and is pastor after his glorious resurrection. The whole flock of the Father is his. Every other pastor might feed his flock but only in him, with him and for him. Every separation of the shepherds from Christ is transformed into the removal of the shepherd from the sheep. Every falsehood that he introduces into Christ is a falsehood that he introduces into the flock. Every truth that discovers of Christ is a truth that he discovers of the flock. Pastors in Christ are shepherds to the flock of Christ to the extent that they allow themselves to be grazed by Christ. The more the pastor assumes the form of Christ, just as Christ assumed the form of the Father, and the more the flock takes on the form of Christ and the form of God. As Christ is from the Father for the Father and feeds the flock of the Father. Thus the shepherd is in Christ if he is from Christ for Christ and feeds the flock of Christ. Being of Christ and for Christ is an essential, constitutive and always necessary condition. Without Christ we are shepherds of death, never of life. Nobody is life for the flock. Only Christ Jesus is the way, the truth and the life of the flock.

*I am the good shepherd. A good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. A hired man, who is not a shepherd and whose sheep are not his own, sees a wolf coming and leaves the sheep and runs away, and the wolf catches and scatters them. This is because he works for pay and has no concern for the sheep. I am the good shepherd, and I know mine and mine know me, just as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I will lay down my life for the sheep. I have other sheep that do not belong to this fold. These also I must lead, and they will hear my voice, and there will be one flock, one shepherd. This is why the Father loves me, because I lay down my life in order to take it up again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down on my own. I have power to lay it down, and power to take it up again. This command I have received from my Father" (Jn 10,11-18).*

Jesus withdrew aside with his disciples in a deserted place. The crowd follows him. Indeed it precedes him. When Jesus arrives a large crowd is before his eyes. They are his sheep. He cannot send them away. He puts himself at their service, as any good shepherd would do and teaches them many things. He opens their hearts to hope. He gives them a new light. If a pastor does not bring souls into God, he is not a good shepherd. If he takes them to himself and uses them for himself, he is a mercenary. Jesus cares for the flock of the Father and brings every sheep to the Father. This is why the Father gives them to him: so that he may remove the heart of stone from them, put the heart of the Father and then hand them over to him.

*When Jesus heard of it, he withdrew in a boat to a deserted place by himself. The crowds heard of this and followed him on foot from their towns. When he disembarked and saw the vast crowd, his heart was moved with pity for them, and he cured their sick. When it was evening, the disciples approached him and said, "This is a deserted place and it is already late; dismiss the crowds so that they can go to the villages and buy food for themselves." (Jesus) said to them, "There is no need for them to go away; give them some food yourselves." But they said to him, "Five loaves and two fish are all we have here." Then he said, "Bring them here to me," and he ordered the crowds to sit down on the grass. Taking the five loaves and the two fish, and looking up to heaven, he said the blessing, broke the loaves, and gave them to the disciples, who in turn gave them to the crowds. They all ate and were satisfied, and they picked up the fragments left over  - twelve wicker baskets full. Those who ate were about five thousand men, not counting women and children.*

We are in a deserted place. There is no bread. The sheep are not just souls to be cured, they are also a body to be fed. Jesus gives another sign of his love. He also takes care of their body and multiplies bread for them. The Eucharist that tomorrow, before being crucified, He will give and that will have to support the sheep in the desert of their life to make the journey till reaching the eternal kingdom of God, is depicted in the multiplication of the bread. Today, in the desert of history only whoever wants to die, dies. We have the bread. However, it must be received with faith. Eating it like normal bread is of no use.

Mother of God, Angels and Saints ensure that we receive the Eucharist in fullness of truth and faith.

## And spoke of his exodus

## Dn 7,9-10.13-14; or 2 Pt 1,16-19; Ps 96; Lk 9,28b-36

### 6 AUGUST

The things of God are not always understood instantly. Sometime has to go by occasionally. Then they remain carved as milestones in our hearts. Simon Peter and the others see, hear and do not understand. After this event their heart is not the same. A new vision has entered into it. When they then understand, this vision will be the foundation of their faith. This truth is testified by Peter many years later.

*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).*

What had been the error of Peter and of the other disciples of Jesus? Interpreting the prophetic scriptures in a private way. They had placed their interpretation over that of Christ the Lord, of Elijah, of Moses and of the Father of heaven himself. On the mountain, Moses and Elijah speak of Jesus' exodus in Jerusalem. Jesus has always announced his death by crucifixion. The Father invites to listen to the Word of Jesus as his authentic truth. Instead, how did they act? They made their interpretation or understanding of the Scriptures triumph. In the name of their thought they opposed the truth of Christ the Lord. Does not the thought of this or that other person obscure the prophetic Scriptures of both the Old and New Testaments today? Do not we say, against all revelation, that everyone will be in Heaven tomorrow, that hell is empty, that Christ is not needed for salvation. Can other routes and other paths be travelled? This is simply called stubborn imposition of our ways on the ways of God. Private prevails over the public, the personal over the whole Church, what we imagine imposes itself on the whole revelation. We deny the truth of God and his history with our falsehoods. Yet it would be enough to put in the heart a single Word of Scripture and with it we could begin to dismantle all our lies about revelation. A single Word believed in purity of truth and faith is able to declare false every thought of the earth and of the sky, of the men and of the devils of hell.

*About eight days after he said this, he took Peter, John, and James and went up the mountain to pray. While he was praying his face changed in appearance and his clothing became dazzling white. And behold, two men were conversing with him, Moses and Elijah, who appeared in glory and spoke of his exodus that he was going to accomplish in Jerusalem. Peter and his companions had been overcome by sleep, but becoming fully awake, they saw his glory and the two men standing with him. As they were about to part from him, Peter said to Jesus, "Master, it is good that we are here; let us make three tents, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah." But he did not know what he was saying. While he was still speaking, a cloud came and cast a shadow over them, and they became frightened when they entered the cloud. Then from the cloud came a voice that said, "This is my chosen Son; listen to him." After the voice had spoken, Jesus was found alone. They fell silent and did not at that time tell anyone what they had seen.*

Christ Jesus must be imitated. He gave the authentic interpretation of the prophetic Scriptures and called his Father, Moses and Elijah as witnesses. We too must attest to the truth of the prophetic scriptures. How? By living their every word in purity of obedience. When we live the Word of Scripture, the Holy Spirit through us enters the hearts of those who listen and little by little, if they are of good will, convince them of the truth of the Word of Scripture. If we are without the Spirit, because we do not say the Word, no conviction is given, because the Spirit is not given through us.

Mother of God, Angels and Saints, give us perfect obedience to every Word of Jesus.

## Send her away, for she keeps calling out after us

## Nm 13,1-2.25-14,1.26-30.34-35; Ps 105; Mt 15,21-28

### 7 AUGUST

In the New Testament not only requests for graces, often also the reasons for which grace is to be done, are found. They are reasons that find their foundation in charity and love. If a man loves the Jewish people, can he be denied a grace? If a woman has done much good, can she be left in death? One answers with love to love and with charity to charity. No one might ever resist mercy.

*When he had finished all his words to the people, he entered Capernaum. A centurion there had a slave who was ill and about to die, and he was valuable to him. When he heard about Jesus, he sent elders of the Jews to him, asking him to come and save the life of his slave. They approached Jesus and strongly urged him to come, saying, "He deserves to have you do this for him, for he loves our nation and he built the synagogue for us" (Lk 7,1-5).*

*Now in Joppa there was a disciple named Tabitha (which translated means Dorcas). She was completely occupied with good deeds and almsgiving. Now during those days she fell sick and died, so after washing her, they laid (her) out in a room upstairs. Since Lydda was near Joppa, the disciples, hearing that Peter was there, sent two men to him with the request, "Please come to us without delay." So Peter got up and went with them. When he arrived, they took him to the room upstairs where all the widows came to him weeping and showing him the tunics and cloaks that Dorcas had made while she was with them. Peter sent them all out and knelt down and prayed. Then he turned to her body and said, "Tabitha, rise up." She opened her eyes, saw Peter, and sat up. He gave her his hand and raised her up, and when he had called the holy ones and the widows, he presented her alive (At 9,36-41).*

A woman asks for a grace to Jesus. But he does not listen to her. He does not even say a word to her. She keeps shouting. The disciples approach Jesus and beg him to grant her. But what is the reason for his granting? "Because she comes after us shouting"! It is not a motivation of charity, mercy, piety and compassion. Instead, it is a desire for peace and silence for themselves. For no disturb, noise and shouting. It is a motivation of selfishness and not of charity. If they want to give motivations to God, they must spring from great charity either for the Lord or for the man who asks for grace. Abraham asks God to spare Sodom. For what reason? So that He is not seen by the world as an unjust judge, striking righteous and iniquitous people. Thus Moses asks for forgiveness so that the Lord may be believed to be the true God almighty on everything and not in part. If the people had not come to the Promised Land, his name would have suffered a serious damaged. The woman snatches grace from Christ that denies it to her. With what motivation? With one of right. She has been compared by Jesus to a little dog. Well, dogs have a right to eat the crumbs that fall from the master's table. By doing the miracle Jesus would not have transgressed any commandment of the Father. He would have lived the law that is lived in every house of this world and consequently also in the house of God. A wise woman like Abraham and like Moses.

*Then Jesus went from that place and withdrew to the region of Tyre and Sidon. And behold, a Canaanite woman of that district came and called out, "Have pity on me, Lord, Son of David! My daughter is tormented by a demon." But he did not say a word in answer to her. His disciples came and asked him, "Send her away, for she keeps calling out after us." He said in reply, "I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." But the woman came and did him homage, saying, "Lord, help me." He said in reply, "It is not right to take the food of the children and throw it to the dogs." She said, "Please, Lord, for even the dogs eat the scraps that fall from the table of their masters." Then Jesus said to her in reply, "O woman, great is your faith! Let it be done for you as you wish." And her daughter was healed from that hour.*

He who prays must pray with his heart, mind and hands. The heart filled with the love of the Father, the mind overflowing with the wisdom of the Holy Spirit, the hands rich in the same mercy of Lord Jesus. Ours must be a Trinitarian prayer.

Mother of God, Angels and Saints arrange that heart, mind and hands are full of our God.

## No such thing shall ever happen to you

## Nm 20,1-13; Ps 94; Mt 16,13-23

### 8 AUGUST

Simon Peter confesses that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God by revelation of the Father. Jesus proclaims Simon blessed, attesting that his word came neither from flesh nor from blood, but from his Father. He promises him that on his rock he would have built his Church and that the gates of the underworld would have never won, would have never made her its slave. In addition, he also gives him the keys to the kingdom of heaven. What he will bind on earth, it will be bound in the heavens. What he will loosen on earth, it will be loosened in the skies. Who then is Simon for the Church and for the world? The one who always recognizes the true Christ, separating him from the false ones, that are many, too many. The Church founded on Peter will never worship a false Christ in place of the true one. Any other Church not founded on Peter might always incur this danger. Instead of the true Christ she could worship a false one. She could worship a Christ of men and not the Christ of God. Since Christ of God, truth, grace, way, life and light are one, it could happen that in other confessions one of these essential "parts" of the full Truth of Christ is missing. One could have a Christ without either truth, or grace, or way, or life and or light. In reality, some confessions do not have even the Christ of God, the Incarnate Word, anymore.

Immediately afterwards Jesus reveals the modalities of his being the Christ of God. They are those of the suffering Righteous and those of the suffering Servant of the Psalms and of Isaiah. Peter once again intervenes and tells Jesus that this must never happen to him. God must never want this. If God has already prophesied it, might the Lord God ever change one of his absolute prophecies, not conditioned by the events of history? If the prophecy is conditioned, removed or fulfilled the condition, the prophecy is not fulfilled. If you do not get converted, you will perish the same way. Conditioned prophecy. We get converted, we do not perish. We do not get converted, we perish. But if the prophecy is absolute it remains valid forever. Now the Psalms and Isaiah on the Messiah are absolute prophecies, without condition. They will always be fulfilled. Heaven and earth pass, the prophecy remains. This time the words of Jesus are diametrically opposed: "Go after me, Satan! You are a scandal to me, because you do not think according to God, but according to men!" Why did he speak according to God before and now according to men? Because before he speaks from the truth of God about Christ Jesus. Now he does not speak from the truth of God, but from the falseness of men.

*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." Then he strictly ordered his disciples to tell no one that he was the Messiah. From that time on, Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer greatly from the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed and on the third day be raised. Then Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him, "God forbid, Lord! No such thing shall ever happen to you." He turned and said to Peter, "Get behind me, Satan! You are an obstacle to me. You are thinking not as God does, but as human beings do."*

The teaching that Jesus gives is high, very high. Before speaking, everyone must ask the Lord to give him the right Word. Even Jesus, though being full of the Holy Spirit, always prayed to the Father to always make him say the most just Word and to let him carry out only his works. Without a heartfelt prayer, that lasts whole days if it is necessary, it is always possible that we speak from our heart and not from the heart of God, from our instinct or desire and not from the truth of the Scriptures. The heartfelt prayer will always preserve us from saying on Christ the word according to men. This way was used by Jesus, it must be used by every member of his body.

Mother of God, Angels and Saints, help us so that we become persons of true prayer.

## Brought flasks of oil with their lamps

## Hos 2,1 6b.17b.21-22; Ps 44; Mt 25,1-13

### 9 AUGUST

A true example of wisdom is the Father of heaven. Knowing that no man can do his works without his Holy Spirit, He gives Wisdom and the Fortitude of his Spirit to every person who was called by him to do his will. Solomon is an inexperienced young person. He might never govern the people of God without the Wisdom of God. He asks only for Wisdom to the Lord that appears and invites him to ask.

*In Gibeon the Lord appeared to Solomon in a dream at night. God said, "Ask something of me and I will give it to you." Solomon answered: "You have shown great favour to your servant, my father David, because he behaved faithfully toward you, with justice and an upright heart; and you have continued this great favour toward him, even today, seating a son of his on his throne. O Lord, my God, you have made me, your servant, king to succeed my father David; but I am a mere youth, not knowing at all how to act. I serve you in the midst of the people whom you have chosen, a people so vast that it cannot be numbered or counted. Give your servant, therefore, an understanding heart to judge your people and to distinguish right from wrong. For who is able to govern this vast people of yours?" (1Kings 3,5-9).*

Jesus is also an example of true wisdom. He too, full of the Holy Spirit, knowing that no one could have worked a single conversion without his Holy Spirit, promises and gives him. Missionary and Holy Spirit will have to be one.

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

Solomon forgot that Wisdom must be asked without interruption. He did not ask for it to lead his life, he ended up in folly. All his greatness shattered with his death. Even the apostles of Jesus have to know that the Spirit must be asked moment by moment. The Spirit is not asked, no conversion will ever take place. The wise virgins are such because they think of the after and not the moment. The foolish are such because they think of the present moment, but do not think of the future. The future of the lamp is oil. Why are the disciples of Jesus foolish today? Because they do not think of the afterwards either of the earth or of eternity. They waste the present in futility, idleness and vice. Then tomorrow, when virtue is needed for a decision of truth, they are deprived of the oil of life. Living without oil on earth, even at the gates of Paradise we will present ourselves without oil. We do not enter. Oil is the key so that the doors of blissful eternity open up for us.

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

The whole Gospel is divine wisdom and grace, truth and light in view of the eternal future, which is built in the present. Not believing in the Gospel what did we invent for our eternal future? The cancellation, the abolition of eternal death. By now, it is everyone's belief that there is only Heaven. The Gospel is useless. With this invention, four thousand years of divine wisdom descended on earth have been cancelled.

Mother of God, Angels and Saints, convince each heart that the future must be well prepared.

## Will preserve it for eternal life

## 2Cor 9,6-10; Ps 111; Jn 12,24-26

### 10 AUGUST

Jesus made of his life a gift to the Father until death on the cross. For this gift the Father can gather many fruits of conversion, regeneration, sanctification and eternal life. Christ Jesus really made himself a grain of wheat for us, because he was made true bread for us, that is true body and true blood of salvation, mercy, peace and charity.

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

*Consider this: whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. Each must do as already determined, without sadness or compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. Moreover, God is able to make every grace abundant for you, so that in all things, always having all you need, you may have an abundance for every good work. As it is written: "He scatters abroad, he gives to the poor; his righteousness endures forever." The one who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will supply and multiply your seed and increase the harvest of your righteousness. You are being enriched in every way for all generosity, which through us produces thanksgiving to God, for the administration of this public service is not only supplying the needs of the holy ones but is also overflowing in many acts of thanksgiving to God. Through the evidence of this service, you are glorifying God for your obedient confession of the gospel of Christ and the generosity of your contribution to them and to all others, while in prayer on your behalf they long for you, because of the surpassing grace of God upon you. Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift! (2Cor 9,6-15).*

If Christ has made himself a total gift to the Father, if Jesus needs to make a total gift to the Father in his body, in every member up to his Parousia, for the redemption and salvation of humanity, can one of his disciples keep his life for himself. ? If he keeps his life for himself, he does not serve Christ, he does not give everything of himself to him, in the soul, in the spirit and in the body, so that he can enlarge, guard, defend and protect the kingdom of his Father. But if a disciple does not give his life to Christ, might the Father honour him as he honoured Jesus Christ? Never. He did not give his Son his life for the building of the kingdom. He did not spend it for salvation and redemption, it is a life that does not belong to Christ and does not belong to the Father. Life is given to Christ, by giving it to the Word of the Gospel, for a perfect obedience, however, always under the motion and inspiration of the Spirit of God.

*Amen, amen, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains just a grain of wheat; but if it dies, it produces much fruit. Whoever loves his life loses it, and whoever hates his life in this world will preserve it for eternal life. Whoever serves me must follow me, and where I am, there also will my servant be. The Father will honour whoever serves me.*

Life is given to Christ in one way: making it an instrument to manifest Christ in a real way, through soul, spirit, body, truth, light, eternal life, grace, justice, wisdom, prudence, temperance, great mercy and compassion. As Christ manifested the whole Father, so the Christian must show all Christ, always, in every moment of the day. Life is given to Christ, if the Christian thinks like Christ, lives like him and like Him he is always listening to the Spirit.

Mother of God, Angels and Saints ensure that Christ live in us today and for us in the whole world.

**AUGUST 2019**

***SECOND DECADE OF AUGUST***

## At an hour you do not expect, the Son of Man will come

## Wis 18,6-9; Ps 32; Heb 11,1-2.8-9; Lk 12,32-48

### 11 AUGUST

Man's life has only one goal to achieve: eternal bliss in the kingdom of our Father. For this end to be realized, the heavenly Father has indicated every man the way, which is his Word, his will and his Gospel and has assigned a determined time. St. Paul says that time is short. Not only is it short. Nobody knows how long or short his is. Every moment could be the one that marks the passage to eternity. This moment has been hidden from every man.

*I tell you, brothers, the time is running out. From now on, let those having wives act as not having them, those weeping as not weeping, those rejoicing as not rejoicing, those buying as not owning, those using the world as not using it fully. For the world in its present form is passing away (1Cor 7, 29-31).*

Baruch's book reveals to us another precious truth over time. The man is the one who has the breath on loan without any deadline or condition. Every moment is the right one. Jesus is teaching this truth to those who follow him. What is the use of making land our stable and lasting home, as if it were eternal? A moment before, we are. A moment later, we are not. Since eternal bliss is the fruit of our good works, whoever wants an eternity of great, great glory must abound in every good work. Jesus wants everyone to use this land only as strictly necessary. The rest must be given in alms. Those who live on love on earth will be clothed in the heavens of glory, joy and great bliss. That of Jesus is a speech of very pure faith.

*Do not be afraid any longer, little flock, for your Father is pleased to give you the kingdom. Sell your belongings and give alms. Provide money bags for yourselves that do not wear out, an inexhaustible treasure in heaven that no thief can reach nor moth destroy. For where your treasure is, there also will your heart be. "Gird your loins and light your lamps and be like servants who await their master's return from a wedding, ready to open immediately when he comes and knocks. Blessed are those servants whom the master finds vigilant on his arrival. Amen, I say to you, he will gird himself, have them recline at table, and proceed to wait on them. And should he come in the second or third watch and find them prepared in this way, blessed are those servants. Be sure of this: if the master of the house had known the hour when the thief was coming, he would not have let his house be broken into. You also must be prepared, for at an hour you do not expect, the Son of Man will come."*

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

Since today we no longer believe in damnation or eternal perdition, the invitation to be prepared falls. What is the use of being vigilant, being careful? Nothing. Death comes. The doors of eternity open. Eternity coincides with Paradise. Three quarters of the Gospel thus disappear, they are erased. How does the other quarter disappear? By attesting us and declaring that Paradise is for everyone and that there is no greater or smaller bliss, it is useless to lose oneself in works of charity or almsgiving. Whether they are done or not, bliss is the same. There is no difference in glory. Today as on earth there must be no difference of any kind between man and man, so even in Paradise there must be no difference. Having us also abolished every difference between the true God and the gods who are not live and true God, what is the use of keeping the eternal difference? Yet in God there is a difference and there is also hell.

Mother of God, Angels and Saints, give us a strong and temperate faith in every word of Jesus.

## They were overwhelmed with grief

## Mt 17,22-27

### 12 AUGUST

Jesus has always announced his death to his disciples as necessary way not only for the redemption of humanity, but also so that He may send the Holy Spirit over them and, above all, so that He may be in every place and time with each of them. If we add the mystery of Eucharist to that, then the fruits that ripe from Jesus’s death are extremely great. However, the disciples do not understand the mystery. They do not know the truth. Grief is always fruit either of the absence of truth or of its non-welcoming in fullness of faith. The Psalms and also the Word of Jesus help us in the comprehension of the mystery. Jesus accepts the truth of his death, after an intense prayer in the Garden, and his soul walks to the cross.

As the deer pants for streams of water, so my soul pants for you, my God. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When can I go and meet with God? My tears have been my food day and night, while people say to me all day long, “Where is your God?” These things I remember as I pour out my soul: how I used to go to the house of God under the protection of the Mighty One with shouts of joy and praise among the festive throng. Why, my soul, are you downcast? Why so disturbed within me? Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise him, my Savior and my God. My soul is downcast within me; therefore I will remember you from the land of the Jordan, the heights of Hermon—from Mount Mizar. Deep calls to deep in the roar of your waterfalls; all your waves and breakers have swept over me. By day the Lord directs his love, at night his song is with me— a prayer to the God of my life. I say to God my Rock, “Why have you forgotten me? Why must I go about mourning, oppressed by the enemy?” My bones suffer mortal agony as my foes taunt me, saying to me all day long, “Where is your God?” Why, my soul, are you downcast? Why so disturbed within me? Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise him, my Savior and my God. (Psal 42 (41) 1-12).

Vindicate me, my God, and plead my cause against an unfaithful nation. Rescue me from those who are deceitful and wicked. You are God my stronghold. Why have you rejected me? Why must I go about mourning, oppressed by the enemy? Send me your light and your faithful care, let them lead me; let them bring me to your holy mountain, to the place where you dwell. Then I will go to the altar of God, to God, my joy and my delight. I will praise you with the lyre, O God, my God. Why, my soul, are you downcast? Why so disturbed within me? Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise him, my Savior and my God. (Psal 43 (42) 1-5).

Jesus knew that they wanted to ask him, so he said to them, "Are you discussing with one another what I said, 'A little while and you will not see me, and again a little while and you will see me'? Amen, amen, I say to you, you will weep and mourn, while the world rejoices; you will grieve, but your grief will become joy. When a woman is in labor, she is in anguish because her hour has arrived; but when she has given birth to a child, she no longer remembers the pain because of her joy that a child has been born into the world. So you also are now in anguish. But I will see you again, and your hearts will rejoice, and no one will take your joy away from you. On that day you will not question me about anything. Amen, amen, I say to you, whatever you ask the Father in my name he will give you. (Jn 16,19-23).

Today the world, since it is deprived of the truth and of the light of Christ Jesus, is in the great sadness that often becomes either despair or drowning of the body in the greatest immorality. It lacks the science of the Most High. Without this science there is no true hope. This is happening because the builders of hope have become its dismantlers. Whoever dismantles truth dismantles hope. He deprives the soul of the breath of God. He takes away the oxygen of true life to the heart. Most serious sin.

As they were gathering in Galilee, Jesus said to them, "The Son of Man is to be handed over to men, and they will kill him, and he will be raised on the third day." And they were overwhelmed with grief. When they came to Capernaum, the collectors of the temple tax approached Peter and said, "Doesn't your teacher pay the temple tax?" "Yes," he said. When he came into the house, before he had time to speak, Jesus asked him, "What is your opinion, Simon? From whom do the kings of the earth take tolls or census tax? From their subjects or from foreigners?" When he said, "From foreigners," Jesus said to him, "Then the subjects are exempt. But that we may not offend them, go to the sea, drop in a hook, and take the first fish that comes up. Open its mouth and you will find a coin worth twice the temple tax. Give that to them for me and for you."

Jesus is the Eternal Son of the Father. In order not to offend, he pays the temple tax.

Mother of God, Angels, Saints, let every Christian be a builder of true hope.

## Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?

## Dt 31,1-8; e Dt 32,3-4a.7.8.9 e 12; Mt 18,1-5.10.12-14

### 13 AUGUST

Between human greatness and divine greatness there is an abysmal difference. Indeed, the difference is divine, eternal, supernatural and celestial. With men, greatness is measured by the steps of a ladder rising upwards. The higher you are, the bigger you are. The more wealth you have, the bigger you are. The more people you govern, the bigger you are. Instead, with God true greatness is service. The more we serve others according to the will of God, the greater we are. The more you are poor in spirit, the bigger you are. The more we abound in works of mercy according to the Word of the Gospel, the greater we are. The more you occupy the last places, the bigger you are. The real man is great. Who is the real man? He who neither makes himself God nor builds himself a God, because he wants to obey every Word that comes from the mouth of the one and only alive and true God who is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Prompt obedience and immediate service make the man of God great.

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

But even between the humility recommended by Sirach and the humility asked of Christ Jesus there is an eternal and divine abyss. The Cross of the Son of God is still missing, or the Crucified God in his humanity is still missing. Humility is not aimed at one's own person, but is a total gift of oneself to God's will for the redemption of the world. The humble is he who gives his life for the exclusive ministry of the redemption of souls. One deepens oneself in the annihilation of himself so that our God can save the whole world. The Cross of God is missing from the Old Testament. This is why it is Old Testament and not New. There was the cross of man, but not yet the Cross of the eternal Son of God made Cross for our eternal redemption. The obedience of the Eternal Incarnate Word to the Father for salvation is lacking. This is why the difference is abysmal, divine, eternal and human.

*At that time the disciples approached Jesus and said, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" He called a child over, placed it in their midst, and said, "Amen, I say to you, unless you turn and become like children, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven. Whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. And whoever receives one child such as this in my name receives me. "See that you do not despise one of these little ones, for I say to you that their angels in heaven always look upon the face of my heavenly Father. What is your opinion? If a man has a hundred sheep and one of them goes astray, will he not leave the ninety-nine in the hills and go in search of the stray? And if he finds it, amen, I say to you, he rejoices more over it than over the ninety-nine that did not stray. In just the same way, it is not the will of your heavenly Father that one of these little ones be lost.*

Since the smallest in the Kingdom of Heaven is Christ the Lord, every disciple will have to look at him if he wants to be a true disciple. This is the reason why between the worldly vision of greatness and the vision of Christ there is no point of comparison. The Cross of God is lacking in the world. Where the Cross is excluded as a measure of true greatness, one is in pure paganism. Even if we call ourselves Christians, we are pagans.

Mother of God, Angels and Saints arrange that every disciple measure himself with the Cross of Jesus.

## Where two or three are gathered together in my name

## Dt 34,1-1 2; Ps 65; Mt 18,15-20

### 14 AUGUST

Jesus says: "Where there are two or three gathered in my name, there am I in their midst". It is a promise that Christ the Lord will always keep. But what does it mean to be gathered, or do something, or talk, or act, or move, or reunite in the name of Jesus? Let's take an example from the Old Testament and certainly we will be helped in understanding.

*With his shield-bearer marching before him, the Philistine also advanced closer and closer to David. When he had sized David up, and seen that he was youthful, and ruddy, and handsome in appearance, he held him in contempt. The Philistine said to David, "Am I a dog that you come against me with a staff?" Then the Philistine cursed David by his gods and said to him, "Come here to me, and I will leave your flesh for the birds of the air and the beasts of the field." David answered him: "You come against me with sword and spear and scimitar, but I come against you in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel that you have insulted. Today the Lord shall deliver you into my hand; I will strike you down and cut off your head. This very day I will leave your corpse and the corpses of the Philistine army for the birds of the air and the beasts of the field; thus the whole land shall learn that Israel has a God. All this multitude, too, shall learn that it is not by sword or spear that the Lord saves. For the battle is the Lord’s, and he shall deliver you into our hands." The Philistine then moved to meet David at close quarters, while David ran quickly toward the battle line in the direction of the Philistine. David put his hand into the bag and took out a stone, hurled it with the sling, and struck the Philistine on the forehead. The stone embedded itself in his brow, and he fell prostrate on the ground. (Thus David overcame the Philistine with sling and stone; he struck the Philistine mortally, and did it without a sword.) Then David ran and stood over him; with the Philistine's own sword (which he drew from its sheath) he dispatched him and cut off his head. When they saw that their hero was dead, the Philistines took to flight (1Sam 17,41-51).*

David goes against the Philistine with a slingshot and five stones. But he does not go in the name of his slingshot, but of his God. Who is the God of David? He is the Creator of heaven and earth, the Lord, the Omnipotent, the God of heavenly hosts. When you go in his name you do not even need a slingshot. The Lord can also knock him down by himself. But since David must show every man that his God is superior to all others, that is why he goes to fight the Philistine. The whole earth will know his Lord. Do we gather in the name of Christ so that the whole universe, for us, knows who Jesus is? Do we meet together with his faith, charity, hope, prudence, justice, fortitude, temperance, humility, patience, mercy, love and forgiveness? If we do not show the divine and human beauty of the name of Jesus to the world we are not united in his name. David shows the power of the name of his God. What do we show about Christ Jesus? What do we show others? If the other does not see the name of Christ acting in us, how will he manage to believe in him? If we do not reveal Him, we are not in the name of the Lord.

*"If your brother sins (against you), go and tell him his fault between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have won over your brother. If he does not listen, take one or two others along with you, so that 'every fact may be established on the testimony of two or three witnesses.' If he refuses to listen to them, tell the church. If he refuses to listen even to the church, then treat him as you would a Gentile or a tax collector. Amen, I say to you, whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. Again, (amen,) I say to you, if two of you agree on earth about anything for which they are to pray, it shall be granted to them by my heavenly Father. For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them."*

In the name of his truth, of his grace, of his Word, of his light, of his Cross and Resurrection. In the name of Jesus it means essentially going clothed with Christ to manifest the beauty of our Christ to each of our brothers. If every disciple showed the other the goodness, the holiness and the purity of his Christ and let himself be overcome by the goodness and beauty of the Christ of the brothers, the world would come and be converted. It would see and change his opinion on Jesus, on the Church, on the Christian, on the Gospel, on the Word and on morality. It would see unimaginable, unthinkable, divine things, not earthly and not of this world. In the centre of the world it would see the true face of God be born and bloom again on the face of every disciple of Jesus.

Mother of God, Angels and Saints ensure that the disciples always manifest the beauty of Jesus.

## Blessed are you who believed

## Rev 11,19a; 12,1-6a.1oab; Ps 44; 1 Cor 15,20-26; Lk 1,39-56

### 15 AUGUST

The Virgin Mary believed more than Abraham, more than Isaac and Jacob, more than Moses and Joshua, more than any other prophet and just of the Old Testament. The summit of faith is reached at Golgotha. There Mary is present because moved by the Holy Spirit to offer the Son hanging from the wood to the Father. There Mary manifests the highest obedience to the Spirit of the Lord. In the offering of her Son she becomes the visible image of the Father. The Father offers his Son for redemption, he gives him. God so loved the world that he gave his only Son. Mary loved the world so much that she gave her only Son. The Father in Christ welcomes us as his true sons. Mary, by command of Christ, takes us as her true children, in Christ, with Christ, through Christ. The Father lives his ministry of love for the salvation of his creatures. Mary also lives her command of love for the redemption of the sons of God. The Father and the Son have not asked anyone for such a great faith and such a demanding obedience. As God watches, so Mary watches. As God seeks, so Mary seeks. As God welcomes, so Mary welcomes. As God offers, Mary offers the Son and in the Son offers herself. Inexpressible mystery, incomprehensible to any human mind. Only the Holy Spirit can somehow give us a flame of intelligence, understanding and above all love.

It is great sadness to think that, like Jesus, today the Virgin Mary is uprooted from many hearts, turned away from many houses. But she can never become a stranger to us. If she becomes a stranger to us, we will be strangers to the Father, to the Son, to the Holy Spirit, strangers to the Church and strangers to one another. That men are becoming strangers to one another and consequently contrary to each other, enemies of each other, is a sign that she Who is the only operator of our peace is missing in the heart. As God used the slingshot of David to bring down the giant Goliath and give peace and security to his people, so Christ Jesus, through the Holy Spirit, uses the Mother to create eternal enmity with the giant Lucifer, or Satan, or ancient Serpent and bring peace to the hearts of his disciples. If we deprive ourselves of Mary, Christ and the Holy Spirit lack a slingshot. The giant Satan cannot be killed and war will torment the disciples of Jesus without a single breath of serenity and peace. It is not easy to understand this truth. History attests that without Mary we are always without peace.

*During those days Mary set out and travelled to the hill country in haste to a town of Judah, where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the infant leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth, filled with the holy Spirit, cried out in a loud voice and said, "Most blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. And how does this happen to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? For at the moment the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the infant in my womb leaped for joy. Blessed are you who believed that what was spoken to you by the Lord would be fulfilled." And Mary said: "My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord; my spirit rejoices in God my saviour. For he has looked upon his handmaid's lowliness; behold, from now on will all ages call me blessed. The Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name. His mercy is from age to age to those who fear him. He has shown might with his arm, dispersed the arrogant of mind and heart. He has thrown down the rulers from their thrones but lifted up the lowly. The hungry he has filled with good things; the rich he has sent away empty. He has helped Israel his servant, remembering his mercy, according to his promise to our fathers, to Abraham and to his descendants forever." Mary remained with her about three months and then returned to her home.*

Mary is the woman of the most pure faith. She is also the teacher in faith. Anyone who wants to learn how to believe in the Word of Jesus must humbly put himself at her feet and ask her to speak to our hearts. She will reveal to us all the secrets of her most pure faith and, imitating Her, we can reach a perfect and holy imitation. For this reason Mary and the disciple must be one heart, one soul, one life and one spirit. This unity is not achieved in a day, but is the fruit of a daily commitment spent next to her heart, listening to her voice and obeying it.

Mother of God, Angels and Saints, help us to understand this sublime truth.

## Not all can accept [this] word

## Gs 24,1-13; Ps 135; Mt 19,3-12

### 16 AUGUST

In our faith we often witness two parallel paths. On the one hand we have the Scripture, or Word of God, plain, clear and neat, which directs life to perfect conformation with the will of our Lord, Creator, God, Redeemer and Saviour. On the other hand we have the word of man, its traditions, its concrete choices of life, which are very distinct, if not in opposition and in contradiction with the Word of God. Even when one appeals to the Scriptures, to Moses and to the prophets, it is done in a very distorted way, because details that make Revelation false are added or removed. We know from Deuteronomy that the reasons should have been very serious. From the Book of Malachi we learn that the Lord hates repudiation. The breath of life is broken.

*"When a man, after marrying a woman and having relations with her, is later displeased with her because he finds in her something indecent, and therefore he writes out a bill of divorce and hands it to her, thus dismissing her from his house: if on leaving his house she goes and becomes the wife of another man, and the second husband, too, comes to dislike her and dismisses her from his house by handing her a written bill of divorce; or if this second man who has married her, dies; then her former husband, who dismissed her, may not again take her as his wife after she has become defiled. That would be an abomination before the Lord, and you shall not bring such guilt upon the land which the Lord, your God, is giving you as a heritage (DT 24,1-4). This also you do: the altar of the Lord you cover with tears, weeping and groaning, Because he no longer regards your sacrifice nor accepts it favourably from your hand; And you say, "Why is it?" -  Because the Lord is witness between you and the wife of your youth, With whom you have broken faith though she is your companion, your betrothed wife. Did he not make one being, with flesh and spirit: and what does that one require but godly offspring? You must then safeguard life that is your own, and not break faith with the wife of your youth. For I hate divorce, says the Lord, the God of Israel, And covering one's garment with injustice, says the Lord of hosts; You must then safeguard life that is your own, and not break faith (Mal 2,13-16).*

Jesus brings the truth of marriage back to its origins. One man, one woman, once they have become one flesh, they remain only flesh forever. To the only flesh one is obliged forever. At custody of the stability of marriage, the Lord puts two Commandments: Do not commit adultery. Do not desire the woman of others. Fidelity to marriage must be guarded, keeping body, mind and heart in their truth. Moreover, Jesus adds his grace that heals, elevates, sanctifies, instils every force in the nature of man so that he may obey every will manifested by his God and Lord. Jesus does not give only the truth of marriage, he gives every grace so that it can be lived from its truth of origin. But if man is detached from the source of grace, old nature always takes the upper hand. There is always a anticipating sin a serious omission when a marriage is torn. The Lord has done every perfect thing. Faithfulness can always be lived.

*Some Pharisees approached him, and tested him, saying, "Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for any cause whatever?" He said in reply, "Have you not read that from the beginning the Creator 'made them male and female' and said, 'For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh'? So they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore, what God has joined together, no human being must separate." They said to him, "Then why did Moses command that the man give the woman a bill of divorce and dismiss (her)?" He said to them, "Because of the hardness of your hearts Moses allowed you to divorce your wives, but from the beginning it was not so. I say to you, whoever divorces his wife (unless the marriage is unlawful) and marries another commits adultery." [His] disciples said to him, "If that is the case of a man with his wife, it is better not to marry." He answered, "Not all can accept [this] word, but only those to whom that is granted. Some are incapable of marriage because they were born so; some, because they were made so by others; some, because they have renounced marriage for the sake of the kingdom of heaven. Whoever can accept this ought to accept it."*

Can one not marry? Yes. But to dedicate one's life to the total service of the Kingdom.

Mother of God, Angels and Saints ensure that we believe and walk in the truth of the Gospel.

## After he placed his hands on them

## Mt 19, 13-15

### 17 AUGUST

Laying the hands is true transmission of blessing. Jesus is the Blessed Fruit of the Father and He comes into the world so that in Him and through Him all people, language, nation may be blessed by God, may return to their most pure truth of the divine nature. Blessing in Jesus becomes being recomposed, healed, recovered, raised, sanctified. For the blessing, the man is delivered from every falsity and lie of sins and returns into his true essence.

*The LORD said to Abram: "Go forth from the land of your kinsfolk and from your father's house to a land that I will show you. "I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you; I will make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you and curse those who curse you. All the communities of the earth shall find blessing in you." (Gen 12,1-3). Again the LORD'S messenger called to Abraham from heaven and said: "I swear by myself, declares the LORD, that because you acted as you did in not withholding from me your beloved son, I will bless you abundantly and make your descendants as countless as the stars of the sky and the sands of the seashore; your descendants shall take possession of the gates of their enemies, and in your descendants all the nations of the earth shall find blessing - all this because you obeyed my command.''(Gen 22,15-18).*

*The LORD said to Moses: "Speak to Aaron and his sons and tell them: This is how you shall bless the Israelites. Say to them: The LORD bless you and keep you! The LORD let his face shine upon you, and be gracious to you! The LORD look upon you kindly and give you peace! So shall they invoke my name upon the Israelites, and I will bless them." (Nm 6,22-27).*

Laying his hands, Jesus gives his blessing. It is as if He conveys “part of Himself”. The greater holiness is, the mightier love is, the richer grace is, the more immediate and ready is obedience, and the more one conveys in the blessing. It is not a magical ritual, but true “transmission of one’s own being.” When God, after the creation, has blessed the man and the woman, has communicated them part of his creating and regenerating almightiness. If the man and the woman conceive, it is not by nature, but by blessing. It is a grace that the Lord has granted them. They have been blessed.

*Then children were brought to him that he might lay his hands on them and pray. The disciples rebuked them, but Jesus said, "Let the children come to me, and do not prevent them; for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these."* *After he placed his hands on them, he went away.*

Jesus must bless the children as well, for they are children of Abraham, children of Adam, too. He must bless them for He is the offspring of Abraham. This truth is announced with great solemnity by the Apostle Paul in the Letter to the Galatians.

*Now the promises were made to Abraham and to his descendant. It does not say, "And to descendants," as referring to many, but as referring to one, "And to your descendant," who is Christ.* *Before faith came, we were held in custody under law, confined for the faith that was to be revealed. Consequently, the law was our disciplinarian for Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a disciplinarian. For through faith you are all children of God in Christ Jesus. For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free person, there is not male and female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's descendant, heirs according to the promise. (Cf. Gal 3,15-29).*

If Jesus is the offspring of Abraham, if all the nations of earth must be blessed in Him, if the Word of the Scripture cannot be cancelled, why is Christ concealed to the people and to the nations today? Why does one not teach them that their ways are ways of true salvation and redemption? Is this not evidence that we also walk on a parallel way, but in a contrary way to the Gospel and to the entire Scripture? Between what the Holy Spirit says and what we say there is a total contrast.

Mother of God, Angels, Saints, let the Christians announce Christ in fullness of truth.

## I have come to set the earth on fire

## Jer 38,4-6.8-10; Ps 39; Heb 12,1-4; Lk 12,49-53

### 18 AUGUST

The fire that Jesus came to bring to the earth certainly is not that which destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, nor the other of Elijah who burned down the altar and consummated the sacrifice or still the other that descended on fifty men and devoured them. Instead it is much more similar to the fire that envelops the bush in the desert. That fire burns but does not consume. It is the fire of his Father which is the most pure fire of love that burns from eternity in his heart, without ever consuming it, rather reviving it with more intensity.

*The sun was just rising over the earth as Lot arrived in Zoar; at the same time the Lord rained down sulphurous fire upon Sodom and Gomorrah (from the Lord out of heaven). He overthrew those cities and the whole Plain, together with the inhabitants of the cities and the produce of the soil (Gn 19,23-25).* *Answer me, Lord! Answer me, that this people may know that you, Lord, are God and that you have brought them back to their senses." The Lord’s fire came down and consumed the holocaust, wood, stones, and dust, and it lapped up the water in the trench. Seeing this, all the people fell prostrate and said, "The Lord is God! The Lord is God!" (1Kings 18,37-39).*

*Then the king sent a captain with his company of fifty men after Elijah. The prophet was seated on a hilltop when he found him. "Man of God," he ordered, "the king commands you to come down." "If I am a man of God," Elijah answered the captain, "may fire come down from heaven and consume you and your fifty men." And fire came down from heaven and consumed him and his fifty men. Ahaziah sent another captain with his company of fifty men after Elijah. "Man of God," he called out to Elijah, "the king commands you to come down immediately." "If I am a man of God," Elijah answered him, "may fire come down from heaven and consume you and your fifty men." And divine fire came down from heaven, consuming him and his fifty men. Again, for the third time, Ahaziah sent a captain with his company of fifty men. When the third captain arrived, he fell to his knees before Elijah, pleading with him. "Man of God," he implored him, "let my life and the lives of these fifty men, your servants, count for something in your sight! Already fire has come down from heaven, consuming two captains with their companies of fifty men. But now, let my life mean something to you!" (2Kings 1,9-14).*

*Meanwhile Moses was tending the flock of his father-in-law Jethro, the priest of Midian. Leading the flock across the desert, he came to Horeb, the mountain of God. There an angel of the Lord appeared to him in fire flaming out of a bush. As he looked on, he was surprised to see that the bush, though on fire, was not consumed. So Moses decided, "I must go over to look at this remarkable sight, and see why the bush is not burned" (Es 3,1-3). Take heed, therefore, lest, forgetting the covenant which the Lord, your God, has made with you, you fashion for yourselves against his command an idol in any form whatsoever. For the Lord, your God, is a consuming fire, a jealous God (Dt 4,23-24).*

The fire that Jesus came to bring to earth is the fire of his Holy Spirit. He will baptize you in the Holy Spirit and fire. It is the fire that must set hearts on the fire of exclusive love for their God and Lord. God is a devouring fire. He fires the hearts of love for his person. As God is jealous of man, so man will be jealous of his God.

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

Fire is poured by Christ Jesus in the symbolism of water from his crucified body, pierced by the spear. On the day of Pentecost the Spirit is manifested as fire and wind.

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

The Christian is like the burning bush. He is burned but not consumed by the Holy Spirit.

Mother of God, Angels and Saints ensure that the fire of Jesus burns and enlightens for our life.

## If you wish to be perfect

## Jdg 2,11-19; Ps 105: Mt 19.16-22

### 19 AUGUST

Jesus came to fulfil all the Law and the Prophets. The first fulfilment is moral. The justice of the scribes and the Pharisees must be overcome. This overcoming is given through the six oppositions between Ancient and New Law. Here are some examples.

*I tell you, unless your righteousness surpasses that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will not enter into the kingdom of heaven. "You have heard that it was said to your ancestors, 'You shall not kill; and whoever kills will be liable to judgment.' But I say to you, whoever is angry with his brother will be liable to judgment, and whoever says to his brother, 'Raqa,' will be answerable to the Sanhedrin, and whoever says, 'You fool,' will be liable to fiery Gehenna. "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall not commit adultery.' But I say to you, everyone who looks at a woman with lust has already committed adultery with her in his heart. "It was also said, 'Whoever divorces his wife must give her a bill of divorce.' But I say to you, whoever divorces his wife (unless the marriage is unlawful) causes her to commit adultery, and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery.*

*"You have heard that it was said, 'An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.' But I say to you, offer no resistance to one who is evil. When someone strikes you on (your) right cheek, turn the other one to him as well. If anyone wants to go to law with you over your tunic, hand him your cloak as well. Should anyone press you into service for one mile, go with him for two miles. Give to the one who asks of you, and do not turn your back on one who wants to borrow. "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbour and hate your enemy.' But I say to you, love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be children of your heavenly Father, for he makes his sun rise on the bad and the good, and causes rain to fall on the just and the unjust. For if you love those who love you, what recompense will you have? Do not the tax collectors do the same? And if you greet your brothers only, what is unusual about that? Do not the pagans do the same? So be perfect, just as your heavenly Father is perfect (Cf. Mt 5,20-4).*

For those who are called Jesus wants that to moral is added spiritual perfection. What is this perfection? In handing their whole lives over to the Lord so that he may make of it an instrument for the proclamation of the Gospel and for building up his Kingdom on our earth. Since no man might serve two masters, might not care for the things of the earth and the things of the Kingdom, it is necessary, even obligatory to leave the things of the earth and be dedicated entirely to the things of the Kingdom of God. It is this perfection that man refuses. He refuses it because his heart is attached to the things of the earth, to the goods of this world. Sadness attests to the non freedom of the heart. This man is attracted to Jesus and is attracted to wealth. He chooses wealth, he leaves Christ. But Christ is the true good, the true wealth. It is the ideal of his life. It's what his heart looks for. But it is a prisoner. It does not have the strength to follow the better, indeed the best for him. He goes away sad.

*Now someone approached him and said, "Teacher, what good must I do to gain eternal life?" He answered him, "Why do you ask me about the good? There is only One who is good. If you wish to enter into life, keep the commandments." He asked him, "Which ones?" And Jesus replied, " 'You shall not kill; you shall not commit adultery; you shall not steal; you shall not bear false witness; honour your father and your mother'; and 'you shall love your neighbour as yourself.'" The young man said to him, "All of these I have observed. What do I still lack?" Jesus said to him, "If you wish to be perfect, go, sell what you have and give to (the) poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me." When the young man heard this statement, he went away sad, for he had many possessions.*

Sadness is a sign of defeat. It attests and reveals imprisonment. Man knows he is a slave, a prisoner, dominated by his many goods. He could have freed himself from this slavery if he had asked grace to the Lord. When the heart is called up and fails, then it is time to pray. What Christ Jesus did in the Garden of Olives every other man is called to do. The flesh is weak. If the spirit wants to overcome the weakness of the flesh, it must draw every grace in his God. Jesus has always taught it. Certain species of devils are not removed except by prayer. The devil of wealth is removed with intense prayer, without any interruption.

Mother of God, Angels and Saints, obtain for us from the Father the Spirit of trusting prayer.

## Who then can be saved?

## Jdg 6,11-24a; Ps 84; Mt 19,23-30

### 20 AUGUST

After the rich man has gone, Jesus tells his disciples: "Truly, I say to you, a rich man will hardly enter the kingdom of heaven. I repeat it to you: it is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God". It is announced for perdition for those who have wealth, or rather, the great difficulty they will encounter on the path that leads into the eternal kingdom of our God. But we must immediately point out that the perdition is not the fruit of the renunciation towards perfection proposed by Christ the Lord. It has much deeper roots.

If today we are not able to renounce to goods for a greater good, will we be able tomorrow to renounce to our goods in order not to sin? When the heart is a prisoner of its goods, will it succeed in keeping the covenant law? Or rather will it not be forced by wealth to forget God and neighbour? The goods of this person are a prison from which he cannot escape by natural forces, but only by the grace of our God and Lord. Wealth is a demanding master. It obligates to deliver to it all life. It is not satisfied with the body alone, but also demands soul and spirit. When spirit and soul are given to it, there is no hope of salvation. The master wants their total sacrifice. Mind, heart, feelings, faith and truth disappear from the man. Everything is seen and operated on the basis of wealth. From a master, it becomes a tyrant. For Jesus, the idolatry of wealth cancels God from the heart and mind. Here are some considerations of the Sapiential Books on richness and the exhortation of Saint Paul:

*"No one can serve two masters. He will either hate one and love the other, or be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon (Mt 6,24). Wealth is useless on the day of wrath, but virtue saves from death (Pr 11, 4). He who trusts in his riches will fall, but like green leaves the just flourish (Pr 11, 28). Put falsehood and lying far from me, give me neither poverty nor riches; (provide me only with the food I need (Pr 30, 8). The heart of a man changes his countenance, either for good or for evil (Sir 13, 24). Keeping watch over riches wastes the flesh, and the care of wealth drives away rest (Sir 31, 1).  Tell the rich in the present age not to be proud and not to rely on so uncertain a thing as wealth but rather on God, who richly provides us with all things for our enjoyment. Tell them to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous, ready to share, thus accumulating as treasure a good foundation for the future, so as to win the life that is true life (1Tm 6,17-19).*

The salvation of the rich is difficult, but not impossible. It is possible if the rich man is converted to the Word of the Gospel and, supported by the grace of God, which he must invoke without interruption, he will let his heart be attracted by the goods of heaven, while gradually he will be detached from the goods of the earth. The more he will turn towards eternity and the more he will abandon the ephemeral. Matter will no longer be a temptation for him. He might be saved.

*Then Jesus said to his disciples, "Amen, I say to you, it will be hard for one who is rich to enter the kingdom of heaven. Again I say to you, it is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for one who is rich to enter the kingdom of God." When the disciples heard this, they were greatly astonished and said, "Who then can be saved?" Jesus looked at them and said, "For human beings this is impossible, but for God all things are possible." Then Peter said to him in reply, "We have given up everything and followed you. What will there be for us?" Jesus said to them, "Amen, I say to you that you who have followed me, in the new age, when the Son of Man is seated on his throne of glory, will yourselves sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. And everyone who has given up houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or lands for the sake of my name will receive a hundred times more, and will inherit eternal life. But many who are first will be last, and the last will be first.*

The apostles left everything. They set out to follow Jesus. They already know the answer. They offer all of themselves to Jesus and the Father offers them all of himself. To the all of man always the Lord responds with his all. The all of God is for all time and for eternity. There is no comparison between the all of the disciples and the all of God.

Mother of God, Angels and Saints arrange that our hearts is attracted only by Lord Jesus.

**AUGUST 2019**

***THIRD DECADE OF AUGUST***

## You too go into my vineyard

## Jdg 9,6-15; Ps 20; Mt 20,1-16a

### 21 AUGUST

Today Jesus reveals to us how big the heart of the Father is and how small, narrow and evil the heart of man is. For the love of man the Father gave his Only Son, he gave him from the Cross, as a Crucifix. For us he made of him a holocaust, a sacrifice of expiation for the forgiveness of our sins. Man, with a poor, but also impure, bad and evil heart, is not able to understand the infinite love, without measure or limitations of the Father. He complains and mutters because He also gave money to those who had come to the vineyard at the last hour. If man were full of love, he would rejoice, cry out to the miracle, would see the great love of the Lord and would say: "Blessed be the Lord for having inspiring such noble sentiment, such a high charity and such a great work of mercy to the father of the vineyard. Even their children, like ours, might feed themselves tonight". The workers of the first hour should have raised this prayer of blessing and praise, instead they abandon themselves to murmuring and the complaint against the master because they deserved more. One deserves more if he goes far beyond the contract. If he stays in the contract, he does not deserve more. The respect of the stipulated contract is enough for him: a day of work, a coin. If we read the Book of Tobit, we will find that the Angel is offered more because He has done more.

*When the wedding celebration came to an end, Tobit called his son Tobiah and said to him, "Son, see to it that you give what is due to the man who made the journey with you; give him a bonus too." Tobiah said: "Father, how much shall I pay him? It would not hurt me at all to give him half of all the wealth he brought back with me. He led me back safe and sound; he cured my wife; he brought the money back with me; and he cured you. How much of a bonus should I give him?" Tobit answered, "It is only fair, son, that he should receive half of all that he brought back." So Tobiah called Raphael and said, "Take as your wages half of all that you have brought back, and go in peace" (Tb 12,1-5).*

God is great in mercy because he does not call only in one age. He calls to the kingdom in every age, in every circumstance and in every moment. The time of the call belongs to his mystery. We only have to answer. The reward also belongs to the Lord. To us the joy of having been called by him and having always responded through his grace. The Lord could have left us all day in idleness. Instead, for his goodness he has taken us away from all despair and fear. It is impossible to know the mystery of God's love.

*"The kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out at dawn to hire laborers for his vineyard. After agreeing with them for the usual daily wage, he sent them into his vineyard. Going out about nine o'clock, he saw others standing idle in the marketplace, and he said to them, 'You too go into my vineyard, and I will give you what is just.' So they went off. (And) he went out again around noon, and around three o'clock, and did likewise. Going out about five o'clock, he found others standing around, and said to them, 'Why do you stand here idle all day?' They answered, 'Because no one has hired us.' He said to them, 'You too go into my vineyard.' When it was evening the owner of the vineyard said to his foreman, 'Summon the labourers and give them their pay, beginning with the last and ending with the first.' When those who had started about five o'clock came, each received the usual daily wage. So when the first came, they thought that they would receive more, but each of them also got the usual wage. And on receiving it they grumbled against the landowner, saying, 'These last ones worked only one hour, and you have made them equal to us, who bore the day's burden and the heat.' He said to one of them in reply, 'My friend, I am not cheating you. Did you not agree with me for the usual daily wage? Take what is yours and go. What if I wish to give this last one the same as you? (Or) am I not free to do as I wish with my own money? Are you envious because I am generous?' Thus, the last will be first, and the first will be last."*

This parable must teach us a great truth. Respect for every decision of God in our life, in the life of our brothers. God's decisions are all dictated by his greatest love. For love he calls early in the morning and for love he calls in the evening. For love he gives us the right salary and for love knows how to go beyond what is due.

Mother of God, Angels and Saints, give us a pure heart to always see God in everything.

## But those who were invited were not worthy

## Jdg 11,29-39a; Ps 39; Mt 22,1-14

### 22 AUGUST

The Lord wants every man to come to the knowledge of the truth that is in Christ Jesus. He wants him to welcome the Gospel of truth and grace, justice and eternal life. The Apostles are sent all over the world, to all peoples, all tribes and all nations of every language. For our Creator and Father there are no worthy and unworthy men. He really loves the salvation of all. Christ was given to the world. The Gospel is given to the world. Light and truth are given to the world. Whoever does not welcome Christ is not worthy of Christ. For the Father he was worthy of Jesus. But he declared, proclaimed himself unworthy with his refusal. Even the Acts of the Apostles attest this truth. Paul preaches to everyone. The Jews consider themselves unworthy of the Gospel. It is they who consider themselves such. Sending them Paul, God had considered them worthy.

*Whatever town or village you enter, look for a worthy person in it, and stay there until you leave. As you enter a house, wish it peace. If the house is worthy, let your peace come upon it; if not, let your peace return to you. Whoever will not receive you or listen to your words - go outside that house or town and shake the dust from your feet. Amen, I say to you, it will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah on the day of judgment than for that town. "Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me, and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me; and whoever does not take up his cross and follow after me is not worthy of me. Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it (Mt 10,11-15.37-39).*

*On the following Sabbath almost the whole city gathered to hear the word of the Lord. When the Jews saw the crowds, they were filled with jealousy and with violent abuse contradicted what Paul said. Both Paul and Barnabas spoke out boldly and said, "It was necessary that the word of God be spoken to you first, but since you reject it and condemn yourselves as unworthy of eternal life, we now turn to the Gentiles. For so the Lord has commanded us, 'I have made you a light to the Gentiles, that you may be an instrument of salvation to the ends of the earth.'" The Gentiles were delighted when they heard this and glorified the word of the Lord. All who were destined for eternal life came to believe, and the word of the Lord continued to spread through the whole region. The Jews, however, incited the women of prominence who were worshipers and the leading men of the city, stirred up a persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and expelled them from their territory. So they shook the dust from their feet in protest against them and went to Iconium. The disciples were filled with joy and the holy Spirit (At 13,44-52).*

The king sends his servants to call the guests. Rejecting the invitation for other reason, they considered themselves unworthy to attend the party. They will stay forever out. Instead, who accepts the invitation is also obliged to observe the laws of the invitation. He must present himself with a worthy wedding dress. The law must be observed. It obliges everyone.

*Jesus again in reply spoke to them in parables, saying, "The kingdom of heaven may be likened to a king who gave a wedding feast for his son. He dispatched his servants to summon the invited guests to the feast, but they refused to come. A second time he sent other servants, saying, 'Tell those invited: "Behold, I have prepared my banquet, my calves and fattened cattle are killed, and everything is ready; come to the feast."' Some ignored the invitation and went away, one to his farm, another to his business. The rest laid hold of his servants, mistreated them, and killed them. The king was enraged and sent his troops, destroyed those murderers, and burned their city. Then he said to his servants, 'The feast is ready, but those who were invited were not worthy to come. Go out, therefore, into the main roads and invite to the feast whomever you find.' The servants went out into the streets and gathered all they found, bad and good alike, and the hall was filled with guests. But when the king came in to meet the guests he saw a man there not dressed in a wedding garment. He said to him, 'My friend, how is it that you came in here without a wedding garment?' But he was reduced to silence. Then the king said to his attendants, 'Bind his hands and feet, and cast him into the darkness outside, where there will be wailing and grinding of teeth.' Many are invited, but few are chosen."*

Here is the evil of our days. The servants no longer go around calling. Those who are moved by the Holy Spirit and come to the Church are made sons of perdition. It is taught that the law must be observed. All will be welcomed without any necessary obedience.

Mother of God, Angels and Saints, free the Christian people from all falsehood and lie.

## The whole law and the prophets depend on

## Mt 22,34-40

### 23 AUGUST

The answer that Jesus gives to the Scholar of the Law is taken from the Chapter VI of Deuteronomy and deals with the love for the Lord and from the Chapter XIX of Leviticus regarding the love toward the neighbour. Whoever questions the Teacher knows what both Deuteronomy and Leviticus contain in these two norms. The truth, not said but necessary, is that: the love for the Lord demanded in Deuteronomy is most pure obedience to the Law of Sinai. It is entirely recalled in the Chapter V. we can translate the first Commandment like that: “You shall love the Law of your God, of the Lord, who is only one, who is your Lord, with all your soul, with all your heart, with all your mind.” Without the obedience to the Law of Sinai there is no true love. Now this Law contains only three Commandments who directly deal with the Lord. The other seven are devoted to the love toward the neighbour. If the Commandments are transgressed, there is no love, there is no obedience. There is no observance of the first Commandment of the charity. To love is to obey the Law. Saint Paul encloses all the Commandments in the Law of love.

*Owe nothing to anyone, except to love one another; for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law. The commandments, "You shall not commit adultery; you shall not kill; you shall not steal; you shall not covet," and whatever other commandment there may be, are summed up in this saying, (namely) "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." Love does no evil to the neighbor; hence, love is the fulfillment of the law. And do this because you know the time; it is the hour now for you to awake from sleep. For our salvation is nearer now than when we first believed; the night is advanced, the day is at hand. Let us then throw off the works of darkness (and) put on the armor of light; let us conduct ourselves properly as in the day, not in orgies and drunkenness, not in promiscuity and licentiousness, not in rivalry and jealousy. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the desires of the flesh. (Rm 13,8-14).*

In the second Commandment of charity – You shalt love your neighbour as yourself – is not left to love that every single individual nourishes toward oneself. It is rigorously set in every detail of the Lord. It is not the man who establishes how to love, who to love, where to love. Everything arises from the heart of the Father. Also what Jesus says in his golden rule *“Do to others whatever you would have them do to you. This is the law and the prophets.”* (Mt 7,12), must be righteously interpreted, correctly lived. If a heart is pure, holy, perfect before God, one wants one thing. Instead, if it is impure, wicked, dishonest, it wants other things. Even this Commandment must be all included in the Word of the Lord. Every man must want the knowledge of truth and of charity, he must want every other one to know truth and experience the true charity. When does a Christian truly love? When one wants for the others his own obedience toward the Gospel. One wants the others to live the Gospel as he is living it. He wants the eternal salvation, he gives eternal salvation. If we take away the revelation, the golden rule of Jesus loses its truth.

*When the Pharisees heard that he had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered together, and one of them [a scholar of the law] tested him by asking, "Teacher, which commandment in the law is the greatest?" He said to him, "You shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the greatest and the first commandment. The second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself.**The whole law and the prophets depend on these two commandments."*

The truth that must lead us to the comprehension of Jesus’s reply is only one: for the Christian, “to love” means “to obey”. The greater obedience is and the greater love is. Jesus made Himself obedient until the death of cross. His is a crucified love. If we deprive love of obedience to the will of God, ours is no longer love, but ephemeral feeling of our heart. Today affirming his truth has become almost impossible. Love is what every individual wants. It is no longer what the Lord wants.

Mother of God, Angels, Saints, ensure that the Christians pass from the feeling to the obedience.

## You will see greater things than this

## Rev 21,9b-14; Ps 144; Jn 1,45-51

### 24 AUGUST

Reading the Gospel according to John, we can apply to his disciples what the Psalm announces of the works of God. Each one announces the others the greatness of their Creator and Lord. Thus, from man to man the news of Jesus spreads and runs fast.

*The heavens are telling of the glory of God;* *And their expanse is declaring the work of His hands.**Day to day pours forth speech,* *And night to night reveals knowledge.**There is no speech, nor are there words;* *Their voice is not heard.**Their line has gone out through all the earth, And their utterances to the end of the world (Ps 19 (18) 2-5).*

John the Baptist cries to his disciples that Jesus is the Lamb of God. Two of his disciples follow Jesus. They see where He lives. Andrew meets Simon, his brother, tells him about Jesus and leads him to him. Jesus meets Philip and calls him. Philip meets Nathanael and gives him the news that they found the one of whom Moses wrote in the Law and the Prophets: Jesus, the son of Joseph, of Nazareth. We know that Moses in the Law had announced the sending from God of a prophet equal to him. Everyone should have listened to the prophet. He came from God.

*"A prophet like me will the Lord, your God, raise up for you from among your own kinsmen; to him you shall listen. This is exactly what you requested of the Lord, your God, at Horeb on the day of the assembly, when you said, 'Let us not again hear the voice of the Lord, our God, nor see this great fire any more, lest we die.' And the Lord said to me, 'This was well said. I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their kinsmen, and will put my words into his mouth; he shall tell them all that I command him. If any man will not listen to my words which he speaks in my name, I myself will make him answer for it. But if a prophet presumes to speak in my name an oracle that I have not commanded him to speak, or speaks in the name of other gods, he shall die.' "If you say to yourselves, 'How can we recognize an oracle which the Lord has spoken?', know that, even though a prophet speaks in the name of the Lord, if his oracle is not fulfilled or verified, it is an oracle which the Lord did not speak. The prophet has spoken it presumptuously, and you shall have no fear of him (Dt 18,15-22).*

Nathanael is not able to match the two truths in the same person: one historical and the other scriptural. The scriptural news wants the Messiah to come from Bethlehem. The historical news came from the announcement of Philip. Jesus comes from Nàzareth. If it must not be the Messiah, it could be the great prophet. Nathanael lets himself be led by Jesus. As soon as this sees him, he reveals him his identity. He is a man in whom there is no falsehood. This word was enough to him to remove all his history and Scripture doubts. Jesus is proclaimed by him the true Son of God, true King of Israel and true Christ.

*Philip found Nathanael and told him, "We have found the one about whom Moses wrote in the law, and also the prophets, Jesus, son of Joseph, from Nazareth." But Nathanael said to him, "Can anything good come from Nazareth?" Philip said to him, "Come and see." Jesus saw Nathanael coming toward him and said of him, "Here is a true Israelite. There is no duplicity in him." Nathanael said to him, "How do you know me?" Jesus answered and said to him, "Before Philip called you, I saw you under the fig tree." Nathanael answered him, "Rabbi, you are the Son of God; you are the King of Israel." Jesus answered and said to him, "Do you believe because I told you that I saw you under the fig tree? You will see greater things than this." And he said to him, "Amen, amen, I say to you, you will see the sky opened and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man."*

Nathanael needs only one word to confess that Jesus is the Son of God, the King of Israel, that is, the Messiah. We have a whole Scripture, Old and New Testament, a Tradition of two thousand years, an equally long Magisterium, an army of Fathers of the Church and of Theologians, Summae and countless treatises, libraries with shelves long kilometres and miles of books, numberless martyrs and confessors of faith, yet today we are demolishing the whole truth of Christ Jesus. Questions: what is the origin of this spirit of lies and falsehood that has taken possession of our heart and mind? What happened to reach to such a devastation? Are there ways to reverse this path of death?

Mother of God, Angels and Saints, free us from this infernal spirit that obscures the mind.

## Lord, will only a few people be saved?

## Is 66,18-21; Ps 116; Heb 12,5-7.11-13; Lk 13,22-30

### 25 AUGUST

The number of those who are saved and those who are lost does not depend on God. It depends on the Church and the individual person. It depends on the Church and especially on the ministers of the Word, on whom the responsibility of the proclamation of the Gospel falls wholly. It falls on the single person that can adhere to the preaching or can even refuse to accept the word of salvation and eternal life. This double responsibility has already been announced in the Old Testament by the prophet Ezekiel.

*He said to me: Son of man, eat what is before you; eat this scroll, then go, speak to the house of Israel. So I opened my mouth and he gave me the scroll to eat. Son of man, he then said to me, feed your belly and fill your stomach with this scroll I am giving you. I ate it, and it was as sweet as honey in my mouth. Son of man, he said to me, take into your heart all my words that I speak to you; hear them well. Now go to the exiles, to your countrymen, and say to them: Thus says the Lord God! - whether they heed or resist!  Thus the word of the Lord came to me: Son of man, I have appointed you a watchman for the house of Israel. When you hear a word from my mouth, you shall warn them for me. If I say to the wicked man, You shall surely die; and you do not warn him or speak out to dissuade him from his wicked conduct so that he may live: that wicked man shall die for his sin, but I will hold you responsible for his death. If, on the other hand, you have warned the wicked man, yet he has not turned away from his evil nor from his wicked conduct, then he shall die for his sin, but you shall save your life. If a virtuous man turns away from virtue and does wrong when I place a stumbling block before him, he shall die. He shall die for his sin, and his virtuous deeds shall not be remembered; but I will hold you responsible for his death if you did not warn him. When, on the other hand, you have warned a virtuous man not to sin, and he has in fact not sinned, he shall surely live because of the warning, and you shall save your own life (Cf. Ez 3,1-21).*

Conscious of this responsibility, Saint Paul declares solemnly, before all the bishops of Asia, his innocence. Whoever gets lost, does not get lost for his disobedience.

*And so I solemnly declare to you this day that I am not responsible for the blood of any of you, for I did not shrink from proclaiming to you the entire plan of God (At 20,26-27).*

From the moment of the mission, which for the ministers of the Word begins from the moment of their consecration, they are responsible for the salvation of every man. All the ministers operators of injustice - for them injustice is the non-fulfilment according to very pure truth and obedience of their mission - are responsible for every person that is lost for failure of proclamation and teaching of how the Gospel is to be lived. Then, the responsibility of the one who has listened and seen, begins. If this does not get converted, does not retreat from evil, does not believe in the Word of life and grace, he is responsible for eternity before his true Lord and God. It is a universal, immortal and eternal law.

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

There is a truth that needs to be put in the heart. We can alter, misrepresent, modify, transform and falsify the Word of Jesus. We are free to not believe and even fight against the Word. Jesus remains eternally faithful to what has come out of his mouth. If He has said He will not recognize us, He will not recognize us. We can deceive the world. He does not deceive, he does not deceive himself and will never be unfaithful to his Word.

Mother of God, Angels and Saints convince the hearts of their very high responsibility.

## You lock the kingdom of heaven before human beings

## 1Ts 1,1-5.8b-10; Ps 149; Mt 23,13-22

### 26 AUGUST

False prophecy always closes the kingdom of heaven. It closes it for the just and for the unjust, for the good and for the bad alike. Why does it also close it for the righteous? The answer is offered us by the prophet Ezekiel. It deserves all our intelligent and wise attention.

*Thus the word of the Lord came to me: Son of man, prophesy against the prophets of Israel, prophesy! Say to those who prophesy their own thought: Hear the word of the Lord: Thus says the Lord God: Woe to those prophets who are fools, who follow their own spirit and have seen no vision. Like foxes among ruins are your prophets, O Israel! You did not step into the breach, nor did you build a wall about the house of Israel that would stand firm against attack on the day of the Lord. Their visions are false and their divination lying. They say, "Thus says the Lord!" though the Lord did not send them; then they wait for him to fulfil their word! Was not the vision you saw false, and your divination lying? Therefore thus says the Lord God: Because you have spoken falsehood and have seen lying visions, therefore see! I am coming at you, says the Lord God. But I will stretch out my hand against the prophets who have false visions and who foretell lies. They shall not belong to the community of my people, nor be recorded in the register of the house of Israel, nor enter the land of Israel; thus you shall know that I am the Lord.*

*For the very reason that they led my people astray, saying, "Peace!" when there was no peace, and that, as one built a wall, they would cover it with whitewash, say then to the whitewashers: I will bring down a flooding rain; hailstones shall fall, and a storm wind shall break out. And when the wall has fallen, will you not be asked: Where is the whitewash you spread on? Therefore thus says the Lord God: In my fury I will let loose storm winds; because of my anger there shall be a flooding rain, and hailstones shall fall with destructive wrath. I will tear down the wall that you have whitewashed and level it to the ground, laying bare its foundations. When it falls, you shall be crushed beneath it; thus you shall know that I am the Lord. Now, son of man, turn toward the daughters of your people who prophesy their own thoughts; against these, prophesy: Thus says the Lord God: Woe to those who sew bands for everyone's wrists and make veils for every size of head so as to entrap their owners. Do you think to entrap the lives of my people, yet keep yourselves alive? You dishonour me before my people with handfuls of barley and crumbs of bread, killing those who should not die and keeping alive those who should not live, lying to my people who willingly hear lies. Because you have disheartened the upright man with lies when I did not wish him grieved, and have encouraged the wicked man not to turn from his evil conduct and save his life; therefore you shall no longer see false visions and practice divination, but I will rescue my people from your power. Thus you shall know that I am the Lord (Cf. Ez. 13,1-23).*

The false prophets close the kingdom for themselves. They betrayed and denied the Lord. They close it for the righteous because they demoralize them. They close it for the wicked, they strengthen them in their iniquity. Has not today the kingdom of heaven been closed to all the people of God, having false prophets closed hell and declared that everyone will go to Heaven? Why should the righteous be righteous? Why should the wicked be converted?

*"Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, you hypocrites. You lock the kingdom of heaven before human beings. You do not enter yourselves, nor do you allow entrance to those trying to enter. "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, you hypocrites. You traverse sea and land to make one convert, and when that happens you make him a child of Gehenna twice as much as yourselves. "Woe to you, blind guides, who say, 'If one swears by the temple, it means nothing, but if one swears by the gold of the temple, one is obligated.' Blind fools, which is greater, the gold, or the temple that made the gold sacred? And you say, 'If one swears by the altar, it means nothing, but if one swears by the gift on the altar, one is obligated.' You blind ones, which is greater, the gift, or the altar that makes the gift sacred? One who swears by the altar swears by it and all that is upon it; one who swears by the temple swears by it and by him who dwells in it; one who swears by heaven swears by the throne of God and by him who is seated on it.*

Before uttering a false word about God, about Christ, about the Gospel and about the truths that regulate eternity, first the minister of the Word should descend into hell, test eternal fire, then return to earth, and only then he could say falsehood.

Mother of God, Angels and Saints arrange that every minister of the Word is the mouth of God.

## Inside they are full of plunder and self-indulgence

## 1Ts 2,1-8; Ps 138; Mt 23,23-26

### 27 AUGUST

False prophets are by nature immoral. A heart full of God will always say the words of God. A heart full of Satan will say words of Satan. The Word either has its origin in God, if the heart is in God, or has its source in the Gehenna of fire, if the heart is in the fire of hell. From the word we know where everyone keeps his heart. This truth is wisely announced by the Apostle James. The word reveals the heart.

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

Jesus also to the Pharisees who accused him of operating the liberation from unclean spirits by friendship or in the name of Beelzebùl, the prince of the demons, says the same truth.

*"Either declare the tree good and its fruit is good, or declare the tree rotten and its fruit is rotten, for a tree is known by its fruit. You brood of vipers, how can you say good things when you are evil? For from the fullness of the heart the mouth speaks. A good person brings forth good out of a store of goodness, but an evil person brings forth evil out of a store of evil. I tell you, on the day of judgment people will render an account for every careless word they speak. By your words you will be acquitted, and by your words you will be condemned" (Mt 12,33-37).*

When the heart is full of greed and intemperance, it is a sign that God does not live in it. It is right to highlight a truth often ignored by the multitude of believers. Not only the body, but also the heart must be nourished. The body feeds on matter. The heart is nourished with holiness if God is inside it. It feeds on sin, if the Lord does not live in it. Being the heart of the scribes and Pharisees full of greed and intemperance, it must be nourished with ever greater greed and intemperance. Today their heart wants to feed on one evil, one sin: the killing of the Son of the Most High. Until it has not been nourished with this sin it will have no peace. After, it will need other even greater sins to satisfy his thirst for sin and evil.

*"Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, you hypocrites. You pay tithes of mint and dill and cummin, and have neglected the weightier things of the law: judgment and mercy and fidelity. (But) these you should have done, without neglecting the others. Blind guides, who strain out the gnat and swallow the camel! "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, you hypocrites. You cleanse the outside of cup and dish, but inside they are full of plunder and self-indulgence. Blind Pharisee, cleanse first the inside of the cup, so that the outside also may be clean.*

Every man is warned. God is nourished with God. Christ Jesus with Christ Jesus. The Holy Spirit with the Holy Spirit. The Gospel with the Gospel. The grace with grace. The sanctity with holiness. The science of the Most High with science of the Most High. Charity with charity. The truth with truth. But if the heart is full of greed and intemperance it will necessarily be nourished with greed and intemperance. Those of yesterday are not enough anymore. It needs more strong, great, intense and copious of them, capable of satisfying his thirst for evil and sin.

Mother of God, Angels and Saints, purify us from evil, put God in our hearts.

## How can you flee from the judgment of Gehenna?

## 1 Ts 2,9-13; Ps 138; Mt 23,27-32

### 28 AUGUST

Why cannot Pharisees and scribes escape from the condemnation of Gehenna, that is, to the condemnation of hell? Because the way that leads to eternal life is only one: obedience to the Law of the Lord, the observance of his Commandments and his Word. However, Scribes and Pharisees are intent only to replace the truth with falsehood, grace with sin, obedience with disobedience, good with evil, justice with injustice, Scripture with their traditions and glory of God with their glory. Between them and the Lord there is no point of contact, rather Jesus says that they have already closed the kingdom of God for themselves and for others. Might ever who closes the gates of the kingdom think of reaching Paradise? That's why they might never escape the condemnation of Gehenna. They should be converted to the Word of Jesus, while in their hearts from the beginning there was only one thought: how to take Jesus away, how to kill him in a legal way, without anyone thinking that it was the result of their satanic and diabolical will. From the Acts of the Apostles we learn that this will against Christ Jesus even during the course of the years had remained alive. This is attested by the execratory oath made by some of them to kill Paul who had witnessed the truth of Jesus' resurrection in the Sanhedrin. A long time had already gone by.

*When day came, the Jews made a plot and bound themselves by oath not to eat or drink until they had killed Paul. There were more than forty who formed this conspiracy. They went to the chief priests and elders and said, "We have bound ourselves by a solemn oath to taste nothing until we have killed Paul. You, together with the Sanhedrin, must now make an official request to the commander to have him bring him down to you, as though you meant to investigate his case more thoroughly. We on our part are prepared to kill him before he arrives." The son of Paul's sister, however, heard about the ambush; so he went and entered the compound and reported it to Paul. Paul then called one of the centurions and requested, "Take this young man to the commander; he has something to report to him." So he took him and brought him to the commander and explained,*

*"The prisoner Paul called me and asked that I bring this young man to you; he has something to say to you." The commander took him by the hand, drew him aside, and asked him privately, "What is it you have to report to me?" He replied, "The Jews have conspired to ask you to bring Paul down to the Sanhedrin tomorrow, as though they meant to inquire about him more thoroughly, but do not believe them. More than forty of them are lying in wait for him; they have bound themselves by oath not to eat or drink until they have killed him. They are now ready and only wait for your consent." As the commander dismissed the young man he directed him, "Tell no one that you gave me this information." Then he summoned two of the centurions and said, "Get two hundred soldiers ready to go to Caesarea by nine o'clock tonight, along with seventy horsemen and two hundred auxiliaries. Provide mounts for Paul to ride and give him safe conduct to Felix the governor" (At 23,12-24).*

With this hatred so strong in the heart nobody might think either of serving God or of being able to escape the condemnation of the Gehenna. Hatred does not belong to the religion of God. Not even the desire to give death belongs to the Word of the Lord.

*"Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, you hypocrites. You are like whitewashed tombs, which appear beautiful on the outside, but inside are full of dead men's bones and every kind of filth. Even so, on the outside you appear righteous, but inside you are filled with hypocrisy and evildoing. "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, you hypocrites. You build the tombs of the prophets and adorn the memorials of the righteous, and you say, 'If we had lived in the days of our ancestors, we would not have joined them in shedding the prophets' blood.' Thus you bear witness against yourselves that you are the children of those who murdered the prophets; now fill up what your ancestors measured out!* *You serpents, you brood of vipers, how can you flee from the judgment of Gehenna?*

That of the scribes and the Pharisees is a world totally devoid of God. But they use God to commit every crime and every transgression of the Law. Of the Lord they know not neither love, nor truth, nor mercy, nor justice and nor forgiveness.

Mother of God, Angels and Saints ensure that the world of the scribes and Pharisees never belong to us.

## Ask of me whatever you wish and I will grant it to you

## Jer 1,17-19; Ps 70; Mk 6,17-29

### 29 AUGUST

Sin is nourished with sin, vice with vice, concupiscence with concupiscence, injustice with injustice and disobedience with disobedience. Everyone is obliged to ensure that sin never enters the heart. Once it entered it requires another sin. Either it is removed from the heart with immediate repentance, conversion and request for forgiveness, or the misdeeds that it makes us commit are innumerable. They become bigger every day. The people of the Hebrews fell into idolatry. From idolatry it passed to great immorality. David committed a sin of adultery and he immediately became a multiple murderer. To hide his sin he had the husband of the adulterous woman and many others, killed.

*So all the people took off their earrings and brought them to Aaron, who accepted their offering, and fashioning this gold with a graving tool, made a molten calf. Then they cried out, "This is your God, O Israel, who brought you out of the land of Egypt." On seeing this, Aaron built an altar before the calf and proclaimed, "Tomorrow is a feast of the Lord." Early the next day the people offered holocausts and brought peace offerings. Then they sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to revel (Ex 32,3-6). The next morning David wrote a letter to Joab which he sent by Uriah. In it he directed: "Place Uriah up front, where the fighting is fierce. Then pull back and leave him to be struck down dead." So while Joab was besieging the city, he assigned Uriah to a place where he knew the defenders were strong. When the men of the city made a sortie against Joab, some officers of David's army fell, and among them Uriah the Hittite died (2Sam 11,14-17).*

Herod fell into the sin of concubinage. Herodias was his brother's wife. Immediately afterwards he fell into the sin of lustful desire. Because of it he took a foolish and thoughtless oath. This oath forced him, through another sin of vainglory, to be a murderer. The beheading of John the Baptist is not an isolated sin. Instead, it is the fruit of a sequence of sins, everyone more serious than the former. This truth must teach us that if we do not remove the first sin, a second one will follow it, then a third and a fourth. Then, in the end it is the irreparable. By passing more and more the limit of sin one can reach the sin against the Holy Spirit and it is eternal death already while one is alive. Sin over sin!

*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.*

The same truth applies to falsehood. Falsehood also feeds on falsehoods. Today we remove a truth from the Gospel and replace it with a falsehood, tomorrow another and yet another one. It comes to the point of depriving the Gospel of every truth. Today God, Christ Jesus, the Holy Spirit, the Church, the sacraments and everything is deprived of its truth. This is the unstoppable process of falsehood. Evil and falsehoods are like yeast. Once they enter the heart, even in a very small part, they conquer it completely. Who wants to stay in the light he is asked to free himself from all darkness today, tomorrow and always.

Mother of God, Angels and Saints do not allow sin to enter the heart of the Christian.

## Five of them were foolish and five were wise

## 1 Ts 4,1-8; Ps 96; Mt 25,1-13

### 30 AUGUST

Wisdom is the same Spirit of the Lord given to the Christian so that by him he is led from truth to truth until the whole truth is reached. Guided by him the disciple of Jesus knows at all times what to do and what not to do, what is right and what is unjust and what is true and what is false. The Holy Spirit does not govern only the present, he governs the present in view of the future. If the present is without truth, the future will also be without truth and if the present is lived badly even the future is lived badly. A truth without an aim to be attained is not the truth of the Holy Spirit. Nor does a present not destined for the future both in time and in eternity belong to the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit knows how to give his truth to every moment of our life. The condition for Him to work is one: that he is invoked and perpetually revived with prayer and with an ever more perfect obedience to the Word of Jesus. Without obedience to the Gospel, never might the Spirit work. Because He works only in the Word to live the whole Word in fullness of truth. We leave the Word, the Spirit comes out of us. Not only must the Spirit of the Lord be asked for us, but also for others. As Paul we must ask for him. Like the Virgin Mary we must take him with us.

*Therefore, I, too, hearing of your faith in the Lord Jesus and of your love for all the holy ones, do not cease giving thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers, that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you a spirit of wisdom and revelation resulting in knowledge of him. May the eyes of (your) hearts be enlightened, that you may know what is the hope that belongs to his call, what are the riches of glory in his inheritance among the holy ones, and what is the surpassing greatness of his power for us who believe, in accord with the exercise of his great might (Eph 1,15-19). During those days Mary set out and travelled to the hill country in haste to a town of Judah, where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the infant leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth, filled with the holy Spirit, cried out in a loud voice and said, "Most blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. And how does this happen to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? For at the moment the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the infant in my womb leaped for joy. Blessed are you who believed that what was spoken to you by the Lord would be fulfilled" (Lk 1,39-45).*

The virgins who brought the lamps but not the oil are certainly not guided by the Holy Spirit. They lack in the truth of things. We are not wise either. We are lacking in the truth of life. We lack in the truth of life because we are deprived of the truth of the Gospel, of the Church, of the sacraments, of faith, of hope and of charity. Nor can the Holy Spirit guide us, because we dwell out of the Word.

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

Lacking us faith in the Word of Jesus, who says that he does not know us, what wisdom can we have to lead our lives towards the blessed skies? None. Not only do we not believe in the Word, we transform it to the use of our sin. Between what we believe and the Word of Christ Jesus there is no longer any meeting point. Since Jesus only recognizes his Word and only is eternally faithful to it, either we get converted and live according to his Word or even for us, the door will remain closed forever.

Mother of God, Angels and Saints, give us a true faith in every Word of Christ the Lord.

## Called in his servants and entrusted his possessions to them

## 1Ts 4,9-11; Ps 97; Mt 25,14-30

### 31 AUGUST

The truth of man is simple to be defined. God created him for Him. He is for him, if he is from him. He is from him if he is from his Word. He is from his Word if he lends it full, perfect and uninterrupted obedience. If he comes out of obedience, he enters death. Whether man believes or does not believe nothing changes. If he believes, he lives. If he does not believe, he dies. The Word of the Lord is immutable in the eternal centuries. For those who do not believe, death is not only in time, it is also for eternity. Either with faith or without faith out of the Word there is no true life. There is only one death that consumes us and makes us fall into eternal death.

*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 2,16-17).*

The second truth reveals to us that every man is different, different than every other man. Every man is unique and unrepeatable. The uniqueness, the singularity is given to him by the gifts of the Holy Spirit. They too are unique and unrepeatable. The gifts of the Spirit are natural and supernatural. They are given because God wants to achieve a particular end for them.

*There are different kinds of spiritual gifts but the same Spirit; there are different forms of service but the same Lord; there are different workings but the same God who produces all of them in everyone. To each individual the manifestation of the Spirit is given for some benefit (Cf. 1Cor 12,1-31). Since we have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us exercise them: if prophecy, in proportion to the faith; if ministry, in ministering; if one is a teacher, in teaching; if one exhorts, in exhortation; if one contributes, in generosity; if one is over others, with diligence; if one does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness (Rm 12,4-8).*

The parable of Jesus reveals to us that every gift received must be put to good use. We are responsible before the Lord if we omit the fructification of our gifts, which are manifold. Leisure, ignorance, sloth, laziness, indifference, unconcern and every other vice, must never belong to a man. Vice hinders the fruits, virtue favours them.

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

The lazy servant does not take part in the joy of his master. He omitted the fructification of his gift. Someone might think, but it was only one. Suffices one gift put to good use to save the whole world. No gift of God is given in vain. Every gift is a bearer of divine life on our earth. A drop of water is also a precious gift to our God. It cannot be wasted. It is a gift.

Mother of God, Angels and Saints ensure that Christians are always a model of virtue, everywhere.