**SEPTEMBER 2019**

**FIRST DECADE OF SEPTEMBER**

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

## Wis 3,17-18.20.28-29; Ps 67; Heb 12,18-19.22-24a; Lk 14.1.7-14

### 1 SEPTEMBER

Man's life on earth is made up of human rules and divine rules. A true man of God respects both. He can respect them if he lives with great humility and pure faith. Without these two virtues no rule might be respected. Jesus asks his disciples to learn from him that is meek and humble at heart. They will live in peace. With humility one sees with the eyes of God himself and others, but he also lives according to the heart of God. What does the Lord ask of his worshipers? That they think being inferior to the others. That they put themselves in the last place to love from it. What does Jesus ask of the guests? That they go to occupy the last places. There could be a more respectable guest and then they are forced to go to the last place. Going from the first to the last is a shame in front of all the guests. Instead, passing from the last to the first it is a great honour. The humble knows that his place is always the last. He sits down and stays there until his master calls him. But even if he were not to call him, he is already happy and blessed because he lives his life according to truth. For the proud, even if he occupies the first place, there is never peace, because there is always someone higher up than him.

Instead, with meekness we live what is happening in our life, making everything a sacrifice to the Lord. Jesus welcomed the cross, he lived it making it a true sacrifice of love. For this mildness he redeemed the world. If we offered to the Lord, living everything as a holocaust of love, in full denial of ourselves, the world would know the difference between the Christian cross and the pagan cross. We Christians are often the ones who live the cross in the pagan way. The world does not see the difference and also repudiates Christ Crucified. If the folly of the world does not see the difference between the two crosses, it might never welcome Christ Crucified. His cross makes eternal difference. If we want the world to believe in the cross of Jesus and in Jesus Crucified, we Christians must show it every day that we live the cross in a new way. We live it by welcoming it with love, carrying it with hope and letting ourselves be nailed to it with perfect obedience to our Father. Many atrocious crimes are from our rejection of the cross. If the Christian worships the Crucifix and refuses the cross, why proclaim the Crucifix to the world or be scandalized if he is rejected?

*On a Sabbath he went to dine at the home of one of the leading Pharisees, and the people there were observing him carefully. He told a parable to those who had been invited, noticing how they were choosing the places of honour at the table. "When you are invited by someone to a wedding banquet, do not recline at table in the place of honour. A more distinguished guest than you may have been invited by him, and the host who invited both of you may approach you and say, 'Give your place to this man,' and then you would proceed with embarrassment to take the lowest place. Rather, when you are invited, go and take the lowest place so that when the host comes to you he may say, 'My friend, move up to a higher position.' Then you will enjoy the esteem of your companions at the table. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but the one who humbles himself will be exalted." Then he said to the host who invited him, "When you hold a lunch or a dinner, do not invite your friends or your brothers or your relatives or your wealthy neighbours, in case they may invite you back and you have repayment. Rather, when you hold a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind; blessed indeed will you be because of their inability to repay you. For you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous."*

With faith, we see everything from eternity. We know that eternal life is the fruit of our works of mercy, almsgiving, goodness and charity. We know that these works are rewarded by God, if done exclusively for Him. If we do them for us, we have already received our earthly reward. There is no divine reward for us either in time or eternity. Living with the most pure eyes of faith, the Christian knows how to transform everything into greater eternal glory. Even the gestures of everyday life are experienced as a function of the sky. He does not make an invitation to have the exchange. He invites those who cannot invite him in turn. He invites Christ, poor and devoid of all good, and He, rich with eternity, gives us his eternal glory as a gift. Faith gives a dimension of eternity to everything. Blessed is that Christian who grows from faith to faith, from humility to humility and from meekness to meekness. He is Christ's presence on earth.

Mother of God, Angels and Saints arrange that every Christian lives every cross with love.

## He unrolled the scroll and found the passage where it was written

## 1Ts 4,13-18; Ps 95; Lk 4,16-30

### 2 SEPTEMBER

What happens in the synagogue of Nazareth is the fruit of the wisdom of the Holy Spirit that hangs over Christ Jesus. Wisdom is in the choice of the text to read and to comment. In Isaiah there are indeed many texts that are true explicit prophecy about the coming Messiah. At present it is not the time to reveal his perfect identity as Christ of God. This hour for the people will be the day of his solemn entry into Jerusalem, giving fulfilment to the prophecy of Zechariah. But, today, Jesus must attest that He comes from God. He comes as a prophet of the Lord. He comes to carry out some specific works: bringing the good news to the poor, proclaiming liberty to the prisoners and to blind the sight, setting the oppressed in freedom and proclaiming the year of grace of the Lord. These are the works of the Messiah, but also of the prophet. By examining everything well, they are all works that are done with the word. No other thing is required. No armies or soldiers, no swords, no spears, no weapons of offense and no defence is necessary. The word is sufficient. Now only the prophet acted with the Word. The kings acted with weapons, armies and a court all at their service. The prophet always acted alone. All great prophets are without people next to them. Only Elijah was accompanied by Elisha for some time. Elisha himself was a prophet without other prophets following him. He only had a servant who accompanied him along the way. Being what Jesus reads a prophetic work, no one might ever think that He is the Messiah. Everyone can think of it, but neither today nor tomorrow he might say it. Even the devils say it. But he must keep quiet about this mystery that surrounds him. History demands it.

*He came to Nazareth, where he had grown up, and went according to his custom into the synagogue on the Sabbath day. He stood up to read and was handed a scroll of the prophet Isaiah. He unrolled the scroll and found the passage where it was written: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring glad tidings to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, and to proclaim a year acceptable to the Lord." Rolling up the scroll, he handed it back to the attendant and sat down, and the eyes of all in the synagogue looked intently at him. He said to them, "Today this scripture passage is fulfilled in your hearing." And all spoke highly of him and were amazed at the gracious words that came from his mouth. They also asked, "Isn't this the son of Joseph?" He said to them, "Surely you will quote me this proverb, 'Physician, cure yourself,' and say, 'Do here in your native place the things that we heard were done in Capernaum.'" And he said, "Amen, I say to you, no prophet is accepted in his own native place. Indeed, I tell you, there were many widows in Israel in the days of Elijah when the sky was closed for three and a half years and a severe famine spread over the entire land. It was to none of these that Elijah was sent, but only to a widow in Zarephath in the land of Sidon. Again, there were many lepers in Israel during the time of Elisha the prophet; yet not one of them was cleansed, but only Naaman the Syrian." When the people in the synagogue heard this, they were all filled with fury. They rose up, drove him out of the town, and led him to the brow of the hill on which their town had been built, to hurl him down headlong. But he passed through the midst of them and went away.*

The wisdom of Jesus also manifests itself in the conduction of the dialogue with those present in the synagogue. Quoting Elijah and Elisha, he leads the people to see him for the moment only as a prophet. If he is a true prophet he is not obliged to perform any work. The works of the prophets are the Word of God proclaimed by them and which is accomplished at due time. Sometimes even centuries can pass. The fulfilment reveals that they were true prophets. They spoke in the name of God. Jesus does not ask that they immediately believe in his Word. he prepares hearts to believe when his Word will be fulfilled. This is also divine wisdom. But those of Nazareth today let themselves be governed by folly and even come to want to kill Jesus throwing him from the cliff. But he gives a great sign of his being a man of God. He divides the crowd in two, just as Moses divided the Red Sea, passes among them and goes away. From the Gospel we know that not long afterwards Jesus returns to Nazareth and this time he was welcomed with joy. The seed of the Word had been thrown into the hearts. Something had started to sprout. When the man of God speaks with great wisdom of the Holy Spirit, the Lord will do the rest.

Mother of God, Angels and Saints, fill us with the wisdom of the Holy Spirit today and always.

## I know who you are - the Holy One of God!

## 1 Ts 5,1-6.9-11; Ps 26; Lk 4,31-37

### 3 SEPTEMBER

Whoever says a historical truth must always respect its end, which is the greatest good of the person to whom it belongs. But it must never be said for a bad end. It could provoke an evil not only towards the person who bears that truth, but also towards the community, if not towards the whole of humanity. The truth must be sought, confessed, preached and declared only for the greatest good of all. Never must the end of truth be evil, because evil does not belong to the truth. Evil belongs to falsehood, lie, deception and foolishness. The wise always uses truth with wisdom. The fool always with foolishness. Only the greatest good belongs to man, always. Jesus is the only true Son of God. He is the only Son of God by eternal generation. He is the only true Christ of God, that is, his Messiah. This is his historical truth. Currently this truth cannot be said. It would cause irreparable damage to Jesus. Knowing this, Satan right from the first meeting with Jesus, immediately wants to reveal his truth. In fact, he reveals him as the Saint of God, that is, the Messiah awaited by Israel and by the Gentiles according to ancient prophecies. Jesus imposes silence on him. He forces him to leave the man. Thus, he will also stop revealing his truth of nature, of vocation and of mission. The moment has not yet arrived.

We know that Jesus will reveal this truth to his Apostles, imposing silence on them when he makes the decision to go to Jerusalem to be crucified. He will reveal it to the world of the Jews a few days before his crucifixion. He will reveal it under oath to the Sanhedrin the evening before his death on Golgotha. Divine and human wisdom! Then, when he will be resurrected, he will send his Apostles all over the world to announce salvation in his name of Lord and Judge of the living and the dead. Today it is not the time to know the historical truth of Jesus, because his people does not wait for the Christ of God in the fullness of the divine truth. It awaits him according to the great falsity of man's thought. Between the Christ of God and Christ according to his people there is the same unbridgeable distance that reigns between the thoughts of God and the thoughts of man. The west and the east are closer, even if the west is more and more to the west and the east more and more to the east for those who are walking in that direction. A Messiah according to man is not the Messiah according to God. Satan revealed the true Messiah according to God so that he were burned as the Messiah according to men. Thus the work of redemption could never have been accomplished. Here is the evil and wicked end of Satan in unveiling the historical truth of Jesus.

*Jesus then went down to Capernaum, a town of Galilee. He taught them on the Sabbath, and they were astonished at his teaching because he spoke with authority. In the synagogue there was a man with the spirit of an unclean demon, and he cried out in a loud voice, "Ha! What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are - the Holy One of God!" Jesus rebuked him and said, "Be quiet! Come out of him!" Then the demon threw the man down in front of them and came out of him without doing him any harm. They were all amazed and said to one another, "What is there about his word? For with authority and power he commands the unclean spirits, and they come out." And news of him spread everywhere in the surrounding region.*

Let each of us ask himself: do I say the historical truth of a person only for his greatest good? Jesus never said a truth except for the greatest good of every man. Even the troubles uttered against scribes and Pharisees have only one purpose. Jesus manifests their historical truth of hypocrites or ignorant in the things of God not because they had to be humiliated by people, but because they got converted, listening to his Word and believing in the Gospel. Truth will be said for eternal good or for eternal evil on the day of judgment. That day we will be declared according to our truth of good for eternal salvation, but also in our truth of evil for our ruin, perdition and eternal damnation. With death there will no longer exist the truth for conversion, but only that which will declare us blessed or damned. It is the tremendous day of judgment.

Mother of God, Angels and Saints, do not allow Christians to tell the truth for evil.

## For this purpose I have been sent

## Col 1,1-8; Ps 51; Lk 4,38-44

### 4 SEPTEMBER

Man thinks of God from his heart, his thoughts, his will and his desires. He wished a God at his disposal day and night to solve all the problems of his humanity, imbued with vice, sin, idolatry, immorality, superstition, every disobedience and transgression of the Commandments. He does not want to solve them in the manner of God, but in the manner of men. God wants man in his Law and his Will. Man wants God in his sin according to his desire and his expectations, his earthly hopes. God wants to bring man into his sky. Man wants to bring God to his land, to the things of this world. If this on the part of man is valid for his Lord and Creator, it is also valid for all the envoys of God and his ministers, for the Church and every divine institution of God, including the sacraments of true salvation. Man wants to bring everything into his humanity made of earth, to feed himself on earth, which is bad and evil. Even morality, charity, justice, the Word and the Gospel, he wants to drag into his human thoughts. Today, this is the frightening chasm that separates us from our God and Lord. Everything must be brought into our world according to the rules of the world. We want to use all the supernatural for the natural, rather than using the natural to rise into the supernatural and being transformed from natural beings into spiritual creatures, through the power of the Holy Spirit and the grace of Christ the Lord.

Jesus has a divine mission to live. It originates in the heart of the Father. The heart of the Father has only one desire for every man: that he abandons the kingdom of darkness and enters the kingdom of light, leaves idolatry and returns to true worship, stops following darkness and falsehood and lives of light and truth. He frees himself from the slavery of sin and death and becomes eternal life. In eternal life he can enter with every kind of body. He can live as a leper, blind, dumb, deaf, crippled, paralyzed and plagued. But he cannot live with sin. This is why Jesus is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. With sin one does not enter into eternal life. First, sin must be removed with repentance, conversion, faith in the Word of Jesus and immersion in the waters of baptism and then one can live of eternal life. Instead, man wants to use Christ in the sin of the soul, in the vice of the body, but to free the body from all sickness, suffering, danger and difficulty. Man wants a healthy body leaving the soul damned. Jesus wants a holy soul in a crucified body. Man wants to use Jesus exclusively for the good of his body. Instead, Jesus wants to serve man to the exclusive service of the salvation of his soul. Here is his thought: "What good is it to a man if he gains the whole world and then loses his soul?" We must reflect.

*After he left the synagogue, he entered the house of Simon. Simon's mother-in-law was afflicted with a severe fever, and they interceded with him about her. He stood over her, rebuked the fever, and it left her. She got up immediately and waited on them. At sunset, all who had people sick with various diseases brought them to him. He laid his hands on each of them and cured them. And demons also came out from many, shouting, "You are the Son of God." But he rebuked them and did not allow them to speak because they knew that he was the Messiah. At daybreak, Jesus left and went to a deserted place. The crowds went looking for him, and when they came to him, they tried to prevent him from leaving them. But he said to them, "To the other towns also I must proclaim the good news of the kingdom of God, because for this purpose I have been sent." And he was preaching in the synagogues of Judea.*

The crowds want to keep Jesus so that he cares for their sick. Jesus tells them that he must go elsewhere. His mission is not to cure the body, but to preach the Gospel for the salvation and redemption of every man and for liberation from sin. Jesus never lets himself be tempted either by Satan or by men. He knows what God's will is for his life and obeys it with all his heart, strength, spirit, soul and with conviction of pure faith in the Holy Spirit. Knowing God's will on us is necessary if we want to overcome temptation. Without the knowledge of the Lord's will, falling into temptation is more than easy. Indeed we are already in temptation.

Mother of God, Angels and Saints, make us obedient to the whole will of God on our life.

## He sat down and taught the crowds from the boat

## Col 1,9-14; Ps 97; Lk 5,1-11

### 5 SEPTEMBER

Christ draws the Word from the heart of the Father. Every one of his disciples must draw the Word from the heart of Christ, which is his Church. If he does not draw the Word from the heart of the Church, his is the word of men, never might it be said to be the Word of Christ Jesus. It is not drawn from the heart of Lord Jesus. St. Paul teaches that the Church is the pillar and support of the truth. Who is without the Church is also without the truth of salvation and redemption. That his word comes from his heart is attested by the fruits that it does not produce. Never will a single fruit of true salvation come from the word of men.

*I am writing you about these matters, although I hope to visit you soon. But if I should be delayed, you should know how to behave in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and foundation of truth. Undeniably great is the mystery of devotion, Who was manifested in the flesh, vindicated in the spirit, seen by angels, proclaimed to the Gentiles, believed in throughout the world, taken up in glory. Now the Spirit explicitly says that in the last times some will turn away from the faith by paying attention to deceitful spirits and demonic instructions through the hypocrisy of liars with branded consciences. They forbid marriage and require abstinence from foods that God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth. For everything created by God is good, and nothing is to be rejected when received with thanksgiving, for it is made holy by the invocation of God in prayer. If you will give these instructions to the brothers, you will be a good minister of Christ Jesus, nourished on the words of the faith and of the sound teaching you have followed. Avoid profane and silly myths. Train yourself for devotion (1Tm 3,14-4,6).*

Jesus teaches from the boat, which is the image and figure of the Church. Jesus teaches from the Church that he himself is the one to form the Church. If the Church is not formed, it is a sign that it is not taught from the Church, but from the personal heart and desires. The truth of the Gospel that we preach is given by the formation of the body of Christ, which is his Church. If we do not form the Church, our Gospel is false. It is not the Gospel of the Son of the living God and not even the Gospel of the Holy Spirit. Forming the Church is the essence of the preaching of the Gospel. It is not a secondary, accessory thing. It is the very purpose of the announcement of the Word. From the Church Peter is sent into the sea of ​​the world to cast the net for fishing. After the miraculous fishing, Peter is called by Jesus to make him a fisher of men. Who is the fisher of men? He who takes men from the sea of ​​the world and brings them all into the boat of the Church.

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

A Gospel not drawn from the heart of Christ, from the heart of the Church, is not the Gospel of God. A Gospel that does not form the Church of the living God is not the Gospel of God. A Gospel that merely justifies an anthropology of pure humanism, is not God's Gospel. A Gospel transformed into philanthropy, is not God's Gospel. The Gospel is of God when it is preached to form the Body of Christ which is his Church. It is the Church of Jesus the one founded on Peter. If the Gospel does not form the true Church of Christ the Lord, it is not true Gospel of the Holy Spirit. It's just a human word. The formation of the Church attests and certifies that our Gospel is the most pure Gospel of the Father.

Mother of God, Angels and Saints arrange that every Christian builds the Church of Lord Jesus.

## The piece from it will not match the old cloak

## Col 1,15-20; Ps 99; Lk 5,33-39

### 6 SEPTEMBER

The Lord our God wished he could replace the religious works of the flesh with obedience to the Commandments, to his Law, but he did not succeed. The flesh wants works according to the flesh, not according to the Spirit. He also wished he could replace fasting according to the flesh with fasting according to the spirit, but even in this he did not succeed. Flesh for man is more than a tick. It sticks to the flesh and it is impossible to detach it so that it opens to the spirit and walks in the Holy Spirit.

*Cry out full-throated and unsparingly, lift up your voice like a trumpet blast; Tell my people their wickedness, and the house of Jacob their sins. They seek me day after day, and desire to know my ways, Like a nation that has done what is just and not abandoned the law of their God; They ask me to declare what is due them, pleased to gain access to God. "Why do we fast, and you do not see it? afflict ourselves, and you take no note of it?" Lo, on your fast day you carry out your own pursuits, and drive all your labourers. Yes, your fast ends in quarrelling and fighting, striking with wicked claw. Would that today you might fast so as to make your voice heard on high! Is this the manner of fasting I wish, of keeping a day of penance: That a man bow his head like a reed, and lie in sackcloth and ashes? Do you call this a fast, a day acceptable to the Lord? This, rather, is the fasting that I wish: releasing those bound unjustly, untying the thongs of the yoke; Setting free the oppressed, breaking every yoke; Sharing your bread with the hungry, sheltering the oppressed and the homeless; Clothing the naked when you see them, and not turning your back on your own.*

*Then your light shall break forth like the dawn, and your wound shall quickly be healed; Your vindication shall go before you, and the glory of the Lord shall be your rear guard. Then you shall call, and the Lord will answer, you shall cry for help, and he will say: Here I am! If you remove from your midst oppression, false accusation and malicious speech; If you bestow your bread on the hungry and satisfy the afflicted; Then light shall rise for you in the darkness, and the gloom shall become for you like midday; Then the Lord will guide you always and give you plenty even on the parched land. He will renew your strength, and you shall be like a watered garden, like a spring whose water never fails. The ancient ruins shall be rebuilt for your sake, and the foundations from ages past you shall raise up; "Repairer of the breach," they shall call you, "Restorer of ruined homesteads." If you hold back your foot on the Sabbath from following your own pursuits on my holy day; If you call the Sabbath a delight, and the Lord’s holy day honourable; If you honour it by not following your ways, seeking your own interests, or speaking with malice - Then you shall delight in the Lord, and I will make you ride on the heights of the earth; I will nourish you with the heritage of Jacob, your father, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken (Is 58,1-14).*

Today, Jesus cannot say in an open, clear way to the disciples of John that they walk according to the flesh and not according to the spirit. He uses two images, which serve to say a profound and real truth, but also to loosen the too much attention placed on the substantial difference existing between the disciples of John and the disciples of the Pharisees and the disciples of Jesus. Today, it is not important for the Holy Spirit to cry out the novelty of Christ. Instead, it is necessary to calm the restless and agitated hearts.

*And they said to him, "The disciples of John fast often and offer prayers, and the disciples of the Pharisees do the same; but yours eat and drink." Jesus answered them, "Can you make the wedding guests fast while the bridegroom is with them? But the days will come, and when the bridegroom is taken away from them, then they will fast in those days." And he also told them a parable. "No one tears a piece from a new cloak to patch an old one. Otherwise, he will tear the new and the piece from it will not match the old cloak. Likewise, no one pours new wine into old wineskins. Otherwise, the new wine will burst the skins, and it will be spilled, and the skins will be ruined. Rather, new wine must be poured into fresh wineskins. (And) no one who has been drinking old wine desires new, for he says, 'The old is good.'"*

The new dress and the new skin is the heart of Christ. It cannot be adapted to our old heart, to our religion according to the flesh. It is necessary to separate new heart, new Gospel, new life, new religion and old heart, old word, old religion and old life. We go to Jesus not for patching, but for conversion. One does not go outwardly, but through real clothing. We have to get dressed in Christ.

Mother of God, Angels and Saints arrange that we clothe ourselves with Christ and his Gospel.

## Ate of it, and shared it with his companions

## Col 1,21-23; Ps 53; Lk 6,1-5

### 7 SEPTEMBER

Jesus distinguishes the moral law from the ritual law with true wisdom of the Holy Spirit. But also what is the will of his Father in relation to the moral Law and what is instead an addition of men. It is the will of the Lord God that nothing is added to his law and nothing is taken away. Removing or adding makes the Law A law of men and not of God.

*"Now, Israel, hear the statutes and decrees which I am teaching you to observe, that you may live, and may enter in and take possession of the land which the Lord, the God of your fathers, is giving you. In your observance of the commandments of the Lord, your God, which I enjoin upon you, you shall not add to what I command you nor subtract from it (Dt 4,1-2).*

Who is upright and pure at heart, who seeks the truth and loves it always knows how to transform every ritual law into the greatest good for man. But he also knows what the Lord wants and what he does not want, what comes from God and what comes from men. Ahimelech, priest of the Lord, knows how to use the offering bread according to truth.

*Then David departed on his way, while Jonathan went back into the city. David went to Ahimelech, the priest of Nob, who came trembling to meet him and asked, "Why are you alone? Is there no one with you?" David answered the priest: "The king gave me a commission and told me to let no one know anything about the business on which he sent me or the commission he gave me. For that reason I have arranged a meeting place with my men. Now what have you on hand? Give me five loaves, or whatever you can find." But the priest replied to David, "I have no ordinary bread on hand, only holy bread; if the men have abstained from women, you may eat some of that." David answered the priest: "We have indeed been segregated from women as on previous occasions. Whenever I go on a journey, all the young men are consecrated - even for a secular journey. All the more so today, when they are consecrated at arms!" So the priest gave him holy bread, for no other bread was on hand except the showbread which had been removed from the Lord’s presence and replaced by fresh bread when it was taken away. One of Saul's servants was there that day, detained before the Lord; his name was Doeg the Edomite, and he was Saul's chief henchman. David then asked Ahimelech: "Do you have a spear or a sword on hand? I brought along neither my sword nor my weapons, because the king's business was urgent." The priest replied: "The sword of Goliath the Philistine, whom you killed in the Vale of the Terebinth, is here (wrapped in a mantle) behind an ephod. If you wish to take that, take it; there is no sword here except that one." David said: "There is none to match it. Give it to me!" (1Sam 21.1-10).*

Who loves the Lord with a humble, meek and pure heart is always helped by the Lord to walk in his truth. Ahimelech is a priest of great wisdom. He knows that the sacred breads are a sign before the Lord. But the sign can also be removed, but the meaning of them cannot be removed. The people is always before God. Today, however, the loaves are used to nourish persons of the Lord's people and he uses them for this purpose. If he had not been a priest with a simple, meek and humble heart, rich in faith and charity, he would have left David and his family to die of hunger. If these Pharisees were with the humble, pure and meek heart, full of love for the Lord, the Holy Spirit would have filled them with wisdom and encouraged the disciples rather than mortifying them by accusing them of transgressing the Sabbath. But they do not want to strike the disciples, but their Master. Their intent is only one: depriving Jesus of all credibility among the people. Theirs is a highly diabolical end.

*While he was going through a field of grain on a Sabbath, his disciples were picking the heads of grain, rubbing them in their hands, and eating them. Some Pharisees said, "Why are you doing what is unlawful on the Sabbath?" Jesus said to them in reply, "Have you not read what David did when he and those (who were) with him were hungry? (How) he went into the house of God, took the bread of offering, which only the priests could lawfully eat, ate of it, and shared it with his companions." Then he said to them, "The Son of Man is lord of the Sabbath."*

When the spirit of evil is in the heart it is a sign that the heart has been taken from God and handed over to sin. If the heart is in sin, it cannot think according to God. God is not in the heart. The heart thinks according to the thoughts of the guests that are in it. If there is Satan, we think as Satan, if there is sin from sin, if there is God from God.

Mother of God, Angels and Saints arrange that our heart is a worthy dwelling of our God.

## Cannot be my disciple

## Wis 9,13-19; Ps 89; Fm 9b-10.12-17; Lk 14,25-33

### 8 SEPTEMBER

To understand what Jesus teaches today about the needs concerning his sequel, we will let ourselves be helped by the discourse of Joshua to the children of Israel after the conquest of the Promised Land. His is a word that never loses its truth and its value.

*"Now, therefore, fear the Lord and serve him completely and sincerely. Cast out the gods your fathers served beyond the River and in Egypt, and serve the Lord. If it does not please you to serve the Lord, decide today whom you will serve, the gods your fathers served beyond the River or the gods of the Amorites in whose country you are dwelling. As for me and my household, we will serve the Lord." But the people answered, "Far be it from us to forsake the Lord for the service of other gods. For it was the Lord, our God, who brought us and our fathers up out of the land of Egypt, out of a state of slavery. He performed those great miracles before our very eyes and protected us along our entire journey and among all the peoples through whom we passed. At our approach the Lord drove out (all the peoples, including) the Amorites who dwelt in the land. Therefore we also will serve the Lord, for he is our God."*

*Joshua in turn said to the people, "You may not be able to serve the Lord, for he is a holy God; he is a jealous God who will not forgive your transgressions or your sins. If, after the good he has done for you, you forsake the Lord and serve strange gods, he will do evil to you and destroy you." But the people answered Joshua, "We will still serve the Lord." Joshua therefore said to the people, "You are your own witnesses that you have chosen to serve the Lord." They replied, "We are, indeed!" "Now, therefore, put away the strange gods that are among you and turn your hearts to the Lord, the God of Israel." Then the people promised Joshua, "We will serve the Lord, our God, and obey his voice." So Joshua made a covenant with the people that day and made statutes and ordinances for them at Shechem, which he recorded in the book of the law of God. Then he took a large stone and set it up there under the oak that was in the sanctuary of the Lord. And Joshua said to all the people, "This stone shall be our witness, for it has heard all the words which the Lord spoke to us. It shall be a witness against you, should you wish to deny your God." Then Joshua dismissed the people, each to his own heritage (Josh 24,14-28).*

Once the word is given, it obliges forever. God does not give the Word to man for a day. God obliges himself to his Word for eternity. If he gives his word to God, man also must commit himself and be obliged for eternity. The word is not given to God and immediately withdrawn. God gives the Word and creates a new reality in the sacraments. The new reality remains stable for eternity. Even in hell the baptized is a child of God, the confirmed is a witness of Christ, the deacon is a servant of the Gospel, the pastor is a priest and minister of the Word, the bishop is the successor of the apostles. The sacramental consecration is done on the word given by man to God.

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

The truth that Jesus wants to teach those who want to follow Him is very simple to highlight: once the word has been given, it obliges forever. If he is chosen, he must be chosen forever. There are no timed choices. Sacraments are for eternity. They are a word exchange. Jesus gives his Word for eternity to us, we give him our word for eternity. Always for always, eternity for eternity. If we take back our word, we are unfaithful. He never fails. He is the eternal Faithful.

Mother of God, Angels and Saints arrange that Christians also are eternal faithful like Jesus.

## But he realized their intentions

## Col 1,24-2,3; Ps 61; Lk 6,6-11

### 9 SEPTEMBER

Jesus is perennially under the tent of light of the Holy Spirit. He knows what is in every heart and according to this knowledge he always gives a word full of all wisdom, truth, light, prudence and holiness. The Gospel attests this truth. It is in every page. If Jesus had not spoken from full and perfect knowledge of the heart of man, he would have been stoned from the first day of his mission. Scribes and Pharisees saw him as the great destroyer of their false, immoral and deceptive religion. They considered him a true impostor. Their religion was untouchable, unmodifiable and non-criticizable. Everyone had to conform to it.

*While he was in Jerusalem for the feast of Passover, many began to believe in his name when they saw the signs he was doing. But Jesus would not trust himself to them because he knew them all, and did not need anyone to testify about human nature. He himself understood it well (Jn 2,23-25). When the people saw the sign he had done, they said, "This is truly the Prophet, the one who is to come into the world." Since Jesus knew that they were going to come and carry him off to make him king, he withdrew again to the mountain alone (Jn 6,14-15). 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 6,70-71). Before the feast of Passover, Jesus knew that his hour had come to pass from this world to the Father. He loved his own in the world and he loved them to the end. The devil had already induced Judas, son of Simon the Iscariot, to hand him over. So, during supper, fully aware that the Father had put everything into his power and that he had come from God and was returning to God, he rose from supper and took off his outer garments. He took a towel and tied it around his waist. Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and dry them with the towel around his waist (Jn 13,1-5).*

*When the Pharisee who had invited him saw this he said to himself, "If this man were a prophet, he would know who and what sort of woman this is who is touching him, that she is a sinner." Jesus said to him in reply, "Simon, I have something to say to you." "Tell me, teacher," he said. "Two people were in debt to a certain creditor; one owed five hundred days' wages and the other owed fifty. Since they were unable to repay the debt, he forgave it for both. Which of them will love him more?" Simon said in reply, "The one, I suppose, whose larger debt was forgiven." He said to him, "You have judged rightly" (Lkc 7,39-43). They posed this question to him, "Teacher, we know that what you say and teach is correct, and you show no partiality, but teach the way of God in accordance with the truth. Is it lawful for us to pay tribute to Caesar or not?" Recognizing their craftiness he said to them, "Show me a denarius; whose image and name does it bear?" They replied, "Caesar's." So he said to them, "Then repay to Caesar what belongs to Caesar and to God what belongs to God." They were unable to trap him by something he might say before the people, and so amazed were they at his reply that they fell silent (Lk 20,21-26).*

Today Jesus must act with great prudence, intelligence and wisdom. This is why he draws on his side the people that is in the synagogue. He makes it clear to it that good can always be done, even on a Sabbath. There is no day when good cannot be done. Having attracted people on his side, he performs the great miracle, only by saying a word.

*On another Sabbath he went into the synagogue and taught, and there was a man there whose right hand was withered. The scribes and the Pharisees watched him closely to see if he would cure on the Sabbath so that they might discover a reason to accuse him. But he realized their intentions and said to the man with the withered hand, "Come up and stand before us." And he rose and stood there. Then Jesus said to them, "I ask you, is it lawful to do good on the Sabbath rather than to do evil, to save life rather than to destroy it?" Looking around at them all, he then said to him, "Stretch out your hand." He did so and his hand was restored. But they became enraged and discussed together what they might do to Jesus.*

To these Pharisees one could also object: "You say so many vain, useless, foolish, frivolous, often sinful words and do not sin, on Sabbaths. You consider yourselves right, even holy. Why if I, Jesus, say a Word of truth, justice and healing should I sin? If my Word is a sin, infinitely more sin is your word".

Mother of God, Angels and Saints, give us the holy discernment of good and evil.

## He called his disciples to himself, and from them he chose Twelve

## Col 2,6-15; Ps 144; Lk 6,12-19

### 10 SEPTEMBER

Who chooses the Twelve is the Father, in the Holy Spirit. In the Holy Spirit, Christ Jesus welcomes, guards, forms and prepares the Twelve so that tomorrow they may live his mission for the redemption and salvation of every man. Not another one, but his. The Twelve must be perennially given to Christ. They must let themselves be perennially given by the Father to Christ, in the Holy Spirit. Christ must give them to the world every day. Thus the twelve are a twofold gift: from the Father to Christ and from Christ to the world in the Holy Spirit. This truth is essence, substance, truth and light of the Gospel. Christ is a gift from the Father. The Twelve are of the Father. Christ is obedient to the Father and the Twelve obedient to Christ.

*This is my commandment: love one another as I love you. No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends. You are my friends if you do what I command you. I no longer call you slaves, because a slave does not know what his master is doing. I have called you friends, because I have told you everything I have heard from my Father. It was not you who chose me, but I who chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit that will remain, so that whatever you ask the Father in my name he may give you. This I command you: love one another. "If the world hates you, realize that it hated me first. If you belonged to the world, the world would love its own; but because you do not belong to the world, and I have chosen you out of the world, the world hates you (Jn 15,12-19). "I revealed your name to those whom you gave me out of the world. They belonged to you, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word. Now they know that everything you gave me is from you, because the words you gave to me I have given to them, and they accepted them and truly understood that I came from you, and they have believed that you sent me. I pray for them. I do not pray for the world but for the ones you have given me, because they are yours, and everything of mine is yours and everything of yours is mine, and I have been glorified in them. And now I will no longer be in the world, but they are in the world, while I am coming to you. Holy Father, keep them in your name that you have given me, so that they may be one just as we are (Jn 17,6-11).*

*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." But you do not believe, because you are not among my sheep. My sheep hear my voice; I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish. No one can take them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all, and no one can take them out of the Father's hand. The Father and I are one" (Jn 10,14-18.26-30).*

One thing the apostle must never do: give himself, from his will, to the world. He will never produce any fruit of eternal life. He will have to always be this twofold gift: of the Father to Christ and of Christ to the world. Either the disciple is a gift or he is not a disciple.

*In those days he departed to the mountain to pray, and he spent the night in prayer to God. When day came, he called his disciples to himself, and from them he chose Twelve, whom he also named apostles: Simon, whom he named Peter, and his brother Andrew, James, John, Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Thomas, James the son of Alphaeus, Simon who was called a Zealot, and Judas the son of James, and Judas Iscariot, who became a traitor. And he came down with them and stood on a stretch of level ground. A great crowd of his disciples and a large number of the people from all Judea and Jerusalem and the coastal region of Tyre and Sidon came to hear him and to be healed of their diseases; and even those who were tormented by unclean spirits were cured. Everyone in the crowd sought to touch him because power came forth from him and healed them all.*

All pastoral failures are the fruit of the absence of this double gift. We are not a gift from the Father to Christ. We are not a gift of Christ to the world. Being a gift is the essence of the Lord's Apostle. But he is only a gift in full obedience to the one who gives.

Mother of God, Angels and Saints arrange that every apostle of Jesus is eternally a gift.

**SEPTEMBER 2019**

**SECOND DECADE OF SEPTEMBER**

## But woe to you who are rich

## Lk 6,20-26

### 11 SEPTEMBER

Woe in the Scripture is a very strong invitation to conversion. If one does not return into the will of God, in his Law, truth, righteousness, mercy, love, holiness, woe will turn into woe in time, one is out of God’s blessing, and in death into eternal woe, namely in perdition, cursing, condemnation to the fire of hell forever.

*Woe to you who join house to house, who connect field with field, Till no room remains, and you are left to dwell alone in the midst of the land! (Is 5, 8). Woe to those who demand strong drink as soon as they rise in the morning, And linger into the night while wine inflames them! (Is 5, 11). Woe to those who tug at guilt with cords of perversity, and at sin as if with cart ropes! (Is 5, 18). Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil, who change darkness into light, and light into darkness, who change bitter into sweet, and sweet into bitter! (Is 5, 20). Woe to those who are wise in their own sight, and prudent in their own esteem! (Is 5, 21). Woe to the champions at drinking wine, the valiant at mixing strong drink! (Is 5, 22). Woe to those who enact unjust statutes and who write oppressive decrees (Is 10, 1). Woe to the rebellious children, says the LORD, Who carry out plans that are not mine, who weave webs that are not inspired by me, adding sin upon sin. (Is 30, 1). Shall not all these take up a taunt against him, satire and epigrams about him, to say: Woe to him who stores up what is not his: how long can it last! he loads himself down with debts. (Hab 2, 6). Woe to him who pursues evil gain for his household, setting his nest on high to escape the reach of misfortune! (Hab 2, 9). Woe to him who builds a city by bloodshed, and establishes a town by wickedness! (Hab 2, 12). Woe to you who give your neighbors a flood of your wrath to drink, and make them drunk, till their nakedness is seen! (Hab 2, 15). Woe to him who says to wood, "Awake!" to dumb stone, "Arise!" Can such a thing give oracles? See, it is overlaid with gold and silver, but there is no life breath in it. (Hab 2, 19).*

When the Lord pronounces his woe, we urgently need immediate conversion. Without conversion, He cannot bestow his grace, his truth, his Holy Spirit, his beatitude and man walks toward the eternal death. Woe to those who are rich and satisfied and who rejoice is in view of the eternal salvation that is strongly in danger. It must never be seen in view of the poor. The heavenly Father will care of those who are poor, who are hungry, who are now weeping. If they remain in the Word, the Father will be their Providence and will give everything abundantly. The Gospel is not socialism.

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

The Gospel is not a treatise of sociality, but a supernatural vision of life in each of its moment and in every condition in which it is placed. One does not ask the rich to act to suit the poor, for the poor is asked to remain poor, rather to make themselves poor in spirit. The Father, if they are in his Word, will bless them with all blessings. Theys are in his Word if they are in the Commandments, in virtues, in the sacraments, in his Church. If they are in the vices, they are not in his Word, they are out of the law of faith. God can do nothing for them. He can invite them to conversion to be blessed, redeemed, saved by Him. The rich, since they are unrighteous regarding the use of the possessions of this world, are exposed to eternal perdition. If they want to be saved, they must necessarily enter the perfect righteousness. They must use the possessions of this earth as much as they need for the daily living, every other thing must be at disposal of the divine Providence. As long as they remain in unrighteousness, there will be no eternal salvation for them and not even blessing neither on earth nor in eternal centuries. Salvation and blessing are for the one who is in the Word. It is true for the poor and for the rich.

Mother of God, Angels, Saints, ensure that every man, rich or poor, may live in the Gospel.

## Do good to them, and lend expecting nothing back

## Col 3,12-17; Ps 150; Lk 6,27-38

### 12 SEPTEMBER

Between the teaching of the ancient masters of Israel and that of Lord Jesus there is an infinite and substantial difference. The difference is highly substantial because the ancient masters lack the model of true love, true charity and true mercy: Christ Crucified, rather they lack the Crucified God, the God stripped and humiliated, the God who gave us all his life, including his flesh and his blood as the true nourishment of eternal life. The incarnate God who took upon himself all the faults and punishments due to them and has atoned for all mankind nailed to a cross.

*"Through all your days, my son, keep the Lord in mind, and suppress every desire to sin or to break his commandments. Perform good works all the days of your life, and do not tread the paths of wrongdoing. For if you are steadfast in your service, your good works will bring success, not only to you, but also to all those who live uprightly. "Give alms from your possessions. Do not turn your face away from any of the poor, and God's face will not be turned away from you. Son, give alms in proportion to what you own. if you have but little, distribute even some of that. you will be storing up a goodly treasure for yourself against the day of adversity. Almsgiving frees one from death, and keeps one from going into the dark abode. Alms are a worthy offering in the sight of the Most High for all who give them. Therefore, my son, love your kinsmen. Do not be so proud hearted toward your kinsmen, the sons and daughters of your people, as to refuse to take a wife for yourself from among them. For in such arrogance there is ruin and great disorder. Likewise, in worthlessness there is decay and dire poverty, for worthlessness is the mother of famine. "Do not keep with you overnight the wages of any man who works for you, but pay him immediately. If you thus behave as God's servant, you will receive your reward. Keep a close watch on yourself, my son, in everything you do, and discipline yourself in all your conduct. Do to no one what you yourself dislike. Do not drink wine till you become drunk, nor let drunkenness accompany you on your way. "Give to the hungry some of your bread, and to the naked some of your clothing. Whatever you have left over, give away as alms; and do not begrudge the alms you give. So now, my son, keep in mind my commandments, and never let them be erased from your heart (Cf. Tb 4,1-21).*

The hermeneutical and exegetical key of the Gospel teaching is Jesus the Lord who is a gift of the Father for our salvation. God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son. God still today loves the world so much as to give for its salvation every son of adoption, in Christ, with Christ and for Christ. If the Christian does not see himself in Christ as a gift of the Father for salvation, never might he know the true love to which he is called by Christ Jesus. Every disciple of Jesus must be a living Christ today.

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

It is Christ Crucified the Gospel that the disciple must always read as a key to understanding the other Gospel. If the former Gospel is not read, the latter might never be understood and even lived. Christ Crucified is also the difference between every human love, every love of other religions and Christian love. Christ Crucified is taken away, every love is the same as every other love. Divine and eternal difference.

Mother of God, Angels and Saints, give to the Church and to the Christian Jesus Christ Crucified.

## You hypocrite! Remove the wooden beam from your eye first

## 1 Tm 1,1-2.1 2-14; Ps 15; Lk 6,39-42

### 13 SEPTEMBER

Hypocrite is the immoral who preaches morality. The selfish who shouts to people how to love. The idolater who invites to attend his temple, his church and his religion. The fool who teaches wisdom. He who transgresses every commandment and then throws himself against those who do not observe them. The impure person who tears his clothes on seeing others do things that are not perfectly holy. Hypocrite is the Christian who prides himself on the Gospel and his religion, but disobeying every Word of Jesus Christ. Hypocrisy is the instrument by which Satan deceives men so that thus he can lead them more easily and confidently into his jaws of fire and eternal perdition. Nothing is more detrimental to religion when it is led, conducted and taught by the hypocrites.

*When you give alms, do not blow a trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets to win the praise of others. Amen, I say to you, they have received their reward (Mt 6, 2). When you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, who love to stand and pray in the synagogues and on street corners so that others may see them. Amen, I say to you, they have received their reward (Mt 6, 5). When you fast, do not look gloomy like the hypocrites. They neglect their appearance, so that they may appear to others to be fasting. Amen, I say to you, they have received their reward (Mt 6, 16). You hypocrite, remove the wooden beam from your eye first; then you will see clearly to remove the splinter from your brother's eye (Mt 7, 5). Hypocrites, well did Isaiah prophesy about you when he said (Mt 15, 7). Knowing their malice, Jesus said, "Why are you testing me, you hypocrites? (Mt 22, 18). 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 (Mt 23, 13). 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 (Mt 23, 15).*

*Even so, on the outside you appear righteous, but inside you are filled with hypocrisy and evildoing (Mt 23, 28). Knowing their hypocrisy he said to them, "Why are you testing me? Bring me a denarius to look at" (Mk 12, 15). Meanwhile, so many people were crowding together that they were trampling one another underfoot. He began to speak, first to his disciples, "Beware of the leaven - that is, the hypocrisy - of the Pharisees (Lk 12, 1). And the rest of the Jews (also) acted hypocritically along with him, with the result that even Barnabas was carried away by their hypocrisy (Gal 2, 13). What difference does it make, as long as in every way, whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is being proclaimed? And in that I rejoice. Indeed I shall continue to rejoice (Phil 1, 18) through the hypocrisy of liars with branded consciences (1Tm 4, 2). But the wisdom from above is first of all pure, then peaceable, gentle, compliant, full of mercy and good fruits, without inconstancy or insincerity (Jm 3, 17). Rid yourselves of all malice and all deceit, insincerity, envy, and all slander (1Pt 2, 1).*

Jesus wants that those who are his disciples guide others towards the purity of faith, charity and hope, with their life entirely placed in the Gospel. While they live the whole Gospel, if in the Holy Spirit they believe that it is fruitful to say a word of correction, however, made with so much love, let it be done, otherwise they go on with perfect exemplarity. An example teaches more than a thousand words.

*And he told them a parable, "Can a blind person guide a blind person? Will not both fall into a pit? No disciple is superior to the teacher; but when fully trained, every disciple will be like his teacher. Why do you notice the splinter in your brother's eye, but do not perceive the wooden beam in your own? How can you say to your brother, 'Brother, let me remove that splinter in your eye,' when you do not even notice the wooden beam in your own eye? You hypocrite! Remove the wooden beam from your eye first; then you will see clearly to remove the splinter in your brother's eye.*

No one can be a teacher for others, if he is not the first teacher for himself; he is a teacher for himself if he is guided and moved, like Jesus, always by the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit acts as a Master to the disciple, the disciple instructed by the divine Master acts as the teacher of his brothers, but always by the Holy Spirit. The hypocrite is a teacher of others, but not of himself. But can an immoral person teach morality?

Mother of God, Angels and Saints arrange that that no disciple of Jesus lives on hypocrisy.

## That the world might be saved through him

## Nm 21,4b-9 opp. Phil 2,6-11; Ps 77; Jn 3,13-17

### 14 SEPTEMBER

The truth is in differences. If differences escape us, even the truth escapes us and everything is eventually taught in error or in confusion. Between the figures of the Old Testament and Lord Jesus, that gives them all fulfilment, differences must always be grasped starting from Christ. Figures are for orientation only. They are not the truth.

*From Mount Hor they set out on the Red Sea road, to by-pass the land of Edom. But with their patience worn out by the journey, the people complained against God and Moses, "Why have you brought us up from Egypt to die in this desert, where there is no food or water? We are disgusted with this wretched food!" In punishment the Lord sent among the people saraph serpents, which bit the people so that many of them died. Then the people came to Moses and said, "We have sinned in complaining against the Lord and you. Pray the Lord to take the serpents from us." So Moses prayed for the people, and the Lord said to Moses, "Make a saraph and mount it on a pole, and if anyone who has been bitten looks at it, he will recover." Moses accordingly made a bronze serpent and mounted it on a pole, and whenever anyone who had been bitten by a serpent looked at the bronze serpent, he recovered (Num 21,4-9).*

The biblical episode of the bronze serpent reveals to us three truths: the people does not believe in the ways indicated by God to reach the Promised Land and murmurs against him and against Moses. Without the Lord's guidance, the people enters a process of death. There is no life without listening to his voice. Out of the Word the poisonous snakes bite and one dies. There are no human remedies. It is necessary for God to give his remedy. What is the Lord's remedy? Faith in his Word. Whoever looks at the snake, he heals. Who does not look at it dies. Let us observe the differences with Jesus. Every man is already in death, because he is bitten by the ancient serpent with the sin of the origins and with personal sins. Man asks for a remedy. It is God who gives it to him immediately after sin. This remedy is Christ Jesus. Jesus must not be looked only as a remedy raised on the cross. We must believe in every word of his. One enters his Word, believing and obeying it, he immerses himself in the waters of Baptism - in fact the first truth announced to Nicodemus is Baptism – he becomes one life with Him, never might the serpent bite the body of Christ and those who are in it with faith in his Word. Another antidote against snake bites is the body and blood of Jesus given to us as the body and blood of eternal life. Whoever eats me will live for me. But if we do not believe in Christ Crucified, the only antidote against the bites of the devil, we do not make our daily obedience of his Word, not only do we remain in death, we fall into an even harder and heavier death, because we have not believed in Only Begotten Son of the Father. The grace of life had been given to us. We rejected it. The responsibility is all ours. Neither the Father nor Christ the Lord can be called responsible for death.

*No one has gone up to heaven except the one who has come down from heaven, the Son of Man. And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the desert, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, so that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life." For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him might not perish but might have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through him.*

God sent his Only Son, not to condemn the world, but for its salvation. He did not send him as a judge. He did not come for the final judgment. He sent him to preach the year of grace, that is, the Father's will to remit to man any debt contracted with him. However, remission is conditioned to faith in Christ and in every Word that has come out of his mouth. It is conditioned by the rebirth of water and the Holy Spirit and also by remaining in his body for all the days of his life. If man refuses the Word, refuses baptism and refuses to be an invisible and visible body of Christ, there is no salvation for him, not because Christ condemns him, but because he is the one that excludes himself from the path of life. He is already in death. The choice to go into life, observing the conditions posed by the Father, belongs only to him.

Mother of God, Angels and Saints, make us of true faith in every Word of Christ Jesus.

## His father came out and pleaded with him

## Ex 32,7-11.13-14; Ps 50; 1Tm 1,12-17; Lk 15,1-32

### 15 SEPTEMBER

In our most holy faith the Father is the only one that wants reconciliation with him and of the brothers with one another. How can reconciliation take place? Whoever abandoned the house of his Word must return to it. He is ready to welcome and to celebrate with those who return repented, recognizing and confessing that only in his Word there is life. The brothers, being sons of the same Father, must imitate the Father in his love. If the Father forgives, children must also forgive. If a child offers himself as a holocaust of reconciliation, the other children must also offer themselves as victims of reconciliation. When there is no reconciliation among the brothers it is a sign that a sick relationship with the Father is lived. If the relationship with the Father is sound, even with the brothers it will be sound.

*The tax collectors and sinners were all drawing near to listen to him, but the Pharisees and scribes began to complain, saying, "This man welcomes sinners and eats with them." So to them he addressed this parable. "What man among you having a hundred sheep and losing one of them would not leave the ninety-nine in the desert and go after the lost one until he finds it? And when he does find it, he sets it on his shoulders with great joy and, upon his arrival home, he calls together his friends and neighbours and says to them, 'Rejoice with me because I have found my lost sheep.' I tell you, in just the same way there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous people who have no need of repentance. "Or what woman having ten coins and losing one would not light a lamp and sweep the house, searching carefully until she finds it? And when she does find it, she calls together her friends and neighbours and says to them, 'Rejoice with me because I have found the coin that I lost.' In just the same way, I tell you, there will be rejoicing among the angels of God over one sinner who repents." Then he said, "A man had two sons, and the younger son said to his father, 'Father, give me the share of your estate that should come to me.' So the father divided the property between them. After a few days, the younger son collected all his belongings and set off to a distant country where he squandered his inheritance on a life of dissipation. When he had freely spent everything, a severe famine struck that country, and he found himself in dire need. So he hired himself out to one of the local citizens who sent him to his farm to tend the swine. And he longed to eat his fill of the pods on which the swine fed, but nobody gave him any. Coming to his senses he thought, 'How many of my father's hired workers have more than enough food to eat, but here am I, dying from hunger. I shall get up and go to my father and I shall say to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I no longer deserve to be called your son; treat me as you would treat one of your hired workers."' So he got up and went back to his father.*

*While he was still a long way off, his father caught sight of him, and was filled with compassion. He ran to his son, embraced him and kissed him. His son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you; I no longer deserve to be called your son.' But his father ordered his servants, 'Quickly bring the finest robe and put it on him; put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. Take the fattened calf and slaughter it. Then let us celebrate with a feast, because this son of mine was dead, and has come to life again; he was lost, and has been found.' Then the celebration began. Now the older son had been out in the field and, on his way back, as he neared the house, he heard the sound of music and dancing. He called one of the servants and asked what this might mean. The servant said to him, 'Your brother has returned and your father has slaughtered the fattened calf because he has him back safe and sound.' He became angry, and when he refused to enter the house, his father came out and pleaded with him. He said to his father in reply, 'Look, all these years I served you and not once did I disobey your orders; yet you never gave me even a young goat to feast on with my friends. But when your son returns who swallowed up your property with prostitutes, for him you slaughter the fattened calf.' He said to him, 'My son, you are here with me always; everything I have is yours. But now we must celebrate and rejoice, because your brother was dead and has come to life again; he was lost and has been found.'"*

Not only did the Father come out to meet his son who was returning to the house of his Word, but, for this return to take place, he handed his only-begotten Son over to death on the cross. The Son has given the Holy Spirit of conviction, of conversion, of sanctification and of fidelity. Who lives according to purity of faith in this love of the Father and of the Son, he too will let himself be made a sacrifice of love for the conversion of his many brothers who are not yet in the house of the Word. If we are not in this love of the Father and of the Son, the brothers will always be strangers to us.

Mother of God, Angels and Saints ensure that we live according to truth in the love of our God.

## For he loves our nation

## 1 Tm 2,1-8; Ps 27; Lk 7,1-10

### 16 SEPTEMBER

In Scripture the first man who prayed to the Lord, putting forward the reasons for his request, is Abraham. God cannot say a Word that then he does not keep. But neither can he act in a way that is different from his nature. If He says, being Omnipotent, He can and must keep the Word. If He acts in history, he must always act with justice.

*Sometime after these events, this word of the Lord came to Abram in a vision: "Fear not, Abram! I am your shield; I will make your reward very great." But Abram said, "O Lord God, what good will your gifts be, if I keep on being childless and have as my heir the steward of my house, Eliezer?" Abram continued, "See, you have given me no offspring, and so one of my servants will be my heir." Then the word of the Lord came to him: "No, that one shall not be your heir; your own issue shall be your heir." He took him outside and said: "Look up at the sky and count the stars, if you can. Just so," he added, "shall your descendants be." Abram put his faith in the Lord, who credited it to him as an act of righteousness (Gen 15,1-6).*

*Then Abraham drew nearer to him and said: "Will you sweep away the innocent with the guilty? Suppose there were fifty innocent people in the city; would you wipe out the place, rather than spare it for the sake of the fifty innocent people within it? Far be it from you to do such a thing, to make the innocent die with the guilty, so that the innocent and the guilty would be treated alike! Should not the judge of all the world act with justice?" The Lord replied, "If I find fifty innocent people in the city of Sodom, I will spare the whole place for their sake." Abraham spoke up again: "See how I am presuming to speak to my Lord, though I am but dust and ashes! What if there are five less than fifty innocent people? Will you destroy the whole city because of those five?" "I will not destroy it," he answered, "if I find forty-five there." But Abraham persisted, saying, "What if only forty are found there?" He replied, "I will forebear doing it for the sake of the forty." Then he said, "Let not my Lord grow impatient if I go on. What if only thirty are found there?" He replied, "I will forebear doing it if I can find but thirty there." Still he went on, "Since I have thus dared to speak to my Lord, what if there are no more than twenty?" "I will not destroy it," he answered, "for the sake of the twenty." But he still persisted: "Please, let not my Lord grow angry if I speak up this last time. What if there are at least ten there?" "For the sake of those ten," he replied, "I will not destroy it" (Gen 18,23-32).*

Giving motivations to God is appealing to the truth of his nature, against which he might never act. Never might God work without justice and never might he not keep the given Word. The same is true for Jesus. Giving him motivations is obliging him to perform the miracle, because even he might never act against his nature and against his Gospel. If he has promised who loves that an overflowing measure will be poured into his womb, might he ever deny the miracle to a man who loves the Jews and has also built them the synagogue? Jesus must love this man. He must do the miracle to him. He cannot but listen to his prayer. If he did not listen to it, he would be a bad Master instantly. He teaches true love and then it is He who does not love.

*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." And Jesus went with them, but when he was only a short distance from the house, the centurion sent friends to tell him, "Lord, do not trouble yourself, for I am not worthy to have you enter under my roof. Therefore, I did not consider myself worthy to come to you; but say the word and let my servant be healed. For I too am a person subject to authority, with soldiers subject to me. And I say to one, 'Go,' and he goes; and to another, 'Come here,' and he comes; and to my slave, 'Do this,' and he does it." When Jesus heard this he was amazed at him and, turning, said to the crowd following him, "I tell you, not even in Israel have I found such faith." When the messengers returned to the house, they found the slave in good health.*

The centurion reveals the truth of Christ Jesus. He is a person from the Word that can command every existing being of creation. The command does not require his presence. He commands and everything happens. Jesus is extremely high. He is very small.

Mother of God, Angels and Saints arrange that we always confess the very pure truth of Jesus.

## “Young man, I tell you, arise!”

## Lk 7,11-17

### 17 SEPTEMBER

Let us take a nail by the largest size and approach it the fire. One cannot pierce tick wood with it. It is not burning enough. The more the nail is heated and the more it manages to penetrate the wood if it is thrust into it. Eliajah is iron in fire, but he is not fire. He needs a great work to rise the son of the widow who hosted him. However, being well-heated, finally the son is given to his mother again.

*Some time later the son of the mistress of the house fell sick, and his sickness grew more severe until he stopped breathing. So she said to Elijah, "Why have you done this to me, O man of God? Have you come to me to call attention to my guilt and to kill my son?" "Give me your son," Elijah said to her. Taking him from her lap, he carried him to the upper room where he was staying, and laid him on his own bed. He called out to the LORD: "O LORD, my God, will you afflict even the widow with whom I am staying by killing her son?" Then he stretched himself out upon the child three times and called out to the LORD: "O LORD, my God, let the life breath return to the body of this child." The LORD heard the prayer of Elijah; the life breath returned to the child's body and he revived. Taking the child, Elijah brought him down into the house from the upper room and gave him to his mother. "See!" Elijah said to her, "your son is alive." "Now indeed I know that you you are a man of God," the woman replied to Elijah. "The word of the LORD comes truly from your mouth."(1Kg 17,17-24).*

Gehazi is just approached to the fire of the prophet, but he can do nothing to make the child’s life come back. Elisha is heated, but less than Elijah. His work is superior to that requested to Elijah. The more one is heated in the divine fire and the more one can perform the things of God. One leaves the fire, no work of the Lord might be done.

*"Gird your loins," Elisha said to Gehazi, "take my staff with you and be off; if you meet anyone, do not greet him, and if anyone greets you, do not answer. Lay my staff upon the boy." But the boy's mother cried out: "As the LORD lives and as you yourself live, I will not release you." So he started to go back with her. Meanwhile, Gehazi had gone on ahead and had laid the staff upon the boy, but there was no sound or sign of life. He returned to meet Elisha and informed him that the boy had not awakened. When Elisha reached the house, he found the boy lying dead. He went in, closed the door on them both, and prayed to the LORD. Then he lay upon the child on the bed, placing his mouth upon the child's mouth, his eyes upon the eyes, and his hands upon the hands. As Elisha stretched himself over the child, the body became warm. He arose, paced up and down the room, and then once more lay down upon the boy, who now sneezed seven times and opened his eyes. Elisha summoned Gehazi and said, "Call the Shunammite." She came at his call, and Elisha said to her, "Take your son." She came in and fell at his feet in gratitude; then she took her son and left the room. (2Kg 4,29-37).*

Being of true divine nature, Jesus is fore of eternal love and of divine compassion like his Father and the Holy Spirit and as human nature He participates the nature of fire that God is in a very special way. He participates not by nature. The human nature has its properties and the divine nature its ones. He participates by most pure obedience. The Father, through the perfect obedience, grants the human nature to enjoy his fire. Indeed, as soon as He touches the child, he rises. This event must reveal that Jesus is infinitively beyond Elijah and beyond Elisha and through the other miracles infinitively more beyond Moses, as well. A little detail reveals the greatness of Jesus.

*Soon afterward he journeyed to a city called Nain, and his disciples and a large crowd accompanied him. As he drew near to the gate of the city, a man who had died was being carried out, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow. A large crowd from the city was with her. When the Lord saw her, he was moved with pity for her and said to her, "Do not weep." He stepped forward and touched the coffin; at this the bearers halted, and he said,* *"Young man, I tell you, arise!" The dead man sat up and began to speak, and Jesus gave him to his mother. Fear seized them all, and they glorified God, exclaiming, "A great prophet has arisen in our midst," and "God has visited his people." This report about him spread through the whole of Judea and in all the surrounding region.*

Those who are present see what happened and acknowledge that a great prophet is among them. They confess that God visited his people. From the sign to faith!

Mother of God, Angels, Saints, let every Christian give the world signs of truth and of faith.

## We played the flute for you, but you did not dance

## Lk 7,31-35

### 18 SEPTEMBER

Evil attacking the soul and the spirit of the man when he is in sin are numerous: sloth, indolence, spiritual deafness, indifference, apathy, suffocation of truth. With such evil, it is as if man wore an impenetrable armour before every grace of the Lord. The greatest evil is when one goes beyond the limits of evil, one sins against the Holy Spirit and one cannot turn back. One is on earth, but it is as if we were already damned. If sin cannot be forgiven, one is already with his own feet on the trap door of hell. One only waits for death to come so as to precipitate inside. In the examination of conscience that the Holy Spirit makes to the Bishop of Asia, one of them lives in the great lukewarmth. The Lord says that He will spit him out of his mouth. Heavy, but true word, even though no one believes in this statement of God today.

*"To the angel of the church in Laodicea, write this: " 'The Amen, the faithful and true witness, the source of God's creation, says this: "I know your works; I know that you are neither cold nor hot. I wish you were either cold or hot. So, because you are lukewarm, neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of my mouth. For you say, 'I am rich and affluent and have no need of anything,' and yet do not realize that you are wretched, pitiable, poor, blind, and naked. I advise you to buy from me gold refined by fire so that you may be rich, and white garments to put on so that your shameful nakedness may not be exposed, and buy ointment to smear on your eyes so that you may see. Those whom I love, I reprove and chastise. Be earnest, therefore, and repent. " '"Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, (then) I will enter his house and dine with him, and he with me. I will give the victor the right to sit with me on my throne, as I myself first won the victory and sit with my Father on his throne. '"Whoever has ears ought to hear what the Spirit says to the churches."' (Rev 3,14-22).*

As they grow, sloth and indifference turn themselves into fighting against truth. One overcomes the level of muteness, deafness, blindness. There is a real fighting against the Lord. The scribes, the Pharisees, the chief priests, the elders of people, the Sadducees, in order not to be annoyed by their miserable spiritual status, accuse Jesus with every falsity, lie and calumny, even declaring Him a friend of Beelzebul. Finally they accuse Him of blasphemy for He had declared, under oath, to be the Son of man, according to the prophecy of Daniel. When one falls into sin, we know from where one begins, but no one knows when one ends. For many people end is in eternal perdition. This is why Jesus prompts his disciples so that they strive to always remain on the narrow way of his Word, without never leaving it. Leaving is easy. It is enough to listen to a temptation. Returning on the way is hard. This is why we are all obliged to beware. If we fall, will we also stand up? No one knows it. That’s also why the Scripture invites man not to add sin to sin, for he does not know if he is forgiven of the first one. One urges attention.

*"Then to what shall I compare the people of this generation? What are they like? They are like children who sit in the marketplace and call to one another,* *'We played the flute for you, but you did not dance. We sang a dirge, but you did not weep.' For John the Baptist came neither eating food nor drinking wine, and you said, 'He is possessed by a demon.' The Son of Man came eating and drinking and you said, 'Look, he is a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners.' But wisdom is vindicated by all her children."*

John the Baptist is an austere person. Not to be converted to his word, they say he is possessed. Can one be converted to someone who speaks in the name of the demon? Never. Jesus comes, He is a person among people, He shares their life, but always in the highest holiness. What do they say about Him? That He is a glutton and a drunkard. A friend of sinners and of tax collector. Can one be converted to a friend of sinners and of tax collectors? Never. If then He is also a person who works in the name of Beelzebul, can one be converted to someone who goes with Satan? Never. A calumny, a lie, a falsity is enough and the conscience can continue in its evil. However, are calumnies, falsities and lies not fruit of evil? Even one little falsity is enough to reveal that we are not in truth.

Mother of God, Angels, Saints, let us never fall into sin. It is the beginning of perdition.

## A sinful woman in the city

## 1Tm 4,12-16; Ps 11 0; Lk 7,36-50

### 19 SEPTEMBER

In order for the Holy Spirit to be able to save a soul, he always needs another soul who in his name, with his light and truth, with his grace and benevolence and with his wisdom and intelligence, accepts it and manifests it the beauty of the Kingdom of God, which is conversion, forgiveness of sins, reconciliation, justification and sanctification. Never might the Holy Spirit send a soul from a soul that works for perdition and not for salvation, for darkness and not for the light, for injustice and not for justice, for immorality and not for morality, for the word of men and not for the Word of God. The spiritual and pastoral failures do not arise from the bad will of the men of the world, but from the impossibility of the Holy Spirit to find souls who work for him, according to his motion, his inspiration and his true salvation. If the sinful woman had been sent by the Holy Spirit to Simon or to the other guests, she would have been welcomed as a prostitute and left as a prostitute. By Pharisees and scribes there was no reception for these women. One day the Holy Spirit sends a publican to the temple to at least ask God for forgiveness. There is a Pharisee there, not only he does not approach him, he judges, despises and condemns him.

*He then addressed this parable to those who were convinced of their own righteousness and despised everyone else. "Two people went up to the temple area to pray; one was a Pharisee and the other was a tax collector. The Pharisee took up his position and spoke this prayer to himself, 'O God, I thank you that I am not like the rest of humanity - greedy, dishonest, adulterous - or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week, and I pay tithes on my whole income.' But the tax collector stood off at a distance and would not even raise his eyes to heaven but beat his breast and prayed, 'O God, be merciful to me a sinner.' I tell you, the latter went home justified, not the former; for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and the one who humbles himself will be exalted" (Lk 18,9-14).*

Let us not speak of the eldest son in the parable of the father and his two sons. The younger returns, repented and humiliated. The older, true image and figure of the Pharisee, does not even want to enter the house to greet his brother, despite his father's heartfelt invitation. The true pastoral is made by the Holy Spirit and by a soul that lets itself be moved by Him and led by Him. Jesus is lets himself be moved by the Spirit even in the smallest details of salvation. This is the truth of Christ: a soul always guided by the Spirit of the Lord.

*A Pharisee invited him to dine with him, and he entered the Pharisee's house and reclined at table. Now there was a sinful woman in the city who learned that he was at table in the house of the Pharisee. Bringing an alabaster flask of ointment, she stood behind him at his feet weeping and began to bathe his feet with her tears. Then she wiped them with her hair, kissed them, and anointed them with the ointment. When the Pharisee who had invited him saw this he said to himself, "If this man were a prophet, he would know who and what sort of woman this is who is touching him, that she is a sinner." Jesus said to him in reply, "Simon, I have something to say to you." "Tell me, teacher," he said. "Two people were in debt to a certain creditor; one owed five hundred days' wages and the other owed fifty. Since they were unable to repay the debt, he forgave it for both. Which of them will love him more?" Simon said in reply, "The one, I suppose, whose larger debt was forgiven." He said to him, "You have judged rightly." Then he turned to the woman and said to Simon, "Do you see this woman? When I entered your house, you did not give me water for my feet, but she has bathed them with her tears and wiped them with her hair. You did not give me a kiss, but she has not ceased kissing my feet since the time I entered. You did not anoint my head with oil, but she anointed my feet with ointment. So I tell you, her many sins have been forgiven; hence, she has shown great love. But the one to whom little is forgiven, loves little." He said to her, "Your sins are forgiven." The others at table said to themselves, "Who is this who even forgives sins?" But he said to the woman, "Your faith has saved you; go in peace."*

Let everyone ask the question to his heart and give the right answer: can the Holy Spirit send me a soul so that I can open it the kingdom of God? Or am I they like the hypocritical Pharisees who closed the kingdom for themselves and also for every other man? If the Holy Spirit cannot move me, He will send me no soul and my nets will always be empty.

Mother of God, Angels and Saints arrange that every Christian is a soul at the service of the Spirit.

## Preaching and proclaiming the good news of the kingdom

## 1Tm 6,2c-12; Ps 48; Lk 8,1-3

### 20 SEPTEMBER

The mission of Jesus consisted of four essential actions: travelling, teaching, announcing and healing. He travelled the region, taught in synagogues, announced the Gospel of the kingdom, healed all sorts of diseases and infirmities among the people. Alongside these four actions addressed to all, there was the very special one of the formation of his Apostles. All these actions receive the seal of truth with his death on the Cross and with the sending of the Holy Spirit. Without death there would not have been the sending of the Holy Spirit and without the Holy Spirit his mission would be only a prophetic mission, but not a messianic one. Without the Spirit there is no new birth of the man.

*He went around all of Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom, and curing every disease and illness among the people. His fame spread to all of Syria, and they brought to him all who were sick with various diseases and racked with pain, those who were possessed, lunatics, and paralytics, and he cured them. And great crowds from Galilee, the Decapolis, Jerusalem, and Judea, and from beyond the Jordan followed him (Mt 4,23-25).*

*Jesus answered and said to him, "Amen, amen, I say to you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above." Nicodemus said to him, "How can a person once grown old be born again? Surely he cannot re-enter his mother's womb and be born again, can he?" Jesus answered, "Amen, amen, I say to you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit. What is born of flesh is flesh and what is born of spirit is spirit. Do not be amazed that I told you, 'You must be born from above.' The wind blows where it wills, and you can hear the sound it makes, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes; so it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit" (Jn 3,3-8).* *The one who comes from above is above all. The one who is of the earth is earthly and speaks of earthly things. But the one who comes from heaven (is above all). He testifies to what he has seen and heard, but no one accepts his testimony. Whoever does accept his testimony certifies that God is trustworthy. For the one whom God sent speaks the words of God. He does not ration his gift of the Spirit. The Father loves the Son and has given everything over to him. Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but whoever disobeys the Son will not see life, but the wrath of God remains upon him (Jn 3,31-36).*

*Now since it was preparation day, in order that the bodies might not remain on the cross on the Sabbath, for the Sabbath day of that week was a solemn one, the Jews asked Pilate that their legs be broken and they be taken down. So the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first and then of the other one who was crucified with Jesus. But when they came to Jesus and saw that he was already dead, they did not break his legs, but one soldier thrust his lance into his side, and immediately blood and water flowed out. An eyewitness has testified, and his testimony is true; he knows that he is speaking the truth, so that you also may (come to) believe. For this happened so that the scripture passage might be fulfilled: "Not a bone of it will be broken." And again another passage says: "They will look upon him whom they have pierced" (Jn 19,31-37).*

The Apostles live the same mission as Christ, but in different ways. They must go, make disciples, baptize and teach. They can do this if they are filled with the Holy Spirit. Without the Spirit of the Lord they are not missionary souls, they are souls of the world and the Spirit cannot send to the Spirit. He is not in the missionaries.

*Then Jesus approached and said to them, "All power in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age" (Mt 28,18-20).*

Another truth that springs from the mission of Jesus reveals to us that the Father has never left Christ Jesus to himself for his daily sustenance. His care is great. Jesus takes care of the things that concern the Father. The Father takes care of his body. Jesus works for the kingdom of the Father. The Father works for the things necessary for his Son.

*Afterward he journeyed from one town and village to another, preaching and proclaiming the good news of the kingdom of God. Accompanying him were the Twelve and some women who had been cured of evil spirits and infirmities, Mary, called Magdalene, from whom seven demons had gone out, Joanna, the wife of Herod's steward Chuza, Susanna, and many others who provided for them out of their resources.*

Mother of God, Angels and Saints arrange that we believe in the mission entrusted to us.

**SEPTEMBER 2019**

**THIRD DECADE OF SEPTEMBER**

## Sat with Jesus and his disciples

## Eph 4,1-7.11-13; Ps 18; Mt 9,9-13

### 21 SEPTEMBER

Jesus is the Suffering Servant of Isaiah. He came to take upon himself all the sins of the world and expiate them in his body on the cross. This truth is announced by St. Paul in the Letter to the Colossians. Jesus removed the document that testified against us.

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

Why does Jesus not take advantage of the comfort of the prophet Isaiah, as he addresses the prophet Hosea? If Jesus had cited Isaiah, his speech would have been incomprehensible. The Song of Isaiah was at that time difficult to interpret. While the prophecy drawn from Hosea reveals an absolute truth not linked to the person. What good is it to offer the Lord a fat victim on his altar, if his children then, are not loved according to his law of love? What is the use of being called children of the religion of God if they do not help one another to know the Lord? Who is the Lord? He who from the first day of creation has always gone to seek the sinful man. But even from the days of Abraham he always went to seek his people to lead it to his love, to his truth, to his freedom and to his peace. Never might a child act differently than the Father. The Father seeks sinners and forgives them, even the child must seek them and forgive them.

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

Not only does Jesus seek sinners, he transforms them into his missionaries, creates them seekers of all the sinners of this world to offer them reconciliation, forgiveness and the peace of their God and Lord, Creator and Father. When is a Christian true Christian? When he too, according to the sacramental mission received, seeks sinners to bring them to Christ.

*As Jesus passed on from there, he saw a man named Matthew sitting at the customs post. He said to him, "Follow me." And he got up and followed him. While he was at table in his house, many tax collectors and sinners came and sat with Jesus and his disciples. The Pharisees saw this and said to his disciples, "Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?" He heard this and said, "Those who are well do not need a physician, but the sick do. Go and learn the meaning of the words, 'I desire mercy, not sacrifice.' I did not come to call the righteous but sinners."*

From Christ Jesus we must learn to transform every sinner into a great missionary of Lord Jesus. Never might this happen if we as Pharisees and scribes shut ourselves up in our false justice and despise sin. Loving is seeking.

Mother of God, Angels and Saints, make us true missionaries. Help us to seek in order to transform.

## The master commended that dishonest steward

## Am 8,4-7; Ps 112; 1 Tm 2,1-8; Lk 16,1-13

### 22 SEPTEMBER

Life is a present in which the future is being prepared, it is time that must generate blessed eternity, it is the present moment from which the after is inevitably conceived. It is enough to get distracted for a single moment and the after becomes irretrievably compromised. It is enough to surrender to a single sin and often we no longer get out of the path of death. Youth is wasted and adulthood remains disoriented forever. The present must be experienced as the greatest grace of God. Saint Paul shouted to the Corinthians that it is the favourable moment of salvation. Grace passes. The heart opens, it enters. We close it, nobody knows if there will be a return. This is the reason why we must live the present paying great attention not to waste any grace of the Lord. Does a young man know today that delivering twenty precious years of his life to formation is the greatest grace of God? But if they are God's grace can they be squandered in alcohol, drugs, idleness, vices, amusements, moral and spiritual disorder? A grace wasted by us often becomes also wasted grace for the others.

Jesus, the Father's gift of salvation to his people, was a grace wasted for many sons of Israel. This grace not accepted in conversion and faith was also the cause of the destruction of the Holy City. We are not responsible for grace only for us, but for the whole world. A young man spoils the grace of formation. With his science he could have invented something excellent for the whole of humanity. He has wasted grace, the earth lacks a grace of salvation. Wasted grace always impoverishes the world. Even Paradise is impoverished. A wasted grace can open the doors of hell. The Master praises the dishonest administrator. He does not praise him for his dishonesty, but because he knows how to use cunning for his future. It is not a matter of the eternal future, but about the future over time. If all the "evildoers" of the earth put so much acumen to procure their eternal future, as they put to give vain well-being to their future in time, God should widen the spaces of his Paradise. And yet for futility, vanity and what does not last, cunning and shrewdness are used well, while for what it is worth, lasts and is eternal good it is as if man were without intelligence and devoid of all wisdom. Foolishness produces an eternal evil.

*Then he also said to his disciples, "A rich man had a steward who was reported to him for squandering his property. He summoned him and said, 'What is this I hear about you? Prepare a full account of your stewardship, because you can no longer be my steward.' The steward said to himself, 'What shall I do, now that my master is taking the position of steward away from me? I am not strong enough to dig and I am ashamed to beg. I know what I shall do so that, when I am removed from the stewardship, they may welcome me into their homes.' He called in his master's debtors one by one. To the first he said, 'How much do you owe my master?' He replied, 'One hundred measures of olive oil.' He said to him, 'Here is your promissory note. Sit down and quickly write one for fifty.' Then to another he said, 'And you, how much do you owe?' He replied, 'One hundred kors of wheat.' He said to him, 'Here is your promissory note; write one for eighty.' And the master commended that dishonest steward for acting prudently. "For the children of this world are more prudent in dealing with their own generation than are the children of light. I tell you, make friends for yourselves with dishonest wealth, so that when it fails, you will be welcomed into eternal dwellings. The person who is trustworthy in very small matters is also trustworthy in great ones; and the person who is dishonest in very small matters is also dishonest in great ones. If, therefore, you are not trustworthy with dishonest wealth, who will trust you with true wealth? If you are not trustworthy with what belongs to another, who will give you what is yours? No servant can serve two masters. He will either hate one and love the other, or be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon."*

Every moment of our life is grace, because with it we can merit the blessed eternity of glory tomorrow. But if we, in our wickedness – it is of the wickedness and evilness of the heart turning the whole of revelation upside down - we say that Paradise is not the fruit of the present, because it is a gift that God makes to all, then the truth of the present like a tree that must mature eternal fruits, falls. It is the triumph of foolishness and ignorance.

Mother of God, Angels and Saints arrange that no moment of the present is wasted.

## So that those who enter may see the light

## Esr 1,1-6; Ps 125; Lk 8,16-18

### 23 SEPTEMBER

The Christian is the light of Christ Jesus in the world in the same way that Christ Jesus in his mortal body was the light of the Father. As Jesus illuminated the world of the purest truth of the Father with his works and his words, so the Christian must illuminate every man with the purest light of Lord Jesus. The light comes neither from the Scriptures nor from the Sacraments for the world. The Christian draws light in the Holy Spirit and grace and strength in the sacraments, burns like the light of Christ, manifests Christ and reveals him.

*So then, my beloved, obedient as you have always been, not only when I am present but all the more now when I am absent, work out your salvation with fear and trembling. For God is the one who, for his good purpose, works in you both to desire and to work. Do everything without grumbling or questioning, that you may be blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine like lights in the world, as you hold on to the word of life, so that my boast for the day of Christ may be that I did not run in vain or labour in vain. But, even if I am poured out as a libation upon the sacrificial service of your faith, I rejoice and share my joy with all of you. In the same way you also should rejoice and share your joy with me (Phil 2,12-18).*

*But you are "a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people of his own, so that you may announce the praises" of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. Once you were "no people" but now you are God's people; you "had not received mercy" but now you have received mercy. Beloved, I urge you as aliens and sojourners to keep away from worldly desires that wage war against the soul. Maintain good conduct among the Gentiles, so that if they speak of you as evildoers, they may observe your good works and glorify God on the day of visitation. Be subject to every human institution for the Lord's sake, whether it be to the king as supreme or to governors as sent by him for the punishment of evildoers and the approval of those who do good. For it is the will of God that by doing good you may silence the ignorance of foolish people. Be free, yet without using freedom as a pretext for evil, but as slaves of God. Give honour to all, love the community, fear God, honour the king (1Pt 2,9-17).*

*On the contrary, in everything we commend ourselves as ministers of God, through much endurance, in afflictions, hardships, constraints, beatings, imprisonments, riots, labours, vigils, fasts; by purity, knowledge, patience, kindness, in a holy spirit, in unfeigned love, in truthful speech, in the power of God; with weapons of righteousness at the right and at the left; through glory and dishonour, insult and praise. We are treated as deceivers and yet are truthful; as unrecognized and yet acknowledged; as dying and behold we live; as chastised and yet not put to death; as sorrowful yet always rejoicing; as poor yet enriching many; as having nothing and yet possessing all things (2Cor 6,4-10).*

Christ is the eternal light of the Father. He was hidden in eternity. He was made flesh. He became visible light in history. Now he is back with his glorious body. He remained on earth with his body, which is the Church. Through this body he must manifest all the light of the Father. He manifests it in every corner of the earth, through every one of his disciples. But if the disciple returns to darkness, he does double damage. He loses himself in eternal darkness. He does not help the world to leave darkness and enter the light. If the Christian is not the light of Christ, never might the world know the splendour of light.

*"No one who lights a lamp conceals it with a vessel or sets it under a bed; rather, he places it on a lamp stand so that those who enter may see the light. For there is nothing hidden that will not become visible, and nothing secret that will not be known and come to light. Take care, then, how you hear. To anyone who has, more will be given, and from the one who has not, even what he seems to have will be taken away."*

The Christian is called to be the light of charity, faith and hope; light of fortitude, justice, temperance and prudence; light of meekness and humility; light of compliance; light that always walks with its eyes turned towards eternal goods. Always light of truth.

Mother of God, Angels and Saints arrange that the Christian never returns to darkness and falsehood.

## Those who hear the word of God and act on it

## Lk 8,19-21

### 24 SEPTEMBER

A man is blessed when he walks in the Law of the Lord. When one is in the Word, one dwells in it, the beatitude becomes every blessing. The blessing on earth is turned into eternal blessing at the end of times. One dwells with God in his house.

*Blessed is the one who does not walk in step with the wicked or stand in the way that sinners take or sit in the company of mockers, but whose delight is in the law of the Lord, and who meditates on his law day and night. That person is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither— whatever they do prospers. Not so the wicked! They are like chaff that the wind blows away. Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the assembly of the righteous. For the Lord watches over the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked leads to destruction. (Psal 1,1-8).*

The beatitude of the Virgin Mary does not arise from her immaculate conceiving, from being full of grace either and not even from the presence of God in her life. Instead, it arises from her faith. Mary is blessed for She has believed in the Word of the Lord. This beatitude was already proclaimed by Elizabeth. Mary is blessed for She has believed in the fulfilment of the Word of the Lord. She is blessed for her obedience.

*During those days Mary set out and traveled 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).*

If the disciple of Jesus wants to be blessed and turn the beatitude into eternal blessing, he must be anchored to the obedience to the Word of the Gospel, in accordance with the truth that always comes from the Holy Spirit. The Christian obeys the Word obeying the Holy Spirit. Neither Word without the Spirit, nor the Spirit without the Word.

*Therefore, gird up the loins of your mind, live soberly, and set your hopes completely on the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ. Like obedient children, do not act in compliance with the desires of your former ignorance but, as he who called you is holy, be holy yourselves in every aspect of your conduct, for it is written, "Be holy because I (am) holy." Now if you invoke as Father him who judges impartially according to each one's works, conduct yourselves with reverence during the time of your sojourning, realizing that you were ransomed from your futile conduct, handed on by your ancestors, not with perishable things like silver or gold but with the precious blood of Christ as of a spotless unblemished lamb. He was known before the foundation of the world but revealed in the final time for you, who through him believe in God who raised him from the dead and gave him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God. Since you have purified yourselves by obedience to the truth for sincere mutual love, love one another intensely from a (pure) heart. You have been born anew, not from perishable but from imperishable seed, through the living and abiding word of God (1Pt 1,13-23).*

Jesus owes full obedience to the Father. Between the Father and Him, not one can interfere, neither the Mother, nor a blood relative. Whoever wants to be his brother and his Mother must respect his obedience to the Father. They must never distract Him from it, not even for one moment. To love Christ is to love in his obedience.

*Then his mother and his brothers came to him but were unable to join him because of the crowd. He was told, "Your mother and your brothers are standing outside and they wish to see you." He said to them in reply, "My mother and my brothers are* *those who hear the word of God and act on it."*

We know that the Virgin Mary has never interfered in the relation between Jesus and the Father. Even in this obedience, She has been most perfect. She is true Mother of Jesus.

Mother of God, Angels, Saints, make us obedient, always, in all things, to the Word of God.

## And he sent them to proclaim the kingdom of God

## Esr 9,5-9; C Tb 13,2.3-4a.4bed.5.8; Lk 9,1-6

### 25 SEPTEMBER

The Lord's people awaits that every promise made by God to the Fathers is fulfilled. Jesus came to announce to the children of Israel and to the whole world that every Word of God is being fulfilled in Him. But he is one, only one. It is impossible for him to go to every son of Israel and bring him the good news of the kingdom. Guided by the wisdom of the Holy Spirit and illuminated by the eternal light of the Father, comforted by his advice, always in the Holy Spirit, he multiplies his strengths. He gives the Apostles some supernatural powers and sends them to the lost sheep of the house of Israel to announce the kingdom and to manifest its fruits. With the Word they proclaim that the kingdom of God is present in their midst. With works or miracles they make it visible. Jesus reveals the kingdom with the Word and manifests it in its visibility with the works and so also the Apostles. They are true Word and work of Christ Jesus in the people.

What is said for Jesus and for the Apostles applies to every disciple of the Lord. Everyone, in relation to the sacrament received, must, with different responsibility, announce and visibly manifest the kingdom of God. The best way to reveal the kingdom is a life completely interwoven with obedience to the Gospel. If the Christian wants the whole world to know the beauty of the kingdom of God, it is only necessary for him to live word by word the whole Sermon on the Mount. The life of Jesus is all in that speech. Even on the cross, he never came out of it. He lived it in fullness of truth and justice, of holiness and love, of forgiveness and prayer before the whole world. The centurion saw the kingdom of God on the face of Christ and publicly attested to it. He confessed that Jesus was the true son of God. Obedience to the Gospel really makes the kingdom of God in the world visible. If the body of the Christian does not show the kingdom, his words are vain. There is talk of a non-existent kingdom. Of a distant thing. While the kingdom is near. If it is not near, it is not the true kingdom of God. In the mission to the world Jesus does not give his disciples any supernatural power with regard to miracles. The kingdom becomes visible, living the disciples the whole Gospel and teaching the world that every Word of Jesus can be lived. It can be lived not on theological or scriptural foundations, but because He lives it.

*Then Jesus approached and said to them, "All power in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age" (Mt 28,18-20).*

The greatest miracle performed by the Christian is his life perfectly in conformity with the Word of the Gospel, according to the truth that, from time to time, the Holy Spirit dictates to the heart. A Christian who lives the Gospel is the greatest miracle of Christ Jesus, of the Father and of the Holy Spirit in history. No miracle is greater than this.

*He summoned the Twelve and gave them power and authority over all demons and to cure diseases, and he sent them to proclaim the kingdom of God and to heal (the sick). He said to them, "Take nothing for the journey, neither walking stick, nor sack, nor food, nor money, and let no one take a second tunic. Whatever house you enter, stay there and leave from there. And as for those who do not welcome you, when you leave that town, shake the dust from your feet in testimony against them." Then they set out and went from village to village proclaiming the good news and curing diseases everywhere.*

When the Gospel is not lived, it is not even announced. You can repeat a Gospel sentence, but repeating a sentence is not announcement. The announcement is the fruit of the heart, of the soul, of the spirit and of the body. The Word is eaten, it is transformed into our body, soul and spirit. From our heart the Word of the announcement can come out in the same way than the water and the blood of our eternal redemption came out of the heart of Christ. The missionary crisis of our days finds in the non lived Gospel its first cause. Living the Gospel is the true work of the missionary of Christ Jesus. He produces works of salvation and redemption to the extent that he lives the Gospel and announces it.

Mother of God, Angels and Saints arrange that every missionary always lives the whole Gospel.

## He was greatly perplexed

## Ag 1,1-8; Ps 149; Lk 9,7-9

### 26 SEPTEMBER

The Book of Sirach reveals admirably the human ontological structure. He is together from God, from himself, from others and from the earth. He is made of present to be done, but leaning towards the future. He is made and must be done. He does not possess science, he must acquire it. He does not know the truth, he must learn it. Man is an unfinished mystery whose eternal completeness depends on his will. It is as if man were God of himself, but always dependent on his Creator, Lord and God. Mystery in the mystery.

*The Lord from the earth created man, and in his own image he made him. Limited days of life he gives him and makes him return to earth again. He endows man with a strength of his own, and with power over all things else on earth. He puts the fear of him in all flesh, and gives him rule over beasts and birds. He forms men's tongues and eyes and ears, and imparts to them an understanding heart. With wisdom and knowledge he fills them; good and evil he shows them. He looks with favour upon their hearts, and shows them his glorious works, That they may describe the wonders of his deeds and praise his holy name. He has set before them knowledge, a law of life as their inheritance; An everlasting covenant he has made with them, his commandments he has revealed to them. His majestic glory their eyes beheld, his glorious voice their ears heard. He says to them, "Avoid all evil"; each of them he gives precepts about his fellow men. Their ways are ever known to him, they cannot be hidden from his eyes.*

*Over every nation he places a ruler, but the Lord’s own portion is Israel. All their actions are clear as the sun to him, his eyes are ever upon their ways. Their wickedness cannot be hidden from him; all of their sins are before the Lord. A man's goodness God cherishes like a signet ring, a man's virtue, like the apple of his eye. Later he will rise up and repay them, and requite each one of them as they deserve. But to the penitent he provides a way back, he encourages those who are losing hope!*

*Return to the Lord and give up sin, pray to him and make your offenses few. Turn again to the Most High and away from sin, hate intensely what he loathes; Who in the nether world can glorify the Most High in place of the living who offer their praise? No more can the dead give praise than those who have never lived; they glorify the Lord who are alive and well. How great the mercy of the Lord, his forgiveness of those who return to him! The like cannot be found in men, for not immortal is any son of man. Is anything brighter than the sun? Yet it can be eclipsed. How obscure then the thoughts of flesh and blood! God watches over the hosts of highest heaven, while all men are dust and ashes (Sir 17,1-32).*

King Herod does not know what to think of Christ Jesus. He does not know because he was not formed in the knowledge of the Scriptures. Nor does he let himself be illuminated by the Holy Spirit. He lives in the sin of adultery. What science of the Highest might he have? None. Sin closes the doors of wisdom and science according to God. It deprives man of all supernatural intelligence. This is also the ontological structure of man. Who wants to know God and his works must stop sinning. Whoever sins does not know.

*Herod the tetrarch heard about all that was happening, and he was greatly perplexed because some were saying, "John has been raised from the dead"; others were saying, "Elijah has appeared"; still others, "One of the ancient prophets has arisen." But Herod said, "John I beheaded. Who then is this about whom I hear such things?" And he kept trying to see him.*

Herod might also see Jesus, but never might he know him in his truth. In fact, when he saw him he did not have the science of the truth of Christ the Lord. He saw him in the guise of a magician. Since he was not heard in his requests, he sent him back to Pilate.

Mother of God, Angels and Saints, make us pure at heart. We will see God and his eternal truth.

## Who do the crowds say that I am?

## Ag 1,15b-2,9; Ps 42; Lk 9,18-22

### 27 SEPTEMBER

The crowds will always have a summary, superficial knowledge of Christ Jesus, composed of some truth and a lot of falsehood, few sound principles and many false ones. The knowledge of the crowd is subject to every influence. It is sufficient that a false prophet shouts something and the multitude is orientated differently from what it thought a moment before. In addition, a hammering propaganda suffices and truths once considered immutable become falsehoods to be thrown to the winds or be brought to the Gehenna dump. Today, Christian crowds have lost the most precious thing of Christ Jesus: the truth of his Word, the wisdom of his Gospel, the intelligence of his Cross, the knowledge of his gift of grace, the power and strength of his resurrection. As if this were not enough, they renounced the uniqueness of his Mediation, the necessity of his Church, the indispensable transformation of nature that takes place in the sacraments, the hierarchical structure and every supernatural element of being disciples of the Lord. But the crowd is like that. It must always be propped up. Satan knows the structure of crowds and knows how to maneuver them at will, for the purposes of perdition and not of salvation. We know how they are capable of sudden change of orientation. The day of Jesus' entry into Jerusalem they were all cheering the king who comes for the salvation of his people. A few days later everyone was shouting "Let him be crucified". This is the consistency of the crowd. Let him know whoever bases his hopes on it that, like it hosannas, so it also crucifies. But the false prophets know how to manipulate it and they do it well. Working with falsehood is infinitely different than working with the truth. Jesus always works for the truth with the truth of his Father. He does not seek consensus. He can't look for it. Consent is renunciation to the truth of salvation.

Through Peter, the Apostles know who Jesus is: the Christ of God. They know that Jesus is the Christ of the Lord, but they do not know who the true Christ of God is. Unfortunately this also happens. We know who God, Christ Jesus, the Holy Spirit, the Church, the Sacraments, Eternal Life, Paradise, the Gospel and Scripture, are. Unfortunately today we have lost the truth of God, of Christ Jesus, of the Holy Spirit, of the Church, of the Sacraments of Eternal Life, of Paradise, of the Gospel and of Scripture. We are also losing the truth of man and nature, of the present and the future, of the body and the spirit. We have also lost the truth of the soul. It is urgent to return to the truth. Life is truth. Without truth everything is drawn into death. But whoever must bring everything back to the truth is precisely the Apostle of Christ Jesus. If He loses the truth, the whole world loses the truth. Jesus says that if salt loses its flavour, it serves no other purpose than to be thrown and trampled by men. If the minister of light becomes darkness, it will be great darkness.

*Once when Jesus was praying in solitude, and the disciples were with him, he asked them, "Who do the crowds say that I am?" They said in reply, "John the Baptist; others, Elijah; still others, 'One of the ancient prophets has arisen.'" Then he said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" Peter said in reply, "The Messiah of God." He rebuked them and directed them not to tell this to anyone. He said, "The Son of Man must suffer greatly and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed and on the third day be raised."*

Jesus knows the Christ of God in fullness of truth. The truth is not the one contained in his heart, but that which the Father, in the Holy Spirit, handed over to the prophetic Scriptures. Whoever wants to know Christ must always be in spiritual communion with Christ. He obeys his Word and dwells in his Gospel, the Holy Spirit comes, takes possession of our heart and in it day after day he puts the truth of Christ Jesus, in which every truth is contained. If there is detachment from the Word, there is separation from Jesus, the Spirit cannot guide us from truth to truth, falsehood envelops our heart and we will speak of Christ without the truth of Christ. Without the truth of Christ every other truth will be transformed into falsehood. The process of transformation is inevitable. If the Christian wants to know the truth of Christ, he must live in the Gospel.

Mother of God, Angels and Saints arrange that the truth of Christ shines in the hearts for the Christian.

## But they did not understand this saying

## Zc 2,5-9.14-15a; C Jer 31,10-13; Lk 9,43b-45

### 28 SEPTEMBER

Obedience requires no understanding. It must always be given to the Lord, in listening to his Word, voice, Law and Precepts. While obeying or disobeying, the fruits of both obedience and disobedience are gathered and it is understood why the Commandment was given. Hell and Paradise are eternal but different understanding. The damned will know why it was a good thing to obey. Those of Paradise will know why it was right not to disobey. For those who obey there is also an additional prize. The more one obeys, the more the Lord grants the gift of knowledge of Him and of understanding many things. Those who want to know God must remain in the Word of Jesus for all the days of their lives.

*"If you love me, you will keep my commandments. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate to be with you always, the Spirit of truth, which the world cannot accept, because it neither sees nor knows it. But you know it, because it remains with you, and will be in you. I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you. In a little while the world will no longer see me, but you will see me, because I live and you will live. On that day you will realize that I am in my Father and you are in me and I in you. Whoever has my commandments and observes them is the one who loves me. And whoever loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and reveal myself to him." Judas, not the Iscariot, said to him, "Master, (then) what happened that you will reveal yourself to us and not to the world?" Jesus answered and said to him, "Whoever loves me will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our dwelling with him. Whoever does not love me does not keep my words; yet the word you hear is not mine but that of the Father who sent me. "I have told you this while I am with you. The Advocate, the holy Spirit that the Father will send in my name - he will teach you everything and remind you of all that (I) told you (Jn 14,5-26).*

*The works of God are all of them good; in its own time every need is supplied. At his word the waters become still as in a flask; he had but to speak and the reservoirs were made. He has but to command and his will is done; nothing can limit his achievement. The works of all mankind are present to him; not a thing escapes his eye. His gaze spans all the ages; to him there is nothing unexpected. No cause then to say: "What is the purpose of this?" Everything is chosen to satisfy a need (Sir 39,16-21).*

The things of the Lord are difficult to understand, they go beyond our mind; can we understand what Christ says? Jesus does not ask his people to understand what is not immediately understandable, but to believe in his Word. Thinking that we can understand the mystery hidden in every Word of Jesus is impossible even for the Angels of God. Only the Holy Spirit possesses the Church of science and of knowledge of the full truth of Christ the Lord. However, obedience must always be given, because faith is listening and not understanding. If Jesus wants to give signs of credibility on the certainty and truth of his Person, they are welcome, otherwise his Word is heard, one believes in it and obeys it. Listening, faith and obedience. This is the only possible relationship with the Word of Jesus and his Will.

*While they were all amazed at his every deed, he said to his disciples, "Pay attention to what I am telling you. The Son of Man is to be handed over to men." But they did not understand this saying; its meaning was hidden from them so that they should not understand it, and they were afraid to ask him about this saying.*

What must every disciple of Jesus welcome today? Faith in his passion, death and resurrection. Not only must he accept this Word, he must give it the adhesion of mind and heart. He will have to set his life on it. For this it is necessary to remove from the mind and from the heart all other thoughts, ideas, desires, false doctrines and things of the kind. Saint Paul says that before the sublimity of Christ he considered rubbish all his previous life. We must consider everything that does not conform to the Word of Jesus to be junk. A Messiah in the human manner is garbage. An non-Crucified Messiah is garbage. I do not understand. I believe.

Mother of God, Angels and Saints arrange that we believe in every Word of Jesus. It is life for us.

## Between us and you a great chasm is established

## Am 6,1a.4-7; Ps 145; 1Tm 6,11-16; Lk 16,19-31

### 29 SEPTEMBER

Before Jesus had the bad rich speak from hell to manifest to us what the anguish and sufferings of eternal hell are, the Lord God had already caused the damned to speak to reveal to us the depth, the breadth and the width of their foolishness and ignorance. For a moment of time, indeed for a second of time given to wickedness, they are condemned to the torments of hell that are eternal. Every fool is invited to think, reflect and decide to pay all obedience to the Word of God.

*Then shall the just one with great assurance confront his oppressors who set at nought his labours. Seeing this, they shall be shaken with dreadful fear, and amazed at the unlooked-for salvation. They shall say among themselves, rueful and groaning through anguish of spirit: "This is he whom once we held as a laughingstock and as a type for mockery, fools that we were! His life we accounted madness, and his death dishonoured. See how he is accounted among the sons of God; how his lot is with the saints! We, then, have strayed from the way of truth, and the light of justice did not shine for us, and the sun did not rise for us. We had our fill of the ways of mischief and of ruin; we journeyed through impassable deserts, but the way of the Lord we knew not. What did our pride avail us? What have wealth and its boastfulness afforded us? All of them passed like a shadow and like a fleeting rumour; Like a ship traversing the heaving water, of which, when it has passed, no trace can be found, no path of its keel in the waves. Or like a bird flying through the air; no evidence of its course is to be found - But the fluid air, lashed by the beat of pinions, and cleft by the rushing force Of speeding wings, is traversed: and afterward no mark of passage can be found in it. Or as, when an arrow has been shot at a mark, the parted air straightway flows together again so that none discerns the way it went through - Even so we, once born, abruptly came to nought and held no sign of virtue to display, but were consumed in our wickedness." Yes, the hope of the wicked is like thistledown borne on the wind, and like fine, tempest-driven foam; Like smoke scattered by the wind, and like the passing memory of the nomad camping for a single day. But the just live forever, and in the Lord is their recompense, and the thought of them is with the Most High (Wis 5,1-15).*

The bravado, strength as a rule of justice, death inflicted on the just do not produce any life for those who let their hearts be conquered. Does perhaps wealth experienced as an end in itself benefit or save us? Not even this way of leading our lives produces salvation. Wealth lived in a selfish way is theft of God's goods bestowed to us, so that we could comfort with them to all the poor of the earth. We have defrauded the Lord. There is no place for us in his holy skies.

*"There was a rich man who dressed in purple garments and fine linen and dined sumptuously each day. And lying at his door was a poor man named Lazarus, covered with sores, who would gladly have eaten his fill of the scraps that fell from the rich man's table. Dogs even used to come and lick his sores. When the poor man died, he was carried away by angels to the bosom of Abraham. The rich man also died and was buried, and from the netherworld, where he was in torment, he raised his eyes and saw Abraham far off and Lazarus at his side. And he cried out, 'Father Abraham, have pity on me. Send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, for I am suffering torment in these flames.' Abraham replied, 'My child, remember that you received what was good during your lifetime while Lazarus likewise received what was bad; but now he is comforted here, whereas you are tormented. Moreover, between us and you a great chasm is established to prevent anyone from crossing who might wish to go from our side to yours or from your side to ours.' He said, 'Then I beg you, father, send him to my father's house, for I have five brothers, so that he may warn them, lest they too come to this place of torment.' But Abraham replied, 'They have Moses and the prophets. Let them listen to them.' He said, 'Oh no, father Abraham, but if someone from the dead goes to them, they will repent.' Then Abraham said, 'If they will not listen to Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded if someone should rise from the dead.'"*

Today not only do we not believe in these voices that speak to us from the place of their perdition. You can't even believe in it. We have established, lying and deceiving, that hell is empty and that Paradise is given to all. Eternal lie.

Mother of God, Angels and Saints arrange that no Christian tells lies to others.

## Whoever is not against you is for you

## Zc 8,1-8; Ps 101; Lk 9,46,50

### 30 SEPTEMBER

Whoever carries out the works of the flesh is by nature against others. Whoever transgresses the Commandments by will is against God and against the neighbour. Whoever cultivates the seven deadly sins will always be against others. Never whoever hates the Word of God and of Christ Jesus might love his brothers. He lacks the source of love which is the grace and truth of God. Saint Paul to Christians who walk according to the flesh says that at least they do not slaughter each other. Today these works lead to endless murders, the fruit of infinite evilness and wickedness. Crucified Christ was abandoned and we are ruled by Satan.

*For you were called for freedom, brothers. But do not use this freedom as an opportunity for the flesh; rather, serve one another through love. For the whole law is fulfilled in one statement, namely, "You shall love your neighbour as yourself." But if you go on biting and devouring one another, beware that you are not consumed by one another. I say, then: live by the Spirit and you will certainly not gratify the desire of the flesh. For the flesh has desires against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; these are opposed to each other, so that you may not do what you want. But if you are guided by the Spirit, you are not under the law. Now the works of the flesh are obvious: immorality, impurity, licentiousness, idolatry, sorcery, hatreds, rivalry, jealousy, outbursts of fury, acts of selfishness, dissensions, factions, occasions of envy, drinking bouts, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. In contrast, the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law. Now those who belong to Christ (Jesus) have crucified their flesh with its passions and desires. If we live in the Spirit, let us also follow the Spirit. Let us not be conceited, provoking one another, envious of one another (Gal 5,13-26).*

Whoever is in the Word of the Lord, in his Commandments and in the Gospel of Christ Jesus is always for his brothers. Not only does he not harm others, he does not even resist the wicked. Like Jesus, he also lets himself be deprived of the body and letting him be nailed to the cross.

*"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 (Mt 5,38-42).*

If we get out of faith relationships and enter the vast world of human relations, one might not even be with us, not choose our faith or our community. He could decide to stay in his world. Jesus says: if a person does not hinder you, does not set himself against you, lets you work in peace and also gives you a glass of water, this person is not against you, he is for you and helps you in your mission. Why stop him from helping you? Everyone needs the help of others. Everybody. Jesus also needed to be received. He always lets himself be welcomed.

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

Tomorrow the Apostles will have to go out into the world to preach the good news. Some will welcome them according to faith, believing in the Word and letting themselves be baptized. Others will fight them. Still others will remain in their religious belief, but not for this reason will they hurt them. They will also be able to do them good. Can they accept it? Certainly. They need every good thing. Good always comes from God. If a man drives out demons in the name of Christ, he is certainly not against Christ, he is for Him. He is helping him so that many others can believe. Preventing good is a sin.

Mother of God, Angels and Saints give us wisdom and discernment to know the good.