**Whose sandal strap I am not worthy to untie**

**SATURDAY JANUARY 2 (Jn 1,19-28)**

John the Baptist is purely and simply a man, even if full of Elijah’s Spirit of truth and fortitude from the womb of his Mother: *But the angel said to him, "Do not be afraid, Zechariah, because your prayer has been heard. Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you shall name him John. And you will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth, for he will be great in the sight of (the) Lord. He will drink neither wine nor strong drink. He will be filled with the holy Spirit even from his mother's womb, and he will turn many of the children of Israel to the Lord their God.He will go before him in the spirit and power of Elijah to turn the hearts of fathers toward children and the disobedient to the understanding of the righteous, to prepare a people fit for the Lord." (Lk 1,13-17).* He is a creature, even if made by God for a unique mission of its kind. Jesus will talk about him: *Amen, I say to you, among those born of women there has been none greater than John the Baptist; yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he. (Mt 11,11).* Instead, Jesus is God always and forever.Not only is he God, he is the God through whom everything was made, every creature visible and invisible. Not only is He God, He is the life of creation and the life and light of men. He is the God who became flesh and came to dwell among us full of grace and truth. This is its eternal, divine, incorruptible, immortal essence. He is the Creator and Lord of every man. With the Incarnation he is the Savior and Redeemer of humanity and creation. Everything was done for him in view of him, but also all redeemed by him in view of him*.* “*For in him  were created all things in heaven and on earth, the visible and the invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers; all things were created through him and for him. He is before all things, and in him all things hold together. He is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things he himself might be preeminent. For in him all the fullness  was pleased to dwell,and through him to reconcile all things for him, making peace by the blood of his cross (through him), whether those on earth or those in heaven.” (Col 1,16-20).* John sees in the Holy Spirit that Jesus is his God and his Lord, his Savior and Redeemer and for this reason he affirms that he is not worthy to untie the sandal straps. He is just a man. Jesus is his God.

*And this is the testimony of John. When the Jews from Jerusalem sent priests and Levites (to him) to ask him, "Who are you?" he admitted and did not deny it, but admitted, "I am not the Messiah." So they asked him, "What are you then? Are you Elijah?"  And he said, "I am not." "Are you the Prophet?" He answered, "No." So they said to him, "Who are you, so we can give an answer to those who sent us? What do you have to say for yourself?" He said: "I am 'the voice of one crying out in the desert, "Make straight the way of the Lord,"' as Isaiah the prophet said."Some Pharisees were also sent. They asked him, "Why then do you baptize if you are not the Messiah or Elijah or the Prophet?" John answered them, "I baptize with water;  but there is one among you whom you do not recognize, the one who is coming after me, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to untie."This happened in Bethany across the Jordan, where John was baptizing.*

Today it is the divine, eternal, immortal, spiritual essence of Christ Jesus that is no longer confessed, preached, taught. They are making of Him a Master like every other man on earth, a founder of religion like every other founder. It is the non-confession of the very pure truth of Jesus - True man and true God in the Person of the Only Begotten Son of the Father or of the Eternal Word incarnate for our redemption - that is generating so much confusion in the hearts. The non-confession of Christ’s truth drags even the very pure truth of his body, which is the Church, into confusion. If Christ is not the only Light of salvation and redemption, not even the Church, the body of Christ, is the only true light, in Christ through the Holy Spirit, of true salvation and redemption. This confusion leads to the proclamation of every human way of true salvation without any need for either Christ or the Church. We can also play with the truth, though the truth does not play with us; and for us the way of true salvation and redemption is lost. Confessing the truth of Christ is the most urgent thing to do today.

Mother of the Redemption, Angels and Saints, let us all confess the truth of Christ.