**Grieved at their hardness of heart**

**WEDNESDAY JANUARY 20 (Mk 3, 1-6)**

Several times in the Scripture it spoken of the Lord’s repentance. The behaviour of men is so far from his thinking that he feels great sorrow - we speak in the human way - for the choices made by him, even if they are holy and just. Here are some examples of repentance: *“When the LORD saw how great was man's wickedness on earth, and how no desire that his heart conceived was ever anything but evil, he regretted that he had made man on the earth, and his heart was grieved. So the LORD said: "I will wipe out from the earth the men whom I have created, and not only the men, but also the beasts and the creeping things and the birds of the air, for I am sorry that I made them." But Noah found favor with the LORD.” (Gen 6,5-8). “Then the LORD spoke to Samuel: "I regret having made Saul king, for he has turned from me and has not kept my command." At this Samuel grew angry and cried out to the LORD all night.” (1Sam 15,10-11). “Samuel departed for Ramah, while Saul went up to his home in Gibeah of Saul. Never again, as long as he lived, did Samuel see Saul. Yet he grieved over Saul, because the LORD regretted having made him king of Israel.” (1Sam 15,34-35). “Gad then went to David to inform him. He asked: "Do you want a three years' famine to come upon your land, or to flee from your enemy three months while he pursues you, or to have a three days' pestilence in your land? Now consider and decide what I must reply to him who sent me." David answered Gad: "I am in very serious difficulty. Let us fall by the hand of God, for he is most merciful; but let me not fall by the hand of man." Thus David chose the pestilence. Now it was the time of the wheat harvest when the plague broke out among the people. (The LORD then sent a pestilence over Israel from morning until the time appointed, and seventy thousand of the people from Dan to Beer-sheba died.) But when the angel stretched forth his hand toward Jerusalem to destroy it, the LORD regretted the calamity and said to the angel causing the destruction among the people, "Enough now! Stay your hand." The angel of the LORD was then standing at the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite.” (2Sam 24,13-16).* Between the thought of God and the behaviour of man there is an uncommunicable distance. It is as if God said: *"I was wrong to do what I did."* So great is the disappointment caused in his heart. The same thing can be said for Jesus. He who is holiness, truth, love, mercy, grace, justice, true and supreme good, finds himself in front of hearts so hardened that they cannot even see the simplest and most immediate good. Not only do they not see the good, but they also persist in wickedness and evil doing and would like Jesus to think according to their heart and not according to the heart of the Father. He is saddened by such harshness. He finds himself in front of people with a heart of stone, unable to see and do good.

*Again he entered the synagogue. There was a man there who had a withered hand. They watched him closely to see if he would cure him on the sabbath so that they might accuse him. He said to the man with the withered hand, "Come up here before us." Then he said to them, "Is it lawful to do good on the sabbath rather than to do evil, to save life rather than to destroy it?" But they remained silent. Looking around at them with anger and grieved at their hardness of heart, he said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." He stretched it out and his hand was restored. The Pharisees went out and immediately took counsel with the Herodians against him to put him to death.*

It is right to ask why a heart created in the image of the Creator’s heart, called to the fulfilment of the greatest good, surrenders itself to evil in every form. Why not only does men not do good, but also do what they do not want to receive? When man falls into sin it is as though he falls into a furnace of liquefied iron. Either he immediately comes out of the furnace, or as soon as the iron has consolidated, man too becomes hard and cold like iron. However, he becomes a bad, wicked iron. The more he falls into sin, the more the wickedness and the evil increase. This growth in evil reaches the point of sin against the Holy Spirit, from which there is no turning back. When this limit is exceeded, one lives in wickedness and also dies. Pharisees, scribes, Herodians are people who do not love the Lord and who does not love the Lord neither is able to love man. They want to make Jesus die because he does good. Jesus sees this wickedness and is saddened. It is as though he was wondering: how can is creature go so far?

Mother of the Redemption, Angels, Saints, make us with a pure heart and upright conscience.