**We have no king but Caesar**

**GOOD FRIDAY 2 APRIL (Jn 18,1-19.42)**

Today, before Pilate, the leaders of the Jews, by rejecting and denying their Messiah, do not reject and deny only Jesus. They reject God's Messiah, his Christ. They have no king but Caesar. Caesar is their Messiah. Not one of Abraham's sons. This statement marks the death of their faith and religion. In the whole history of salvation, from Abraham to this day, there is no darker moment. Truly, as Jesus says, this is the hour of darkness, also signified by the darkening of the sun which occurred at the moment of his death: *"And Jesus said to the chief priests and temple guards and elders who had come for him," Have you come out as against a robber, with swords and clubs? Day after day I was with you in the temple area, and you did not seize me; but this is your hour, the time for the power of darkness. " It was now about noon and darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon because of an eclipse of the sun. Then the veil of the temple was torn down the middle. Jesus cried out in a loud voice, "Father, into your hands I commend my spirit"; and when to he had said this he breathed His last. " (Lk 22, 52-53; 23, 44-46).*The choice of Caesar as their Messiah, their Christ, their King, shows how great is the force of evil in men who say they worship the living and true God, the Lord of all the earth, the Creator of the universe.

*Then Pilate took Jesus and had him scourged. And the soldiers wove a crown out of thorns and placed it on his head, and clothed him in a purple cloak, and they came to him and said, "Hail, King of the Jews!" And they struck him repeatedly. Once more Pilate went out and said to them, "Look, I am bringing him out to you, so that you may know that I find no guilt in him." So Jesus came out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple cloak. And he said to them, "Behold, the man!" When the chief priests and the guards saw him they cried out, "Crucify him, crucify him!" Pilate said to them, "Take him yourselves and crucify him. I find no guilt in him." The Jews answered, "We have a law, and according to that law he ought to die, because he made himself the Son of God." Now when Pilate heard this statement, he became even more afraid, and went back into the praetorium and said to Jesus, "Where are you from?" Jesus did not answer him. So Pilate said to him, "Do you not speak to me? Do you not know that I have power to release you and I have power to crucify you?" Jesus answered (him), "You would have no power over me if it had not been given to you from above. For this reason the one who handed me over to you has the greater sin." Consequently, Pilate tried to release him; but the Jews cried out, "If you release him, you are n o t a Friend of Caesar. Everyone who makes himself a king opposes Caesar." When Pilate heard these words he brought Jesus out and seated him on the judge's bench in the place called Stone Pavement, in Hebrew, Gabbatha. It was preparation day for Passover, and it was about noon. And he said to the Jews, "Behold, your king!" They cried out, "Take him away, take him away! Crucify him!" Pilate said to them, "Shall I crucify your king?" The chief priests answered, "We have no king but Caesar." Then he handed him over to them to be crucified.*

We are actually more sophisticated and subtle today. In very polite ways we have denied Christ as the Redeemer and Savior of humanity. We have declared Him useless to the salvation of man. With this grave sin of ours, we have deprived the world of the true Light, the eternal Light that became flesh to illuminate the path towards the true knowledge of the Father, of men and of every other existing reality, visible and invisible. This is Christian sin today. However, this sin also marks the beginning of the end of our religion, of our very pure faith. With the disappearance of Christ, who is the heart of all truth, the Truth dies. Humanity can only be built on falsehood and lies. The one who builds on lies is only Satan and his angels. It means that we, disciples of Jesus, are there or have already transformed ourselves into ministers of the prince of darkness. Now is it fair to ask: How long will this hour and this power of darkness last? The power of darkness is causing devastation and ruin in the hearts of even the little ones and the simple, of those who consecrated their lives to Christ Jesus as the one and only source of truth and life. We know that this hour will pass. It is our faith.

Mother of the Redemption, Angels, Saints, make us true disciples of the truth of Christ Jesus.