***And when he had said this, he said to him, "Follow me"***

**FRIDAY MAY 21 (Jn 21,15-19)**

Immediately before the passion, death, and resurrection of the Lord, in the Upper Room, before his capture, Jesus had prophesied to Peter that he would betray him three times: *“Then, after singing a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives. Then Jesus said to them, "This night all of you will have your faith in me shaken, for it is written: 'I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock will be dispersed'; but after I have been raised up, I shall go before you to Galilee. "Peter said to him in reply, "Though all may have their faith in you shaken, mine will never be." Jesus said to him, "Amen, I say to you, this very night before the cock crows, you will deny me three times." Peter said to him, "Even though I should have to die with you, I will not deny you. "And all the disciples spoke likewise." (Mt 26, 20-35).* In the Upper Room, Peter is sure of himself. He would never have denied the Lord. History then reveals what our strength, our conviction, our faith is. The whole story reveals about us: “*After arresting him they led him away and took him into the house of the high priest; Peter was following at a distance. They lit a fire in the middle of the courtyard and sat around it, and Peter sat down with them. When a maid saw him seated in the light, she looked intently at him and said, "This man too was with him." But he denied it saying, "Woman, I do not know him." A short while later someone else saw him and said, "You too are one of them"; but Peter answered, "My friend, I am not." About an hour later, still another insisted, "Assuredly, this man too was with him, for he also is a Galilean." But Peter said, "My friend, I do not know what you are talking about." Just as he was saying this, the cock crowed, and the Lord turned and looked at Peter; and Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said to him, "Before the cock crows today, you will deny me three times." He went out and began to weep bitterly." (Lk 22, 54-69).* What Jesus said was punctually accomplished on the same night, before the crowing of the cock. Here is what happens after the resurrection of Jesus, along the shores of the Sea of Galilee.

*When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon, son of John, do you love me more than these?" He said to him, "Yes, Lord, you know that I love you." He said to him, "Feed my lambs." He then said to him a second time, "Simon, son of John, do you love me?" He said to him, "Yes, Lord, you know that I love you." He said to him, "Tend my sheep." He said to him the third time, "Simon, son of John, do you love me?" Peter was distressed that he had said to him a third time, "Do you love me?" and he said to him, "Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you." (Jesus) said to him, "Feed my sheep. Amen, amen, I say to you, when you were younger, you used to dress yourself and go where you wanted; but when you grow old, you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will dress you and lead you where you do not want to go. "He said this signifying by what kind of death he would glorify God. And when he had said this, he said to him, "Follow me."*

After the threefold profession of love, Jesus reveals to Simon what death he would have glorified his Lord and God with. He then invites him to follow him. With this call, Jesus attests to his other Apostles that Simon Peter is now a new person. He trusts, and they too will have to trust. Simon can feed sheep and lambs. Never again will he deny his Master. Of course, the fall in the night of passion will help him to always remember that falling is easy. He must always keep in his heart that as he was forgiven and called by Jesus, he too will have to confirm his brothers tomorrow, when they fall. He will have to help them get up. These are the qualities required of every shepherd of the flock of Christ Jesus. He must always imitate his Master: *“ I myself will pasture my sheep; I myself will give them rest, says the Lord GOD. The lost I will seek out, the strayed I will bring back, the injured I will bind up, the sick I will heal (but the sleek and the strong I will destroy), shepherding them rightly. "(Ez 34, 15-16).*This can happen when love for Christ surpasses any other love. This is why Simon must love Jesus more than any of his other disciples. Since he has to feed sheep and lambs, he must have a love so great that it surpasses that of all sheep and all lambs. He will have to love the sheep even on the cross.

Mother of the Redemption, Angels, Saints, give us a great love for Christ the Lord.