**FRIDAY JUNE 25 XII WEEK O.T. [B]**

**When Jesus came down from the mountain, great crowds followed him. And then a leper approached, did him homage, and said, "Lord, if you wish, you can make me clean." He stretched out his hand, touched him, and said, "I will do it. Be made clean."**

**Leprosy is figure and image of sin. With a great difference. Leprosy is visible, sin is invisible. Here is another great difference. Against leprosy, one can defend himself by the distancing of the leper. Sin produces spiritual death for the entire humankind, that is one only body. Adam committed one only sin. He disobeyed his Lord. He chose death. He did not choose it only for his person, but for his entire progeny, namely the entire humankind.**

**Jesus heals the leper from his illness. A figure, this one, of the healing that Jesus has come to operate for the entire human genre, not only for the children of Abraham, but for all the children of Adam. Being true son of Adam, he can free all his brothers, namely every man, from sin.**

**In the Old Testament, too, sin was forgiven. Let us read in the Psalm: “Blessed is the one whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. “Blessed is the man against whom the Lord counts no iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no deceit. For when I kept silent, my bones wasted away through my groaning all day long. For day and night your hand was heavy upon me; my strength was dried up** **as by the heat of summer. Selah I acknowledged my sin to you, and I did not cover my iniquity; I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the Lord," and you forgave the iniquity of my sin. Selah Therefore let everyone who is godly offer prayer to you at a time when you may be found; surely in the rush of great waters, they shall not reach him. You are a hiding place for me; you preserve me from trouble; you surround me with shouts of deliverance. Selah I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will counsel you with my eye upon you. Be not like a horse or a mule, without understanding, which must be curbed with bit and bridle, or it will not stay near you. Many are the sorrows of the wicked, but steadfast love surrounds the one who trusts in the Lord. Be glad in the Lord, and rejoice, O righteous, and shout for joy, all you upright in heart!” (Psalm 32, 1-11)**

**But what is the great difference between the forgiveness given in the Old Testament and the forgiveness given in the New one? In the Old Testament, the Lord forgave the fault. Man, however, remained in his old nature. David knows this truth and asks the Lord that he creates a new heart, too: “Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love; according to your abundant mercy blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin! For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me. Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight, so that you may be justified in your words and blameless in your judgment. Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me. Behold, you delight in truth in the inward being, and you teach me wisdom in the secret heart.**

**Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. Let me hear joy and gladness; let the bones that you have broken rejoice. Hide your face from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities. Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right****spirit within me. Cast me not away from your presence, and take not your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and uphold me with a willing spirit. (cf. Psal 51, 1-14) One forgives the fault, but man remains in his old nature. Namely, he always remains son of Adam, son of the concupiscence that has generated the sin of his father in him, and also son of the instinct of the sin. He remains in this heavy slavery or heavy heritage.**

**With Christ Jesus, instead, in the Holy Baptism not only every fault and every punishment due to committed sins is washed away, everyone is created as new creatures, all fulfilled of Holy Spirit. One remains new creature if one remains in Christ through the obedience to each of his Word. Jesus says: "If you remain in my word, you will truly be my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." They answered him, "We are descendants of Abraham and have never been enslaved to anyone. How can you say, 'You will become free'?" Jesus answered them, "Amen, amen, I say to you, everyone who commits sin is a slave of sin. A slave does not remain in a household forever, but a son always remains. So if a son frees you, then you will truly be free.” (Jn 8, 30-36)**

**Here is what the Apostle Peter teaches: “This prefigured baptism, which saves you now. It is not a removal of dirt from the body but an appeal to God for a clear conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, with angels, authorities, and powers subject to him.” (1Pt 3, 21-22) While the Apostle Paul addresses to Titus as: “For we ourselves were once foolish, disobedient, deluded, slaves to various desires and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful ourselves and hating one another. But when the kindness and generous love of God our savior appeared, not because of any righteous deeds we had done but because of his mercy, he saved us through the bath of rebirth and renewal by the holy Spirit, whom he richly poured out on us through Jesus Christ our savior, so that we might be justified by his grace and become heirs in hope of eternal life.” (Tt 3, 3-7) Baptism is true generation in us of a new creature. Thus, further, the Apostle Paul:** “**For the love of Christ impels us, once we have come to the conviction that one died for all; therefore, all have died. He indeed died for all, so that those who live might no longer live for themselves but for him who for their sake died and was raised. Consequently, from now on we regard no one according to the flesh; even if we once knew Christ according to the flesh, yet now we know him so no longer. So whoever is in Christ is a new creation: the old things have passed away; behold, new things have come. (2Cor 5, 14-17) This is the great miracle of the grace of Christ Jesus in the Baptism.**

**LET US READ THE TEXT OF Mt 8, 1-4**

**When Jesus came down from the mountain, great crowds followed him. And then a leper approached, did him homage, and said, "Lord, if you wish, you can make me clean." He stretched out his hand, touched him, and said, "I will do it. Be made clean." His leprosy was cleansed immediately. Then Jesus said to him, "See that you tell no one, but go show yourself to the priest, and offer the gift that Moses prescribed; that will be proof for them."**

**All this richness of grace and Holy Spirit, of truth and light, of new creation and of eternal life, does one want to remove, to eradicate both from the Holy Scripture, from the Tradition and from the heart of the faithful in Christ. What is the reason of this fury against Christ Jesus? Why does one want to cut down his tree of eternal life and new creation? One wants to cut it down because yesterday one lost the consciousness of sin, today one has totally lost the truth of good and evil. Today truth is one’s own heart. Not, however, the heart ruled and moved by the Holy Spirit, but the heart enslaved to sin, to its concupiscence, to its instincts. Raising today one’s own heart to unique truth, Commandments do no longer exist, the Gospel does no longer exist, the Word does not exist. Today the word of man, drawn from his heart, is the only truth. The word can be of idolatry, killing, lust, theft, false witness, blasphemy, calumny against his own brothers. Being, by now, all these things most pure truth, one celebrates with all these things in the heart and one approaches the sacraments of grace and of light. But one does not approach them to receive light and grace, they are celebrated as habits and traditions to reassure our consciousness. Today calumny has made itself a structure of death and, however, no one has one only scruple of conscience. Today calumny is, by now, the new “Summa theologica” not only of the man, but also of the Christian. The schools where this Summa theologica is taught are many.**

**Mother of God, Woman of most pure heart, ensure that we never attend these schools. Help us not to cut down the tree of Christ, the only one that is of eternal life. Amen.**