**THURSDAY SEMPTEMBER 02 – XXII WEEK O.T. [B]**

**Simon Peter fell at the knees of Jesus and said, "Depart from me, Lord, for I am a sinful man." Jesus said to Simon, "Do not be afraid; from now on you will be catching men." When they brought their boats to the shore, they left everything and followed him.**

**Now Jesus is in the Galilee again. The crowd was pressing in on Jesus and listening to the word of God. Knowing this news is important. One does not go to Jesus just to ask for miracles. One also go to listen to the Word. The Word of Jesus is Word of God. When a man introduces himself to men with the Word of God, many are those who want to listen to it. The Word of God is of salvation, hope, peace, mercy, forgiveness, reconciliation, truth. The crowd is a lot, Jesus cannot speak surrounded by it. He needs to finds a way letting him be able to convey the Word to everyone. The Holy Spirit suggests Him to speak from the boat. When a man of Jesus, a preacher of the Gospel, is in the Holy Spirit, the best way of all, so that the Gospel reaches every heart, will always be suggested to him by the Spirit, if He is invoked by him. The Gospel is for everyone. If it is for everyone, it is also right that everyone may listen to it. It is up to the Spirit of the Lord to indicate ways and modalities so that no one is deprived of the listening of the Gospel.**

**Jesus gets into one boat. The boat is of Simon. He asked him to put out a short distance from the shore. So that no one may surround the boat or, even worse get into it. The preaching would have suffered. Jesus sits down and teaches the crowds from the boat. Divine way to speak so that everybody can listen. In this way, no one is of impediment for the others and Jesus, too, might live his mission in the effective way. The Word reaches everyone. The boat is symbol of the Church. The Word of Jesus must always be given to man from the heart of the Church that is the heart of Christ. If the Word does not come from the heart of Christ, heart of the Church, it will never produce one only fruit of salvation. As the heart of Christ, in the Holy Spirit, draws the Word in the heart of the Father, so the heart of the Church must draw the Word from the heart of Christ. For the heart of the Father to Christ, for the heart of Christ to the Church, in the Holy Spirit. For the heart of the Church, that is the heart of Christ, that is in the heart of the Father, in the Holy Spirit, the Word will have to reach the heart of every man. The Church speaks through every member of its body according to the gift of grace.**

**Now a command is given to Simon: "Put out into deep water and lower your nets for a catch." In truth, it could appear a word as the other ones. A word that is usually used among fishermen. Instead, the order is clothed with most pure faith. Simon replies: "Master, we have worked hard all night and have caught nothing” All night might mean all time before Christ Jesus. In this time, the son of Abraham remained son of Abraham and the pagan remained pagan. Even the children of Abraham often remained pagan in mind and in heart. Rather. They became great idolaters and unchaste. The kingdom remained empty. Now Simon adds: “But at your command I will lower the nets." The Word of Jesus will have to be addressed to every man. If one lowers the net on the Word of Jesus, many will enter the net of the Kingdom of God. It will never be caught empty. If one catches the net and it is empty, it is sign that we did not lower it on the Word of Jesus. But it is also sign that we did not lower the Word of Jesus as true net in the sea of the world. Only his Word, Jesus guarantees. Simon obeys. He lowers the net for faith. He is not alone, he is with others. They catch a great number of fish and their nets are tearing. It is not the sea that changed. The sea is the same. The world is always the same. The one who changed is Simon. First, he was without the Word of Jesus. Now he is with the Word. First, he was with no faith. Now he is in the faith. First, he was alone by himself. Now he is with Jesus. Simon changes, the catch of fish changes.**

**Let us read the text of Lk 5,1-11**

**While the crowd was pressing in on Jesus and listening to the word of God, he was standing by the Lake of Gennesaret. He saw two boats there alongside the lake; the fishermen had disembarked and were washing their nets. Getting into one of the boats, the one belonging to Simon, he asked him to put out a short distance from the shore. Then he sat down and taught the crowds from the boat. After he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, "Put out into deep water and lower your nets for a catch." Simon said in reply, "Master, we have worked hard all night and have caught nothing, but at your command I will lower the nets." When they had done this, they caught a great number of fish and their nets were tearing. They signaled to their partners in the other boat to come to help them. They came and filled both boats so that they were in danger of sinking. When Simon Peter saw this, he fell at the knees of Jesus and said, "Depart from me, Lord, for I am a sinful man." For astonishment at the catch of fish they had made seized him and all those with him, and likewise James and John, the sons of Zebedee, who were partners of Simon. Jesus said to Simon, "Do not be afraid; from now on you will be catching men." When they brought their boats to the shore, they left everything and followed him.**

**The work cannot be done only by Simon or by his fishing companions. Fishes are so numerous that the help of the other boats present on the lake is needed. All the present boats are invited to give their rescue. Everyone must see the difference in the catch of the fish between the net lowered on the Word of Jesus with the faith in Jesus in the heart and every other net lowered in the sea without the Word of Jesus and without the faith in Jesus. This last one will always be empty. It is obligation of Simon, namely of all the Church in Christ Jesus, to show every other religious confession the difference existing between the Word of Christ and the other words. It urges this difference.**

**The astonishment always arises when one passes from the natural to the supernatural or when one passes from the ordinary to the extraordinary, but not for the work of man, as it is only work of the Lord. The catch of the fish is extremely extraordinary. The Church, being the body of Christ, always through its children, must carry out actions that astonish the world. These are not actions all man can carry out. Everyone can give a piece of bread to a poor or even a dress. The actions of the Church are the total change of the life of its children for a true holiness. The holiness is creating of perennial astonishment. When a child of the Church manifests his faith, he lives his charity, he makes his way of the perfect hope, he always creates astonishment in the world. Jesus created astonishment in this way. Every disciple of Jesus is obliged to wonder: do I create the astonishment with my light, my truth, charity, faith, hope, the other virtues with which my life is woven? Do I create astonishment for my conformation to Christ the Lord?**

**The astonishment invades all those who are in the lake and assist the miraculous catch of the fish. At the lake, there are also James and John, sons of Zebedee, who are partners with Simon. This news is contained only in this little passage. After the astonishment, after the confession of Simon who declare himself to be a sinner before the holiness of Jesus, the call of Simon comes:** **"Do not be afraid; from now on you will be catching men." Now Simon becomes partner with Jesus. Jesus is the fisherman of the Father on earth. Simon will have to become the fisherman of Jesus in the world. If he is true fisherman of Jesus, he will also be true fisherman of the Father. He will be true fisherman of Jesus, if by Him he will learn how to fish.**

**After the catch of the fish, the boats are brought to the shore. Simon and his partners, James and John, leave everything and follow Jesus. If they want to be good fishermen, they will have to “steal” the art and the science from Jesus the Lord. One can learn no science and no art without the frequentation of an excellent teacher. Jesus has the Father as Teacher and the Holy Spirit as a guide. The Apostles have Christ the Lord as unique Teacher. As Christ the Lord is always directed to the Father, He always dwells in the womb of the Father, so also the disciples of Jesus. They must always be directed toward Christ, they must dwell in the truth and in the grace of Christ the Lord. As Jesus follows the Father from eternity, without never taking his eyes off Him, and without never coming out of his womb, so also the disciple. He must always look toward Christ Jesus and never leave his heart. Never. May the Mother of Jesus obtain for us this grace. Amen.**