**WEDNESDAY SEPTEMBER 08 – XXII WEEK O.T. [B]**

**NATIVITY OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY**

**"Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary your wife into your home. For it is through the Holy Spirit that this child has been conceived in her. She will bear a son and you are to name him Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins."**

**The Virgin Mary is already engaged to Joseph. The wedding has not been celebrated yet. She is not married yet. Mary and Joseph do not live together, they do not dwell in the same house as a family. In this phase of engagement, Mary found herself pregnant through the work of the Holy Spirit. Neither Joseph, nor other man are involved in the mystery of the conceiving of the Virgin Mary. The Virgin Mary does not know any man, She has never known any man. She is and She has remained in the purest and holiest virginity. In Her, the fruit of Her womb is through the work of the Holy Spirit. It is work of the Holy Spirit. This is the mystery.**

**Joseph is a righteous man. His justice suggests him not to repudiate Mary. That is why he decides to divorce Her quietly. In the text, nothing else is said. From the height, the depth, the width, the extent of his justice he only thinks the good. He does not think of his good, though. Instead, he thinks of the greatest good for the Virgin Mary. What is the greatest good for the Virgin Mary? The greatest good is that of not repudiating Her by public deed. This would have caused a most great pain in the Virgin Mary and it could have exposed Her to public derision. The greatest good is tiptoeing out, in the greatest silence, from the life of his future spouse. This means: “divorce Her quietly”. He would have withdrawn without anyone knowing it. They key to solve everything is precisely in his great justice.**

**It is proper to justice not to cause any harm to anybody. It is proper to love the renouncement to every action that could produce some both physical and moral pain to the others in some way. Joseph thus becomes a great master of justice: he teaches every man that the greatest good of the other must be the only desire of our heart, the only will of each of our action. It is Truth that overwhelms this rule of justice lived by Joseph: the searching of the greatest good for the Virgin Mary.**

**In this desire of the greatest good for the Virgin Mary, Joseph thought that this greatest good had to be without him. The Lord, instead, manifests him that the greatest good for the Virgin Mary is only one: taking the Virgin Mary with him. She is his spouse and he must accept her as his spouse. The Lord, through the angel, explains him the reason: “Mary has done nothing by herself. In Her, a great mystery is fulfilling. What is generated in Her comes from the Holy Spirit.” From these words of the angel, we must guess that Joseph really knew nothing of the mystery that has been fulfilled in the Virgin Mary. His non-knowledge of the mystery increases the sensibility of his justice even more. He was really seeking the greatest good. The justice in him is abstention from every judgement, from every word, from every gossip, from every gesture, from every other thing but the absolute silence. Justice makes his heart a tomb and his mind an absolute void.**

**Let us read the text of Mt 1,1-16.18-23**

**The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham. Abraham became the father of Isaac, Isaac the father of Jacob, Jacob the father of Judah and his brothers. Judah became the father of Perez and Zerah, whose mother was Tamar. Perez became the father of Hezron, Hezron the father of Ram, Ram the father of Amminadab. Amminadab became the father of Nahshon, Nahshon the father of Salmon, Salmon the father of Boaz, whose mother was Rahab. Boaz became the father of Obed, whose mother was Ruth. Obed became the father of Jesse, Jesse the father of David the king. David became the father of Solomon, whose mother had been the wife of Uriah. Solomon became the father of Rehoboam, Rehoboam the father of Abijah, Abijah the father of Asaph. Asaph became the father of Jehoshaphat, Jehoshaphat the father of Joram, Joram the father of Uzziah. Uzziah became the father of Jotham, Jotham the father of Ahaz, Ahaz the father of Hezekiah. Hezekiah became the father of Manasseh, Manasseh the father of Amos, Amos the father of Josiah. Josiah became the father of Jechoniah and his brothers at the time of the Babylonian exile. After the Babylonian exile, Jechoniah became the father of Shealtiel, Shealtiel the father of Zerubbabel, Zerubbabel the father of Abiud. Abiud became the father of Eliakim, Eliakim the father of Azor, Azor the father of Zadok. Zadok became the father of Achim, Achim the father of Eliud, Eliud the father of Eleazar. Eleazar became the father of Matthan, Matthan the father of Jacob, Jacob the father of Joseph, the husband of Mary. Of her was born Jesus who is called the Messiah.**

**Now this is how the birth of Jesus Christ came about. When his mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found with child through the Holy Spirit. Joseph her husband, since he was a righteous man, yet unwilling to expose her to shame, decided to divorce her quietly. Such was his intention when, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary your wife into your home. For it is through the Holy Spirit that this child has been conceived in her. She will bear a son and you are to name him Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins." All this took place to fulfil what the Lord had said through the prophet: "Behold, the virgin shall be with child and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel," which means "God is with us."**

**In Mary, a great prodigy is fulfilling. It is an unprecedented prodigy, never happened in the ancient history, it will never happen in the future history. She alone has conceived the Only Begotten Son of the Father in her womb through the work of the Holy Spirit. No other woman in the world. Never. Joseph shall name the son the Virgin Mary will bear. He shall name Him Jesus. By naming Him, Joseph recognizes Jesus as his true son. By this deed, Jesus enters the descendants of Abraham and of David. By accepting Him as his true son, it is as if He were born from him, too. This is greatness of Joseph as well: he makes the Son of God his son. It is as if he has had him by spiritual generation. Thus Joseph is true image of God. God Father makes us his true children, even if we do not come from his nature. Joseph makes the son of the Virgin Mary and the Son of God his true son, even if He does not come from his nature.**

**The spiritual generation has a very strong bond, it is stronger than the generation according to flesh. It is true generation. Jesus is not a stranger to Joseph. He is his life. He is life of his life and, as such, he will love him, he will serve him, he will consecrate himself to him. What is the mission of Jesus? Saving his people from their sins. Jesus is born for the salvation of the people of the Lord. This salvation is freedom from sin. Jesus (God saves) comes to remove the sin of his people and of the world.**

**Between the prophecy as it is uttered by Isaiah and its fulfilment, it reigns the same abyss separating heaven and earth, eternity and time, the Creator and the creature. The Son of the Virgin Mary is not just the Emmanuel, the God-with-us, He is the Son of God who made himself truly flesh, truly one of us. God is not with us, but staying out of us. He is with us, but in us. He is with us, but making himself flesh like us. He is God with us since now He is our flesh and our blood, our history and our life. To the temptation of the man who wants to make himself like God, God replies with making Him like us. It is the overturning of all our history. With the Incarnation of the eternal Word, of the Only Begotten Son of the Father our existence is overturned. It is as if it is turned upside down. The Incarnation thus becomes the new law of humanity. Every man, from false man is called to make himself true man. With the temptation of the Garden of Eden, man made himself like God, becoming both false God and false man. Now in Christ – and only in Christ this mystery might be fulfilled – man is called to make himself true man and true son of God. He must descend from the height of his false divinity and false humanity and be clothed with an infinitively more perfect and higher humanity than that received originally. The true humanity he must clothe himself is Christ Jesus, though. If he does not clothe Christ Jesus, he remains in his false divinity and in his false humanity. May the Mother of God come to our rescue.**