**THURSDAY SEPTEMBER 16 – XXIV WEEK O.T. [B]**

**So I tell you, her many sins have been forgiven; hence, she has shown great love. But the one to whom little is forgiven, loves little." He said to her, "Your sins are forgiven."**

**Jesus is a man of a great communion. He really participates in people’s life. By participating, he turned every meeting into teaching, in a great manifestation of the truth of the Father. Today He is invited to dine at one of the Pharisee’s house. A woman of that town – she is a sinner – having known that Jesus was in that house, namely in the house of the Pharisee, comes and brings** **an alabaster flask of ointment. Certainly, people are astonished and surprised seeing the woman entering that house bringing an alabaster flask of ointment with her. In the house of a Pharisee, there is no space for such woman. However, the woman, defying every good usage and habit, enters there.**

**She stays behind, before the feet of Jesus. She begins to bathe Jesus’s feet with tears. Then she wipes them with her hair, she kisses them, she anoints them with ointment. It is an unprecedented, inconceivable, unimaginable action. This woman does something that goes infinitively beyond what that could be decent to do. This is a gesture of most great love for Christ Jesus. Her tears are sign of a repentance that is overwhelming her life. She came for Jesus, because she knows that Jesus forgives the sinners. She knows that Jesus opens the door of his heart to hope. This woman is repentant. Her cry and her tears attest it. This woman wants to give a new ointment to her life. That ointment bathing the feet of Jesus is the ointment of her new life that started at the same moment in which she decided to speak to Christ the Lord to ask Him forgiveness of each of her fault: "Your sins are forgiven." After having heard these words, she can even die. Her life is redeemed.**

**The Pharisee knows who that woman is. Better, he knows who she was and what her job is. He does not know who she is today, at this moment. At this moment, she is a repentant woman, who cries for her sin and is begging for the grace of the forgiveness. The Pharisee knows the pasted history of the woman, he thinks that she touches Jesus as prostitute, with thoughts of a prostitute, with a behaviour of a prostitute, with the desire of a prostitute. What conclusion does the Pharisee draw from the behaviour of Jesus, who lets himself be touched by such a woman? The Pharisee concludes that Jesus is not a prophet. He does not know that the woman who is touching him is a prostitute.**

**To know that a woman is a prostitute there is no need of any gift of prophecy. The eyes of the flesh are enough. Instead, to know that the heart of the woman is totally pure in this moment and that her hands are pure and that her tears are pure one really needs the spirit of the prophecy. Jesus is true prophet since he sees the purity of the heart of the woman. She is not a prostitute who touches Jesus as a prostitute. Instead, she is a repentant woman seeking the redemption of her life and of her body and seeks this redemption precisely by the One who is the Redeemer of man. He touched the leapers and he did not remain impure. His touch cured and healed. Jesus lets himself be touched by a prostitute, but the touch of this woman does not contaminate him. He heals the woman from the leprosy of her sin.**

**Let us read the text of Lk 7,36-50**

**A Pharisee invited him to dine with him, and he entered the Pharisee's house and reclined at table. Now there was a sinful woman in the city who learned that he was at table in the house of the Pharisee. Bringing an alabaster flask of ointment, she stood behind him at his feet weeping and began to bathe his feet with her tears. Then she wiped them with her hair, kissed them, and anointed them with the ointment. When the Pharisee who had invited him saw this he said to himself, "If this man were a prophet, he would know who and what sort of woman this is who is touching him, that she is a sinner." Jesus said to him in reply, "Simon, I have something to say to you." "Tell me, teacher," he said. "Two people were in debt to a certain creditor; one owed five hundred days' wages and the other owed fifty. Since they were unable to repay the debt, he forgave it for both. Which of them will love him more?" Simon said in reply, "The one, I suppose, whose larger debt was forgiven." He said to him, "You have judged rightly." Then he turned to the woman and said to Simon, "Do you see this woman? When I entered your house, you did not give me water for my feet, but she has bathed them with her tears and wiped them with her hair. You did not give me a kiss, but she has not ceased kissing my feet since the time I entered. You did not anoint my head with oil, but she anointed my feet with ointment. So I tell you, her many sins have been forgiven; hence, she has shown great love. But the one to whom little is forgiven, loves little." He said to her, "Your sins are forgiven." The others at table said to themselves, "Who is this who even forgives sins?" But he said to the woman, "Your faith has saved you; go in peace."**

**You, Simon, love little since you feel the burden of no sin on your shoulder. You rather consider yourself above me and that is why you do not even feel the obligation to offer me some sign of gratitude and esteem. You consider yourself so above than me to think you can judge, condemn me, declare that I am not a true prophet. You love little because of your false justice. You consider yourself a saint, a different and diverse one for spiritual and moral elevation from others. You own nothing to God. God owns nothing to you. You do not need me. Here is why you love me little. You loved me little. You have no debt to be forgiven. This is the state of your conscience. Of your conscience before you, not certainly of the conscience before the Lord.**

**Now Jesus grants forgiveness of all the sins to the woman. The formula of absolution is simple: "Your sins are forgiven." Since Jesus is a true prophet, this word is word of God and not of a man. The true prophet has always words of God on his mouth. Woman, God has forgiven your sins. Your great love produced this great fruit of forgiveness from your Lord and God.**

**The murmur of the guests arises: "Who is this who even forgives sins?" The answer is simple: “A true prophet of the living God” Simon had already formulated this answer when he had thought: "If this man were a prophet, he would know who and what sort of woman this is who is touching him, that she is a sinner." Jesus is a true prophet and as true prophet, he always has the true word of the living God on his mouth. Who is this who even forgives sins, then? One who speaks in the name and on behalf of the living God. Jesus does not answer their murmur, though.**

**Now he must give the woman a sure word of hope and consolation. He must say to the woman that she is free from her sins. First, he had manifested Simon his great love, now he reveals the woman her great faith: "Your faith has saved you; go in peace." You, woman, have believed that I am a true prophet of God. You came to a true prophet. You showed a true prophet your repentance. I, as true prophet, seal your faith and I give you the forgiveness of sins. The woman did not go to a man, even if great in words and works. Instead, she went to a true prophet. The true prophet forgives her sins and says to go in peace. She is saved. She is free. Her burden does not bear down on her shoulders. The Lord, by his means, showed her all his mercy. This woman sees Jesus with the eyes of the faith. The eyes of faith, combined with her repentance and with her great love, obtain for her the forgiveness of each of her sins. This woman is another one now. She is a new woman. The true faith in Christ Jesus did this for her. I think there is no greater miracle that is fulfilled in a man with the forgiveness of the sins. The forgiveness of the sins is creation of the new heart, of the firm spirit. It is a new creation of the man. This creation must be announced, but also sought, desired, coveted. Without this creation man remains in the death. May the Mother of God help us. We want to let ourselves be created as new with the forgiveness of the sins.**