**FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 24 – XXV WEEK O.T. [B]**

**"The Son of Man must suffer greatly and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed and on the third day be raised."**

**We know that Jesus can always find a room for his prayer, to put himself into communion with the Father. The communion with the Father is for Jesus immersion in the real life. After immersing in the true life, he comes back to men filled with every life and he pours it upon them. He fills the world that lives around Him with every true life, he fills it with his same fullness of life. Whoever wants to give the life of Jesus to the world, his grace, his light, his truth, his Word, must daily reserve some spaces to immerse himself in Christ grace, light, truth, word. One immerses himself in Him, one fills himself with Him, one comes back to men and manifests, reveals, gives Him. It must happen with us what happened with Moses. He dwelled before God, eternal life, and his face was turned into light:** “**As Moses came down from Mount Sinai with the two tablets of the commandments in his hands, he did not know that the skin of his face had become radiant while he conversed with the LORD. When Aaron, then, and the other Israelites saw Moses and noticed how radiant the skin of his face had become, they were afraid to come near him. Only after Moses called to them did Aaron and all the rulers of the community come back to him. Moses then spoke to them. Later on, all the Israelites came up to him, and he enjoined on them all that the LORD had told him on Mount Sinai. When he finished speaking with them, he put a veil over his face. Whenever Moses entered the presence of the LORD to converse with him, he removed the veil until he came out again. On coming out, he would tell the Israelites all that had been commanded. Then the Israelites would see that the skin of Moses' face was radiant; so he would again put the veil over his face until he went in to converse with the LORD. (Ex 34,29-35) For the prayer Jesus loves the lonely, desert places. In these places, there is no external distraction. One can dedicate himself to the contemplation of the great silence. God speaks in the silence and only the one who seeks God in the inner and external silence can listen to the Lord and speak to his heart.**

**Now Jesus asks the Disciples what the crowd says about him: "Who do the crowds say that I am?" He knows what the crowds say about Him but He wants to put the disciples before the confusion reigning in the heart of the crowds that will always reign for all the duration of all centuries. Knowing that his Gospel and his Person will always be accompanied by confusion, by mistake, by falsity, they will have to divert the heart of men from this confusion, mistake, falsity, always proclaiming Jesus according to the purest truth. The crowds do not have a vision of Jesus according to truth. They see Jesus as a very important person, but not according to what He really, truly, actually is by eternal vocation. Some see John the Baptist in Him; some Elijah; some one of the ancient prophets who is risen. As one can notices, one is very distant from the truth of Jesus. However, the crowds see him as a Person who is from God. The modalities according to which Jesus is seen by the crowd attest that almost everyone saw Jesus as a man of God, sent by Him. They do not exactly know his truth, but they know that God is with Him and that He is from God. The deeds He fulfils attest this truth. What He does cannot be done by a common man. What He does attests his origin from God. This is enough to be opened to the knowledge of his truth. It is sufficient that one listens to him with no mental reservation and the entire truth about his person is disclosed before our ears. It will be Jesus himself to help the incipient faith in Him. After all, this is the same faith of Nicodemus. He does not know who Jesus is in his purest truth. But he knows that Jesus is from God. It will be Jesus who enlightens Nicodemus about his truth.**

**Jesus always helps this initial faith. He always makes it grow and develop until reaching his perfection. After all, this is the great work of the shepherd: making the faith of every sheep reach his perfection. The shepherd starts from an initial, little, simple, rudimental faith and brings to an adult, complete, perfect faith, with no failings or mistakes. The shepherd will always have to be as Jesus the Lord: raising every bruised reed. Lighting every smoldering wick again: “Here is my servant whom I uphold, my chosen one with whom I am pleased, Upon whom I have put my spirit; he shall bring forth justice to the nations, Not crying out, not shouting, not making his voice heard in the street. A bruised reed he shall not break, and a smoldering wick he shall not quench, Until he establishes justice on the earth; the coastlands will wait for his teaching.” (Is 42, 1-4) The mission that is of Jesus is mission of each of his disciple. This one is called to give life, true life, light, true light, to every smoldering wick he meets on his journey. Every man has a smoldering desire of Christ Jesus in the heart. This desire must be lighted again.**

**From this moment on, Jesus starts the great journey of the disciples for the reaching of the perfection of their faith. This journey must be made under his sapient, wise, expert, intelligent, prudent and aware guide of Jesus. This journey started with Jesus and lasts until the consummation of the centuries. The guide changes, though, it is no longer Jesus, but the Holy Spirit, his Holy Spirit. Where there is no true journey in faith, also the journey in charity and hope is stopped there. One stops the moral and even cultural journey. Where there is no true journey in faith, religion soon turns into worship, in ritual, in external work that affects nothing in the life of the person.**

**Let us read the text of Lk 9,18-22**

**Once when Jesus was praying in solitude, and the disciples were with him, he asked them, "Who do the crowds say that I am?" They said in reply, "John the Baptist; others, Elijah; still others, 'One of the ancient prophets has arisen.'" Then he said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" Peter said in reply, "The Messiah of God." He rebuked them and directed them not to tell this to anyone. He said, "The Son of Man must suffer greatly and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed and on the third day be raised."**

**Now Jesus asks the Apostles. Do they know who He really is? Do they know why he came and what his mission is? Will they confuse Him as all the others confused him? Here is then the well-precise question: - What is your truth about me? Peter answers – You, Jesus, are the Messiah of the Lord, his Anointed, his Envoy. This is the answer of Peter.**

**But, does Peter know who the Messiah of God is according to God? As what said, Peter knows that Jesus is the Messiah of God. He knows the Messiah of God according to men. This suggests us that the knowledge of a person is enough to have the truth about the person we know. Almost always one knows the person, but without his truth. Person and his truth according to God must be one only thing. This is the great educative commitment waiting for Jesus: making that, in the heart of the disciples, the Messiah and the truth according to God about the Messiah become one only thing. Now, in Peter and in the others, the Messiah and his truth are two separate, distinct, incompatible, unreachable. An abyss separates them and this abyss is unfillable now. It is precise mission of Jesus to fill this infinite abyss. The pastoral method of Jesus must be ours, too. Every day we are called to fill this infinite abyss between the person and his truth according to God. The Person is Christ, the Father, the Holy Spirit. The reality is also the Church, the sacraments, the same people inside the Church bringing a charisma or a ministry. We know these people and these realities, we often ignore their truth according to God. This is the huge pastoral work that is always before us and will never be completed. But who can do this huge work? Only the one who immerses himself in Christ Jesus every day, as Jesus immersed himself in the Father, and becomes truth of Christ. The one who is filled with the truth of Christ gives the others their truth. May the Mother of God help us in this.**