**TUESDAY SEPTEMBER 28 – XXVI WEEK O.T. [B]**

**When the days for his being taken up were fulfilled, he resolutely determined to journey to Jerusalem, and he sent messengers ahead of him.**

**The days of the passion of Jesus are coming. Jesus is lifted up in a double way: since he is hoisted on the cross; since he is lifted up with his glorious resurrection on the right hand of his Father. In fact, the mystery of Jesus is of passion, death, glorious resurrection and ascension to heaven. It is a unique mystery of death and life, of lowering and lifting, of ignominy and of glory. He knows that he must go to Jerusalem to go up to the cross and takes his firm decision to take up the journey toward the Holy Town. From this moment on, the Gospel becomes a journey toward the cross. Jesus knows what to do and he does it with firm, resolute, determined decision. He wants what the Father wants and he wants it as the Father wants it. His will is all in the will of the Father. The Words of the Psalm are fulfilled in Jesus: “In sacrifice and offering you have not delighted, but you have given me an open ear.** **Burnt offering and sin offering you have not required. Then I said, "Behold, I have come; in the scroll of the book it is written of me: I delight to do your will, O my God; your law is within my heart." I have told the glad news of deliverance** **in the great congregation; behold, I have not restrained my lips, as you know, O Lord. I have not hidden your deliverance within my heart; I have spoken of your faithfulness and your salvation; I have not concealed your steadfast love and your faithfulness from the great congregation.” (Psal 40, 7-11)There is no difference between the will of the Father and the will of Christ Jesus or the wills of Christ Jesus. The will of the Father is all will of Jesus the Lord. Here is why Jesus takes the firm decision to go to Jerusalem: “At that time some Pharisees came to him and said, "Go away, leave this area because Herod wants to kill you." He replied, "Go and tell that fox, 'Behold, I cast out demons and I perform healings today and tomorrow, and on the third day I accomplish my purpose. Yet I must continue on my way today, tomorrow, and the following day, for it is impossible that a prophet should die outside of Jerusalem.'(Lk 13, 31-33) Jesus is definitely determined to fulfil the mission with no delay from his part. He must go to Jerusalem and he walks toward it.**

**Jesus chooses to go to Jerusalem passing by Samaria. This was the shortest way at those times. He sends some messengers before him. Jesus does not want there to be surprises along the journey and this is why he sends them, so that they prepare the access for him. The messengers enter the village of Samaritans. Between the Samaritans and the Jews, there were no feelings of friendship. There is a great religious rivalry that often flowed into enmity. The enmity made itself not welcoming, refusal, sometimes even argument. The Samaritans do not want to receive Jesus. They do not want their country to become a place of transit for those who are directed to Jerusalem. In fact, Jesus was clearly directed to Jerusalem. Nothing strange so far. It was ordinary history of enmity. Going through Samaria was always a great risk for the Jews. This is why almost always one preferred the longer way that passed out of the territory of the Samaritans.**

**What follows is instead charged with strong religious tension. James and John, disciples of the Lord, see that Jesus is refused. For them Jesus is a true prophet. He is a true prophet and he is greater than Elijah. If for Elijah the fire came down from heaven and consumed the ones who sought it, why not making the fire fall from heaven to consume these Samaritans who did not receive Jesus? Here is a text about what happened with Elijah:** “**Then the king sent a captain with his company of fifty men after Elijah. The prophet was seated on a hilltop when he found him. "Man of God," he ordered, "the king commands you to come down." "If I am a man of God," Elijah answered the captain, "may fire come down from heaven and consume you and your fifty men." And fire came down from heaven and consumed him and his fifty men. Ahaziah sent another captain with his company of fifty men after Elijah. "Man of God," he called out to Elijah, "the king commands you to come down immediately.""If I am a man of God," Elijah answered him, "may fire come down from heaven and consume you and your fifty men." And divine fire came down from heaven, consuming him and his fifty men. Again, for the third time, Ahaziah sent a captain with his company of fifty men. When the third captain arrived, he fell to his knees before Elijah, pleading with him. "Man of God," he implored him, "let my life and the lives of these fifty men, your servants, count for something in your sight! Already fire has come down from heaven, consuming two captains with their companies of fifty men. But now, let my life mean something to you!"(2Kg 1, 9-14)**

**As one can see, James and John still lived in the Old Testament. Their mind and their heart is in the Old Covenant, with the Ancient Prophets. They are still with Elijah. If the fire accredited Elijah, it can also accredit Jesus. Is there any other else on earth that might say to be prophet equal to Jesus? No one. Jesus is the greatest among all the prophets and such an accreditation surely serves for his cause. But they do nothing without having received the order from Jesus: “Lord, do you want us to say that the fire may come down from heaven and consume them?” The fire does not come down since Jesus is prophet and not even it comes down since they ask for it to God. Certain convincement in some truths hardly help us not to fall in certain arrogance. It is arrogance to think that the fire comes down from heaven only because one asks for it and only because Jesus allowed it. But above all, it is foolishness to think that Jesus has come to live what the ancient prophets and envoys of his Father have already lived. He has come to manifest the absolute news of God. In him, the prophecy of Isaiah is fully fulfilled: “Remember not the events of the past, the things of long ago consider not; See, I am doing something new! Now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? In the desert I make a way, in the wasteland, rivers. Wild beasts honor me, jackals and ostriches, For I put water in the desert and rivers in the wasteland for my chosen people to drink, The people whom I formed for myself, that they might announce my praise.”(Is 43, 18-21) Jesus is the most pure news of God among his people. In Him every step he puts on earth is always new. There are not two equal steps.**

**Let us read the text of Lk 9,51-56**

**When the days for his being taken up were fulfilled, he resolutely determined to journey to Jerusalem, and he sent messengers ahead of him. On the way they entered a Samaritan village to prepare for his reception there, but they would not welcome him because the destination of his journey was Jerusalem. When the disciples James and John saw this they asked, "Lord, do you want us to call down fire from heaven to consume them?" Jesus turned and rebuked them, and they journeyed to another village.**

**Jesus turns and rebukes them. The Old Covenant is over forever. We are about to enter the New one. One cannot live in the New keeping the mind and the heart in the Old one. One cannot be of the Second with the forms of the first. The Covenant changes and everything changes: forms, style, mind, heart, feelings, relations. One has already said it. One passes in the New Covenant fulfilling a true ontological leap. One passes changing heart and mind, thoughts and will, structures and forms of being and operating.**

**In the New Testament the truth of the prophet is not testified by the fire that comes down from heaven and burns the unbelievers and the ones who refuse to believe. Instead, it is testified by the strength of the prophet to let himself be consumed in his body, even physically, as it happened with Jesus on the cross and as it happens with all the martyrs of faith. One cannot stay with the body in the New Testament and the thoughts and the heart in the Old one. This is true contradiction. Where one is with the body, he must also be with the heart, the mind, the thoughts, the will, the desires. Jesus is all in the New Testament. This same truth cannot be affirmed for his disciples yet. We are not even in the New Testament. May the Mother of Jesus help us operate this passage.**