**MONDAY OCTOBER 11 – XXVIII WEEK O.T. [B]**

**"This generation is an evil generation; it seeks a sign, but no sign will be given it, except the sign of Jonah. Just as Jonah became a sign to the Ninevites, so will the Son of Man be to this generation.”**

**People gather in the crowd around Jesus. Since then, Jesus was otherwise occupied, busy with confuting the Pharisees who accused Him of being friend and ally of Satan to deceit people. Ended this first engagement, a woman calls out from the crowd. Jesus immediately gave her the answer of faith, the true answer according to faith. The Pharisees had first made an explicit request to Jesus: “Others, to test him, asked him for a sign from heaven.” They wanted Jesus to make them an incontestable sign attesting with all certainty his origin from God. Now Jesus deals with their question. First, Jesus answers by saying that: “This generation is an evil generation.” Why is this generation evil? Because it closes itself to the truth of history. Because it denies the truth of history. Because it closes its eyes before evidence. Because not being able to deny the evidence, it attributes this evidence of truth and of good to the prince of darkness. Because it makes Jesus a friend and an ally of the prince of darkness. Jesus, Eternal Light, divine Light, universal Light, immortal Light makes himself friend of darkness to deceive men. This is the evil of this generation. One cannot give any sign to this generation. Every sign given to it is altered, subverted, contradicted, even attributed to devil. What sign can one give to it that might never be attributed to the devil? This sign is only one: the sign of Jonah.**

**Jonah runs far away from the Lord since he believes in the efficaciousness of the Word of God. This is capable of converting hearts, once one makes it resound. He remains three days and three nights in the womb of a big fish and he has been casted aside on the beach. The Lord calls him again and sends him to Ninevites to proclaim this sinner town the conversion. Jonah was a sign of the merciful love of God for the sinner town. Jesus will be a sign of the merciful love of God for this evil and sinner generation. As Ninevites converted before the preaching of Jonah, so this evil generation is called to convert. What does this evil generation do, instead? It is stubborn in its evil. Jonah is a figure of Jesus for his permanence in the womb of the fish. In fact, as Jonah remains three days in the womb of the fish, so Jesus will remain three days in the womb of earth, from the tomb in which he will be placed. The resurrection is the incontrovertible sign, superior to every other sign, that Jesus is from God, that Jesus is God. Jesus has really come out of the tomb. He is really risen and He is the Living forever, the eternal Living.**

**Let us read the text of Lk 11,29-32**

**While still more people gathered in the crowd, he said to them, "This generation is an evil generation; it seeks a sign, but no sign will be given it, except the sign of Jonah. Just as Jonah became a sign to the Ninevites, so will the Son of Man be to this generation. At the judgment the queen of the south will rise with the men of this generation and she will condemn them, because she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and there is something greater than Solomon here. At the judgment the men of Nineveh will arise with this generation and condemn it, because at the preaching of Jonah they repented, and there is something greater than Jonah here.**

**Now Jesus affirms the great responsibility of this evil generation before God and history, before time and eternity. The queen of the south came from the ends of the earth to listen to the wisdom of Solomon. She listened to it and she was astonished. This queen remained enthralled before the splendour of Salomon and before his wisdom. To listen to him, she takes a long way. Salomon was not wise nor intelligent by study or by other human way. Instead, he was so by gift of God. Jesus is infinitively and divinely greater than Salomon, more learned, wiser. Jesus is the Wisdom and the eternal Intelligence. He is the Wisdom from which Salomon drew the wisdom by grace of the Most High.**

**What does this evil generation? Not only does it not listen to him, it wants to destroy him in his truth, in his wisdom, in his power, in his holiness by accusing him of being friend and an accomplice of Satan. Who is Satan? The enemy of man. The queen of the south will arise against this evil generation and will condemn it. On the judgement, she will cry out her incredulity that is fruit of its evil and wickedness of heart. The honesty and the love of this foreign woman, who comes from far away, will accuse this generation because of its non-love for the wisdom and for the truth and for the evil of the heart with which it opposed to Jesus, by calumniating and lying with every lie about him, willing his destruction and his death at any cost.**

**On the judgement, Ninevites, too, will arise and will accuse this evil generation and it will condemn it, so that it converts to the preaching of Jonah. Instead, this evil generation refused to listen to one who is much greater than Jonah. Not only did this generation not convert. It impeded people to convert by accusing Jesus with every infamous lie and calumny. There was, in this generation, a deaf opposition to Jesus who reached its culmination with the crucifixion. Truth obliges when one meets a person who bears it. The refusal of the truth and the appeal of the known truth may also become sin against the Holy Spirit, sin no longer forgivable neither on earth and nor in Heaven. The great the gift is, the greater our responsibility before God and men becomes. The greater the gift is and the greater the fruits produced by us must be. To the one who was given much, much will be required.**

**A brief reflection: when a man trample the truth, the conscience, the history of one only man, this is possible since this man has trampled his truth, his conscience, his history, his mission, his vocation. The Pharisees and the scribes trample the truth of Christ Jesus since they have already put their truth, their history, their vocation, their mission under their feet, squeezing it. This is the martyrdom for the truth: confessing the truth of a man, of his history, of his mission, of his vocation. But who can be a martyr? The one who will never trample his history, his vocation, his mission, his ministry. A professor of Theology trampling the truth of the Theology attests the world that he does not love the truth, he does not take sides for it, he does not expose his life to the martyrdom to defend the truth of his vocation and of his mission. This is also valid for a Bishop and a Presbyter of the Church of God, consecrated to defend the truth of Christ Jesus.**

**How can one defend the truth of Christ Jesus? By defending, each one, his truth, his mission, his vocation. This is the martyrdom of the Christians: the non-sale of their truth, of their mission, of their vocation to no man, even if he were the greatest man in this world, even the supreme authority of the earth, even the dearest friends, even an angel of heaven to ask for the sale of one’s own truth, mission, vocation, ministry. When a minister of Christ Jesus tramples the conscience of the brothers, he attests that he trampled the truth of his history. When he despises God in the brothers, he reveals that he has already despised the God dwelling in his heart. The Pharisees and the scribes trample, despise, offend, calumniate Christ Jesus since they already trampled, despised, offended, calumniated the God of Christ Jesus in their heart. Every word a man utters in history attests the truth or the falsity of his history. Everyone produces according to his nature. A nature that despises God in his heart will always despise him in the history of the others. May the Virgin Mary preserve us from every disdain of the truth. May She help us to become martyrs for Christ and for the Gospel.**