**TUESDAY OCTOBER 12 – XXVIII WEEK O.T. [B]**

**"Oh you Pharisees! Although you cleanse the outside of the cup and the dish, inside you are filled with plunder and evil. You fools! Did not the maker of the outside also make the inside?”**

**Jesus is speaking to the crowd. He wants them to know what is the true will of his Father, but also the true reality of man. Man, from sinner, can become saint, but also from saint, he can become sinner. From righteous, unrighteous and unrighteous righteous. And here is that a Pharisee invites him to dine. Let us remind that the “Pharisee” was a person blocked in the holiness. He could not become wicked, unfair, unrighteous, sinner. The Pharisee considered himself a saint and anything he did, even the most serious sin, was a manifestation of his holiness. Jesus accepts the invitation, he enters the house of the Pharisee and recline at table.**

**The Pharisee sees Jesus reclining at the table without having first observed the prescribed washing and he was amazed. It is not about a pure and simple amazement; judgement is added to amazement. The judgement of the Pharisee is severe. Jesus is a transgressor of the tradition of the ancestors. Can one who transgresses the tradition of the ancestors be a Teacher? But, above all, can he be a man come from God? Can God send a person who transgresses the law of the ancestors? Certainly not, since God sends so that one observes all the law and the tradition of the ancestors is true law for us. The amazement makes itself accusation in the heart of transgression of the law of the ancestors. Jesus does not allow this accusation to go on, he starts speaking and teaches the Pharisee. Jesus says who the Pharisees are. They are people who cleanse the outside of the cup and the dish. They cleanse the body, they wash it. The spirit and the soul are never cleansed, though. Soul and spirit are filled with plunder and evil. This is their spiritual condition. On the outside, they appear to be cleansed and clean. Instead, on the inside they are unclean, as they are filled with very bad vices. The spiritual condition of these people is very miserable. They always wear a mask, that is always clean. The more the mask is clean, more rottenness of heart and of soul is it called to hide. The world sees the mask, it does not see the rottenness, but it smells its stench from miles away. One might never hide the smell of the stench.**

**The Pharisees are foolish since as God wants the cleanness from the outside, He also wants the cleanness from the inside. The one who cleans the outside must, to greater reason, also clean the inside. Otherwise, it is a contradiction and a hypocrisy. Man is one. His is a unity of body and of spirit. As the body must be cleansed, so the soul must be cleansed. One may even not clean the body for particular reasons, there are no reason to keep the soul and the spirit in the spiritual uncleanness. But if they care so much about cleaning the external, one must much more care about cleaning the inside.**

**Let us read the text of 11,37-41**

**After he had spoken, a Pharisee invited him to dine at his home. He entered and reclined at table to eat. The Pharisee was amazed to see that he did not observe the prescribed washing before the meal. The Lord said to him, "Oh you Pharisees! Although you cleanse the outside of the cup and the dish, inside you are filled with plunder and evil. You fools! Did not the maker of the outside also make the inside? But as to what is within, give alms, and behold, everything will be clean for you.**

**For the Pharisees the way suggested by Jesus to abandon every uncleanness is freeing themselves from greed. How can one free himself from greed? By giving all things one has in alms. By sharing their goods to poor, to miserable, to those who have nothing. By freeing from greed one frees himself from wickedness too. By defeating greed one defeats wickedness. For Jesus, greed is what makes man wicked, evil. Abolished greed, shared one’s own goods to the poor, free from every thirst of possession, man becomes good. Jesus thus teaches that it is not the wickedness that generates the greed. Instead, greed generates wickedness. Greed makes man evil. Uprooted the greed, wickedness has no reason to be and the heart becomes pure. Jesus really knows man. Since He knows him in fullness of truth, he can also indicate the way of his healing and of his most authentic purification. Alms is true way of salvation of all man. True way for the freedom from every sin.**

**This teaching given by Jesus to the Pharisees is also valid also and above all for every disciple of Jesus. What must always the disciple of the Lord remember? That the belonging to Jesus, to the Church, to an Order and to a religious Congregation, to an association, to a movement, to an ecclesial group does not give any right to consider oneself holy, saved, already in Paradise. The obedience to every Word of the Gospel of Christ the Lord gives the right to enter the Paradise, to every motion and inspiration of the Holy Spirit, to each of our ministry and vocation, to every gift of the Spirit of God. The belongingness does not give any right. The belongingness must be a way for a more perfect and more complete obedience. Unfortunately, the spirit of the Pharisee has moved into the heart of the Christian and today many are the ones who believe that belongingness is salvation.**

**Not even the belongingness to the Church give the right to the eternal salvation. Today, rightly and even more wrongly, one appeals to the Second Vatican Council. Here is what the Second Vatican Council teaches in regards to the belongingness: This Sacred Council wishes to turn its attention firstly to the Catholic faithful. Basing itself upon Sacred Scripture and Tradition, it teaches that the Church, now sojourning on earth as an exile, is necessary for salvation. Christ, present to us in His Body, which is the Church, is the one Mediator and the unique way of salvation. In explicit terms He Himself affirmed the necessity of faith and baptism (cf. Jn 3, 5) and thereby affirmed also the necessity of the Church, for through baptism as through a door men enter the Church. Whosoever, therefore, knowing that the Catholic Church was made necessary by Christ, would refuse to enter or to remain in it, could not be saved. They are fully incorporated in the society of the Church who, possessing the Spirit of Christ accept her entire system and all the means of salvation given to her, and are united with her as part of her visible bodily structure and through her with Christ, who rules her through the Supreme Pontiff and the bishops. The bonds which bind men to the Church in a visible way are profession of faith, the sacraments, and ecclesiastical government and communion. He is not saved, however, who, though part of the body of the Church, does not persevere in charity. He remains indeed in the bosom of the Church, but, as it were, only in a "bodily" manner and not "in his heart."(12\*) All the Church's children should remember that their exalted status is to be attributed not to their own merits but to the special grace of Christ. If they fail moreover to respond to that grace in thought, word and deed, not only shall they not be saved but they will be the more severely judged. (LG 14)**

**And also: By the proclamation of the Gospel she prepares her hearers to receive and profess the faith. She gives them the dispositions necessary for baptism, snatches them from the slavery of error and of idols and incorporates them in Christ so that through charity they may grow up into full maturity in Christ. Through her work, whatever good is in the minds and hearts of men, whatever good lies latent in the religious practices and cultures of diverse peoples, is not only saved from destruction but is also cleansed, raised up and perfected unto the glory of God, the confusion of the devil and the happiness of man. The obligation of spreading the faith is imposed on every disciple of Christ, according to his state. Although, however, all the faithful can baptize, the priest alone can complete the building up of the Body in the eucharistic sacrifice. In this way the Church both prays and labors in order that the entire world may become the People of God, the Body of the Lord and the Temple of the Holy Spirit, and that in Christ, the Head of all, all honor and glory may be rendered to the Creator and Father of the Universe. (LG 17) We are saved for our conformation to Christ Jesus. May the Mother of God help us so that no one does not let himself be ruled by the spirit of the Pharisees and of the scribes. Belongingness does not give salvation. Salvation is life according to the Gospel.**