**WEDNESDAY OCTOBER 13 – XXVIII WEEK O.T. [B]**

**“Woe to you Pharisees! You love the seat of honor in synagogues and greetings in marketplaces. Woe to you! You are like unseen graves over which people unknowingly walk."**

**Jesus shows some incongruences of the Pharisees. He reveals us what is their great hypocrisy. They are dutiful in paying tithes of mint, of rue and of every garden herb. Paying tithes is easy. It is of no cost. It requires no sacrifice. In this, they show they are good. Instead, they are not good at the practice of the justice and the love of God. The justice and the love of God are put aside. The holiness of a person is certainly founded on the payment of the tithes of all herbs. However, much more is founded upon the practice of justice and charity. An unrighteous man, a man who does not love neither God nor the neighbour might never say to be saint, never a pious observant of the law of God. Why, then, do the Pharisees pay tithes and transgress the justice and the love of God? They pay tithes since the payment is visible and it is of no cost. Being visible is for them reason of pride, of vainglory, of arrogance, of true ostentation of their faithfulness to the Law and to the prescription of Moses. With this visible and not expensive payment, their fame of saints is magnified.**

**Being the practice of justice and of love usually invisible, not only does the invisibility let the highest transgression, but it also allows turning every injustice and every non-love into commandment of the Lord. Also: being justice and love always subjected to the interpretation and to the sound discernment, in this they were true masters of false and infringement. They interpreted everything and they discerned everything in their favour. The earning, the profit, the enrichment on the shoulders of the poor widows, of the little, of the simple, of the fearers of God is in their favour. Jesus says to them that the Law must be observed in all: in the visible things and in the invisible ones; in the things that cost and in those that do not cost. However, everything can happen if one frees himself from greed, from cupidity, from gluttony, from hunger and from the thirst of money. They risk their salvation by continuing doing what they are doing. All thing but blocked holiness. We may speak of perdition already happened, if they do not repent and they do not convert to the Word of Jesus. The Pharisees are arrogant people. Not only are they arrogant. They cure this arrogance of theirs in a very special way. How they cure it? By loving the first places in the synagogues and the greetings in the marketplaces.**

**Where there are people, the garden is good to cultivate their arrogance. Pride is a devilish vice. Whoever lets himself be taken by it puts God as a stool of his feet and he makes men a road on which he walks. Here is why one can speak about a serious danger of eternal perdition. One is completely out of the rules of God. Out of each of his commandment. Out of every righteous and holy service or ministry. Pride denies God and men in their purest and holiest truth. Pride kills God and men and nourishes itself with their flesh. Pride feeds on and is nurtured with idolatry, falsity, deceit, lie, every other vice and sin.**

**Let us read the text of Lk 11,42-46**

**Woe to you Pharisees! You pay tithes of mint and of rue and of every garden herb, but you pay no attention to judgment and to love for God. These you should have done, without overlooking the others. Woe to you Pharisees! You love the seat of honor in synagogues and greetings in marketplaces. Woe to you! You are like unseen graves over which people unknowingly walk." Then one of the scholars of the law said to him in reply, "Teacher, by saying this you are insulting us too." And he said, "Woe also to you scholars of the law! You impose on people burdens hard to carry, but you yourselves do not lift one finger to touch them.**

**Touching a grave made a person ritually unclean. That is why there was the accuracy and the attention of making them visible. Everyone knew to find himself before a grave and he avoided not contaminating. The Pharisees are graves, but invisible. Those who approach them were contaminated without knowing it. They become unclean but they do not know it. They become transgressors of the Law of God but they ignore it. They become children of perdition and they think of finding themselves in the highest and purest truth. This truth Jesus proclaims today is true heavenly wisdom, true vision in the Holy Spirit, most pure enlightening of the Father.**

**This is the true evil of religion, when it turns into pharisaism. One approaches men that say to be of God as one approaches invisible graves. One remains contaminated and one does not even know it. One has become unclean and one continues to live, as we were clean. A religion lived like this fills the heart with sadness. One approaches a man who says to be of God for the holiness and one remains caught up in his moral, ritual, spiritual, ascetic uncleanness. One approaches a man who says to be of God to walk toward the Paradise and, instead, one only walks, with him, along roads taking to the eternal perdition of hell. May the Lord guard us so that we never become invisible graves for our brothers, invisible companions of perdition for those who rely on us.**

**A scholar of the Law understands the seriousness of the revelation made by Jesus about the falsity of the religion practised by the Pharisees and feels offended: "Teacher, by saying this you are insulting us too." By saying this, you put us, Scholars of the Law, in the same falsity of the Pharisees. People may think that the Pharisees and we behave in the same way. The scholar of the Law is the one who feels insulted by Jesus. Jesus had not spoken about them, but only about the Pharisees. Since the scholar of the Law intervenes, Jesus has a word of revelation even about their ministry not lived according to God. What is the revelation of Jesus about their ministry? They have a serious fault. They make difficult the path toward God for the others. While they make it very smooth, pleasant, easy for them. They impose on people burdens hard to carry. But they do not lift one finger to touch them. Not only is the observance of the Law for the others, not for them. If they did this, it would be a minor damage. There would not be the exemplarity, but at least the truth of the teaching.**

**Moreover, they impose the conscience of the others with burdens hard to carry. They declare everything sin and transgression. Everything is fault. Their teaching is used to discourage, instead of encourage; to abandon instead of including; to distance instead of approaching. With their teaching, they made the Law hateful, instead of loving ad pleasant. Theirs is a teaching lacking in every true exemplarity. A teaching without the highest exemplarity of the one who provide it is extremely null. Every good teacher must be exemplar, imitable. He must show with life the truth he teaches. Instead, with their life they annulated what they taught. With the works, they contrasted their doctrine. They too were walking toward the eternal damnation. They too, as the Pharisees, are directed toward the fire of hell.**

**Whoever wants to be a good teacher for the others must be so for himself for first. He must use all the mercy he uses for himself for the others. God the Lord gives all teachers of his truth and of his doctrine, as their example, himself, according to the image of the shepherd of the prophet Isaiah: “Go up onto a high mountain, Zion, herald of glad tidings; Cry out at the top of your voice, Jerusalem, herald of good news! Fear not to cry out and say to the cities of Judah: Here is your God! Here comes with power the Lord GOD, who rules by his strong arm; Here is his reward with him, his recompense before him. Like a shepherd he feeds his flock; in his arms he gathers the lambs, Carrying them in his bosom, and leading the ewes with care.” (Is 40,9-11) God leads with his love, his patience, his infinite mercy, his charity that knows no limits, with the strength of his forgiveness, with the continuous invitation to conversion, with his concern that never fails in sending his prophets. Today the love of God is Christ Jesus, in Christ Jesus, it is each of his disciple. May our heavenly Mother help us to live this divine and eternal mystery of love.**