**OCTOBER 17 – XXIX SUNDAY O.T. [B]**

**He replied, "What do you wish (me) to do for you?" They answered him, "Grant that in your glory we may sit one at your right and the other at your left."**

**Jesus speaks to the disciples. He reveals and manifests his mystery that is about to be fulfilled, mystery that is of death and resurrection. But it is as if He did not speak. His truth does not enter their hearts. Let us not forget that we are on a journey toward Jerusalem, place of the supreme sacrifice of Christ Jesus and neither that Jesus had already indicated what the rules to be observed in his kingdom were: the one who wanted to be the greatest had to become the little one and the servant of everyone. It is as if Jesus had never spoken to them about such a vital importance.**

**Jesus is alone in his truth and in his doctrine. He has not even the solace of his disciples yet. They still think as the world, according to the measures of greatness of the world. The Holy Spirit is the one who makes the difference. Jesus walks with the Spirit of the Lord and he is always in the heart of the Father. The disciples are without the Spirit of God and they are always out of the heart of Christ and his thoughts. James and John make a request to the Lord, without manifesting its content: "Teacher, we want you to do for us whatever we ask of you."**

**Jesus knows what the subject of their request is. One cannot answer without knowing the details of every question. The highest rule of prudence demands it. Jesus is the Most Prudent and He wants to know what is navigating in the mind and in the heart of his two disciples. We must learn this wisdom from the Lord. Prudence is not a virtue to live only with the distant relations or with the strangers. One must live this virtue with everyone: close and distant, faithful and non-faithful, good and evil, but above all and always with the close, the faithful, the good, the friends, those who are at our side. One moment lived without prudence and we are ruined. Just a nothing is enough to find ourselves out of the Gospel. Their answer is simple: one of them may sit at his right and the other at his left when Jesus enter his glory. One may be the first and the other the second. The other is the second only because he cannot be the first, otherwise both of them would have been the first.**

**The fact that the disciples do not know what they are asking is attested by the fact that they completely ignore the future of the kingdom of Christ Jesus. Jesus will not establish a kingdom on earth upon the model of that of David. The kingdom of God Jesus will take on our earth is totally different. Jesus has already spoken about it several times. However, the disciples have always been deaf and slow of heart in receiving his words. Pointed this truth out, Jesus poses a very specific question to them: “Can you drink the cup that I drink or be baptized with the baptism with which I am baptized?" The baptism of Jesus is his martyrdom, his crucifixion. The two disciples attest that they can drink the cup and be baptized with the same baptism than Jesus. They respond yes, but they do not know what they are saying. They do not know it, since they are very distant from the vision Jesus has of his life. Even if they do not still know the exact truth of the cup and of the baptism, Jesus confirms that they too will pass through the way of the martyrdom. Now Jesus reveals another mystery. It is not Him who gives to sit. Every place is given by his Father and since eternity. What the Father has prepared must be done, at the moment and at the time that shall come. The most holy shadow of the Father always hovers upon the life of Christ Jesus. Everything is from the Father in his life. Everything must be from the Father in the life of each of his disciple. The Father is the one who prepares all things according to his eternal Providence. Jesus is always obedient to the will of the Father.**

**Let us read the text of Mk 10,35-45**

**Then James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came to him and said to him, "Teacher, we want you to do for us whatever we ask of you." He replied, "What do you wish (me) to do for you?" They answered him, "Grant that in your glory we may sit one at your right and the other at your left." Jesus said to them, "You do not know what you are asking. Can you drink the cup that I drink or be baptized with the baptism with which I am baptized?" They said to him, "We can." Jesus said to them, "The cup that I drink, you will drink, and with the baptism with which I am baptized, you will be baptized; but to sit at my right or at my left is not mine to give but is for those for whom it has been prepared." When the ten heard this, they became indignant at James and John. Jesus summoned them and said to them, "You know that those who are recognized as rulers over the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones make their authority over them felt. But it shall not be so among you. Rather, whoever wishes to be great among you will be your servant; whoever wishes to be first among you will be the slave of all. For the Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many."**

**The other ten, hearing the request of James and John, become indignant at them. They become indignant since they see a dishonest act in them. They consider their request a serious lack of respect. It is as if they had been excluded in an arbitrary, capricious from the possibility of occupying the first places. They too have the right to such an aspiration. What do James and John have more, or what greater right do they have over the others? If we are all equal, no one should play smart, intelligent, wise, learned, prudent, brisk to trample the right of others. This is the reason of the indignation. Now Jesus reveals with divine clarity the abyssal difference existing between his kingdom and all kingdoms of this world. This difference must be put into heart, if they want to start thinking as children of the new kingdom that is about to come. In the kingdom of this world, the rulers dominate and exercise every power over the nations. Rule and power cause oppression, submissiveness. They create slaves and servants. Only one rules and all the others are at his service. This is the reality one lives in the kingdom of this world.**

**The reality to be lived in the kingdom of Christ Jesus is totally opposite. Whoever wants to be great among the ones who are in the kingdom of Christ Jesus will have to be their servant. Greatness is the service. The more one serves and the more he is great. The less he serves and the less he is great. Great is not the one who is served by the others, but the one who serves everyone. This reality will not have to be lived only as an example, or in a sporadic way or in some particular ritual, as that of the Holy Thursday. This reality must be daily, instant-by-instant, moment by moment. It is form and essence of all the ones who want to be kingdom of God on our earth. Being true kingdom of God is living a reason of total overturning of respect for all that one lives in the world.**

**Now Jesus gives himself as constant image to imitate. Who is indeed the Son of man? Jesus, who is the highest in dignity in Heaven and on earth, has not come to be served, but to serve and to give his life as ransom for many ones. Jesus gave his life from the top of the cross. He gave it for the entire world and not only for his disciples. The disciples must always look at Jesus Crucified, if they want to know how one lives in his kingdom. The style of the service of Christ Jesus will have to be the style of each of his disciple. With a great difference, though: Jesus is the first by nature and by divine essence. He made himself the last one by vocation. The disciples are not the first by nature. They are the last ones by nature. They must always remain the last ones to raise themselves to be the first. They will be the first by always remaining the last ones. With this truth put into heart, the life of the disciple will always be lived in the same way as Christ Jesus. It is from this truth that one must start, if one wants the salvation of the world. The salvation of the world is in and from our giving the life for everyone, with no distinction. Until one does not think like this, no one might never say to be Christian. May the Mother of Jesus make us true servants each other.**