**TUESDAY OCTOBER 19 – XXIX WEEK O.T. [B]**

**Blessed are those servants whom the master finds vigilant on his arrival. Amen, I say to you, he will gird himself, have them recline at table, and proceed to wait on them.**

**Jesus resumes the proclaimed truth when He spoke about the foolish man who made his entire life depend on his goods. Let us read again the text of the Gospel for a moment: “Someone in the crowd said to him, "Teacher, tell my brother to share the inheritance with me." He replied to him, "Friend, who appointed me as your judge and arbitrator?" Then he said to the crowd, "Take care to guard against all greed, for though one may be rich, one's life does not consist of possessions." Then he told them a parable. "There was a rich man whose land produced a bountiful harvest. He asked himself, 'What shall I do, for I do not have space to store my harvest?' And he said, 'This is what I shall do: I shall tear down my barns and build larger ones. There I shall store all my grain and other goods and I shall say to myself, "Now as for you, you have so many good things stored up for many years, rest, eat, drink, be merry!" But God said to him, 'You fool, this night your life will be demanded of you; and the things you have prepared, to whom will they belong?' Thus will it be for the one who stores up treasure for himself but is not rich in what matters to God." (Lk 12,13-20) Here is the sentence that interests us: 'You fool, this night your life will be demanded of you.’**

**From this truth already proclaimed, Jesus wants his disciples always to consider themselves about to depart, to leave this earth to reach heaven. Be ready as if you had to start a night journey immediately: gird your loins to be able to walk without stumbling; lighted lamps to see where to place the feet. Jesus wants us dressed as travellers, as pilgrims. He wants us to consider ourselves as travellers and pilgrims toward Heaven. The image that is behind this invitation of Christ is that of the ancient Easter: “The LORD said to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt,"This month shall stand at the head of your calendar; you shall reckon it the first month of the year. Tell the whole community of Israel: On the tenth of this month every one of your families must procure for itself a lamb, one apiece for each household. If a family is too small for a whole lamb, it shall join the nearest household in procuring one and shall share in the lamb in proportion to the number of persons who partake of it. The lamb must be a year-old male and without blemish. You may take it from either the sheep or the goats. You shall keep it until the fourteenth day of this month, and then, with the whole assembly of Israel present, it shall be slaughtered during the evening twilight.They shall take some of its blood and apply it to the two doorposts and the lintel of every house in which they partake of the lamb. That same night they shall eat its roasted flesh with unleavened bread and bitter herbs. It shall not be eaten raw or boiled, but roasted whole, with its head and shanks and inner organs. None of it must be kept beyond the next morning; whatever is left over in the morning shall be burned up. "This is how you are to eat it: with your loins girt, sandals on your feet and your staff in hand, you shall eat like those who are in flight. It is the Passover of the LORD. For on this same night I will go through Egypt, striking down every first - born of the land, both man and beast, and executing judgment on all the gods of Egypt-I, the LORD! But the blood will mark the houses where you are. Seeing the blood, I will pass over you; thus, when I strike the land of Egypt, no destructive blow will come upon you. "This day shall be a memorial feast for you, which all your generations shall celebrate with pilgrimage to the LORD, as a perpetual institution. (Ex 12, 1-14)**

**The journey was imminent. One needed to act fast. It was urgent to leave as soon as the Lord would have given the sign of the departure. Sedentary life does not belong to Christianity. The imminent journey toward the eternal Kingdom of God belongs to Christianity. Being always ready to begin and fulfil this journey waiting for all of us belongs to Christianity. Since the journey is always imminent, the disciple of Jesus must always be ready to begin it any moment.**

**Another image is that of the servitude living in the house of a master. The master leaves for a wedding. The servants do not know neither the day nor the time of his return. Not knowing neither the time nor the day, they must always be in a state of readiness. When the master comes back, they must be ready to open the door. He knocks and they immediately open. In this image, too, the truth that underlies is the immediateness of the opening of the door. That is why they must be awake and vigilant. They cannot fall asleep. They must stay on their workplace. The disciple of Jesus does not know the time when he must leave. He ignores it. The disciple of Jesus does not know when Jesus comes and knocks at his door. That is why he cannot fall asleep. He cannot be distracted. He cannot abandon his guard and vigilant post. He is obliged always to be alert more than a sentinel is.**

**Let us read the text of Lk 12,35-38**

**"Gird your loins and light your lamps and be like servants who await their master's return from a wedding, ready to open immediately when he comes and knocks. Blessed are those servants whom the master finds vigilant on his arrival. Amen, I say to you, he will gird himself, have them recline at table, and proceed to wait on them. And should he come in the second or third watch and find them prepared in this way, blessed are those servants.**

**For those servants the master will find awake on his return something unprecedented, of really great and extraordinary happens. The master himself will be the one who will serve them. The master will make himself their servant. He will gird himself. True sign of reward to be able to work well. He will have them recline at the table and he will proceeds to serve them. The servants take the place of the master, the master will take the place of the servants. The servant is constituted as master, the master makes himself their servant. This is not only an image. This is the truth of Christ Jesus. This happened in the Last Supper:** “**Before the feast of Passover, Jesus knew that his hour had come to pass from this world to the Father. He loved his own in the world and he loved them to the end. The devil had already induced Judas, son of Simon the Iscariot, to hand him over. So, during supper, fully aware that the Father had put everything into his power and that he had come from God and was returning to God, he rose from supper and took off his outer garments. He took a towel and tied it around his waist. Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and dry them with the towel around his waist.** **So when he had washed their feet (and) put his garments back on and reclined at table again, he said to them, "Do you realize what I have done for you? You call me 'teacher' and 'master,' and rightly so, for indeed I am. If I, therefore, the master and teacher, have washed your feet, you ought to wash one another's feet. I have given you a model to follow, so that as I have done for you, you should also do.” (cf. Jn 13,1-20).**

**This will happen in the Last Supper in Heaven**

**In this “prophecy” of Jesus it is revealed, in some way, the overturning that will happen in Heaven. God will make himself servant of his chosen. He will serve them at his table for eternity. It is a true overturning of the reality: the servant is raised until being the master, the master will lower himself making he himself servant for love. This is the astonishing, marvellous, extraordinary strength of the love of God for man. The love of God is capable of this, too. According to this love, we are called to live: lowering us to serve the brothers. Exalting the others by humbling ourselves. May this charity be today and ever the style of each disciple of the Lord. The parable further insists on the unpredictability of the time of the return of the master. He may arrive in the middle of the night, but also before dawn, namely when the night is about to end. Beatitude, namely the exaltation until taking the place of the master is in the fulfilment of their mission of guarding and being alert. The one who will be found at his place, awake, careful, ready to open the door as soon as the master knocks is blessed, namely he is served by the master. No one really knows when the time of our death comes. May the Mother of Jesus make us servants, alert, vigilant.**