**WEDNESDAY OCTOBER 20 – XXIX WEEK O.T. [B]**

**Blessed is that servant whom his master on arrival finds doing so. Truly, I say to you, he will put him in charge of all his property.**

**Each one of us is invited to be ready since, at the time we do not imagine, the Son of man comes. The time is not calculable earlier; it is not even predictable by very high calculation of probability. The time of one’s own death is singular, unique for every man, unrepeatable. Every instant is good for the coming of the Son of man. If the Lord delays the time of our death or of the end of the world, he does it for one only goal: our greater sanctification and conversion of those who do not believe in God yet. The Lord wants no one to be lost and that is why He allows some favourable time so that everyone may be sanctified and converted. The delay in fulfilling his promises is most pure charity, love, mercy. For us one only command is valid: being vigilant, staying alert and awake. Any time the Lord comes, He will have to find us with the lighted lamps waiting for opening the door.**

**Now Simon Peter wants to know for whom Jesus is saying these things. Is He saying that for them, namely only for the disciples or is He saying that for everyone? To whom are his words addressed? The image always remains that of the master and of the servant. The servant one is speaking about this time is a faithful and prudent steward. Let us try to read the words of Jesus carefully and to give them the right interpretation. The Master will put a faithful and prudent steward in charge of his servants. This steward, who will have to be faithful and prudent, he will have to distribute the food allowance at the proper time to all those who are subjected to him. How will the master know the one who is faithful and prudent and who is instead dishonest and imprudent? If he is not faithful and prudent he might never put him in charge of his servants with the order to distribute the food allowance to them at the proper time. First, he will have to know whom he can trust, though. He will have to know who is prudent. That is why there is the time of the trial.**

**Here is the faithful and prudent servant who can be chosen as the steward of all goods of the master. Faithful and prudent is the one the master finds awake on his return, at his workplace, behind the door ready to open immediately, as soon as the master knocks. The master can trust this servant. He tested him and he resulted as faithful. He gave him a task and he carried it out faithfully, to a good end. This servant can consider himself to be really blessed, happy, filled with joy. The master will precisely choose this servant and he will put him in charge of all his servants. He showed to be faithful, he deserves esteem and trust. The master can surely trust this servant. This “prophecy” of Jesus, that is true revelation of the acting of the Father toward us, shows that the Lord always tests us. If we are faithful in the trial, He will choose us, He will raise us, He will give us tasks of trust and esteem. If we result to be unfaithful and imprudent, foolish and ignorant, He might never give superior tasks. We would destroy his Kingdom.**

**We are still on the trial of faithfulness and of honesty on the part of the servant of the master. Wisdom and intelligence teach us that one does not know neither the time and nor the time of the return of the master. On any moment, in any instant the master can come, he can return. Foolishness and ignorance are the deceit of life. Instead, the foolish, the ignorant thinks, that the master is delaying his coming and he behaves according to this thought of foolishness and ignorance. Foolishness and ignorance generate not good, not right, not opportune actions. They generate wicked, evil, dishonest, monstrous actions. This foolish and ignorant servant begins to beat the menservants and the maidservants. He begins to eat and drink and get drunk. Drunkenness is daughter of foolishness and it is also its mother. In fact, in drunkenness, the foolish loses the control of his conscience and of his will and he may carry out any misdeed, even the most horrendous.**

**Let us read the text of Lk 12,39-48**

**Be sure of this: if the master of the house had known the hour when the thief was coming, he would not have let his house be broken into. You also must be prepared, for at an hour you do not expect, the Son of Man will come." Then Peter said, "Lord, is this parable meant for us or for everyone?" And the Lord replied, "Who, then, is the faithful and prudent steward whom the master will put in charge of his servants to distribute (the) food allowance at the proper time? Blessed is that servant whom his master on arrival finds doing so. Truly, I say to you, he will put him in charge of all his property. But if that servant says to himself, 'My master is delayed in coming,' and begins to beat the menservants and the maidservants, to eat and drink and get drunk, then that servant's master will come on an unexpected day and at an unknown hour and will punish him severely and assign him a place with the unfaithful. That servant who knew his master's will but did not make preparations nor act in accord with his will shall be beaten severely; and the servant who was ignorant of his master's will but acted in a way deserving of a severe beating shall be beaten only lightly. Much will be required of the person entrusted with much, and still more will be demanded of the person entrusted with more.**

**Here is an example from the Holy Scripture about the trial of faithfulness:** **Then he reached out and took the knife to slaughter his son. But the LORD'S messenger called to him from heaven, "Abraham, Abraham!" "Yes, Lord," he answered. "Do not lay your hand on the boy," said the messenger. "Do not do the least thing to him. I know now how devoted you are to God, since you did not withhold from me your own beloved son." As Abraham looked about, he spied a ram caught by its horns in the thicket. So he went and took the ram and offered it up as a holocaust in place of his son. Abraham named the site Yahweh-yireh; hence people now say, "On the mountain the LORD will see." Again the LORD'S messenger called to Abraham from heaven and said: "I swear by myself, declares the LORD, that because you acted as you did in not withholding from me your beloved son, I will bless you abundantly and make your descendants as countless as the stars of the sky and the sands of the seashore; your descendants shall take possession of the gates of their enemies, and in your descendants all the nations of the earth shall find blessing - all this because you obeyed my command.''(Gen 22,10-18)**

**Here is another example of faithfulness from the Book of Sirach: Keeping watch over riches wastes the flesh, and the care of wealth drives away rest. Concern for one's livelihood banishes slumber; more than a serious illness it disturbs repose. The rich man labors to pile up wealth, and his only rest is wanton pleasure; The poor man toils for a meager subsistence, and if ever he rests, he finds himself in want. The lover of gold will not be free from sin, for he who pursues wealth is led astray by it. Many have been ensnared by gold, though destruction lay before their eyes; It is a stumbling block to those who are avid for it, a snare for every fool. Happy the rich man found without fault, who turns not aside after gain! Who is he, that we may praise him? he, of all his kindred, has done wonders, For he has been tested by gold and come off safe, and this remains his glory; He could have sinned but did not, could have done evil but would not, So that his possessions are secure, and the assembly recounts his praises. (Sir 31,1-11)**

**Every disciple of Jesus must always be aware of this: the moment of the trial will always come for him. The Book of Sirach also teaches this truth:** **My son, when you come to serve the LORD, prepare yourself for trials. Be sincere of heart and steadfast, undisturbed in time of adversity. Cling to him, forsake him not; thus will your future be great. Accept whatever befalls you, in crushing misfortune be patient; For in fire gold is tested, and worthy men in the crucible of humiliation. Trust God and he will help you; make straight your ways and hope in him. You who fear the LORD, wait for his mercy, turn not away lest you fall. You who fear the LORD, trust him, and your reward will not be lost. You who fear the LORD, hope for good things, for lasting joy and mercy. (Sir 2,1-9). May the Mother of God obtain for us the gift of the great prudence. We will overcome every trial.**