**NOVEMBER 07 – XXXII SUNDAY O.T. [B]**

**"Beware of the scribes, who like to go around in long robes and accept greetings in the marketplaces, seats of honor in synagogues, and places of honor at banquets. They devour the houses of widows and, as a pretext, recite lengthy prayers. They will receive a very severe condemnation."**

**Jesus does not like the religion of the scribes. It is a religion not pleased to his Father, since it is a religion entirely aimed at the worship of one’s own person. God wants a religion that is faith in his Word and obedience to it. In the course of his teaching, He said: "Beware of the scribes, who like to go around in long robes and accept greetings in the marketplaces.” The long robes are useful to be noted, to stand out, not to be seen as the others. Accepting greetings in the marketplaces attests that they give much importance to the reverence toward their person. They did not concern themselves with God. They only loved themselves. God was the stool to go up to receive glory and every honour. The scribes could be second to none. In every place, the first seat belonged to them by right by then consolidated. They loved to have the seats of honour in synagogues and the places of honour at banquets. They first. Then, the others. This is a great arrogance. When arrogance dwells in a heart, there is no place neither for the Lord nor for men. The arrogant has only himself in the heart. Arrogance even occupies the most remote corners of the soul, spirit, body. Arrogance ruins all things. For the worship of his own person, the arrogant is capable of denying everything, put everything under his feet and destroy. If the arrogant cancels the truth of God and his glory, will he respect anything?**

**Here is what the scribes can do well: “They devour the houses of widows and, as a pretext, recite lengthy prayers.” When one devours the houses of the widows, we enter the sin of the great immorality. God disappears from the heart. If God is not in the heart, even the prayer is not said for the glory of God, but for oneself, to increase one’s own glory. Here is the sentence of Jesus over their life: “They will receive a very severe condemnation." They are scribes, teachers. The condemnation is more severe, since they have the obligation of believing in the Word, living the Word. Being the teachers of the Word, they will have to respond to God for every betrayal of it. The condemnation is more severe. Even the Evangelist Matthew concludes the public teaching of Jesus by denouncing the corrupted religion of the scribes and of the Pharisees, inviting his disciples to keep far from their modality and way of living his most pure Word. Jesus is above every wisdom of earth. Jesus is true Teacher. Jesus is Son of David and Son of God, He is Son and He is the Lord of David. Jesus is beyond every man. One must affirm this truth. Jesus reveals the falsity of the religion of the scribes. Today the Christian is lacking in his truth. The Evangelist Mark has led us, by holding our hand, to the sublime truth of Christ that puts Him above every man, rather it constitutes Him Teacher and Judge of the truth of every action. On the contrary, we are all committed to belittle Christ, denigrating his unicity in several ways and forms. By now, the relativization of Christ has reached the highest point.**

**Let us read the text of Mk 12,38-44**

**In the course of his teaching he said, "Beware of the scribes, who like to go around in long robes and accept greetings in the marketplaces, seats of honor in synagogues, and places of honor at banquets. They devour the houses of widows and, as a pretext, recite lengthy prayers. They will receive a very severe condemnation." He sat down opposite the treasury and observed how the crowd put money into the treasury. Many rich people put in large sums. A poor widow also came and put in two small coins worth a few cents. Calling his disciples to himself, he said to them, "Amen, I say to you, this poor widow put in more than all the other contributors to the treasury. For they have all contributed from their surplus wealth, but she, from her poverty, has contributed all she had, her whole livelihood."**

**Who is Jesus, further? The man who does not see according appearances. He sees the heart of every man. He knows what is in every heart. Seated down opposite the treasury, He observed how the crowd put money into the treasury. Many rich people put in large sums. When one sees according to appearances, one sees the coin, one does not see the heart, one does not see the person throwing coins. One admires or praises the person according to the coin thrown in the treasury. That person has put much. The other one less. This is because we do not have eyes of Holy Spirit. We are capable of seeing only what appears. Many times, we are so blind not even to see the appearance. We are prisoned in our heart and in our thoughts.**

**Now a poor widow comes, she puts in two small coins, worth a few cents. The one who sees according to the appearances will say that a cent is a very little thing. It is nothing. Jesus does not look at the thrown coin. He looks at the heart who puts it. Not only. He looks at the life of the person who puts it. Every gesture of the hands is a gesture ruled by the heart, but it is also a gesture in which one reveals a life. First of all, it must be said that not only is the woman a widow, but she is also poor. From the Holy Scripture we know that Elijah was sent from the Lord to a poor widow with a child, who had a last handful of flour and a last drop of oil in a jar to be fed. This woman has not hesitated to feed Elijah. If the woman is poor and widow, two coins have a value for her. They are not a little thing. Jesus knows that the woman is poor, she is widow, she put in two coins, worth a few cents. Knowing the heart, He pointed her to the disciples.**

**Here is what Jesus does: He educates his disciples never to look at the appearances. Tomorrow in their life, as Elijah, they might find a poor widow who is ready to put the two coins, her richness, at their disposal. They will not have to despise her. They will have to accept her service, as Elijah accepted the service of the widow of Zarephath. For them it would be an affront to the preached Gospel if they chose the house of the rich man. The rich man gives the cent, but not the heart. The poor widow gives the heart and the little things she has with the heart. Despising a widow, choosing the heart of the rich man, it is a very serious offence to the Gospel. The poor chooses the poor: “Calling his disciples to himself, he said to them, "Amen, I say to you, this poor widow put in more than all the other contributors to the treasury.” She has put in more than the other contributors since she put in all her life in the treasury. She put her faith, her hope, her charity. She put in all her love for her Lord. For the glory of his God, she renounced to everything. She did not put in the two coins to show up, but for the glory of God. One gives everything to God, even one’s own life. This poor widow has given it. She kept nothing for her. She believes in her God. She knows that the one who honours the Lord properly will always be honoured by the Lord. She loves and she will be loved.**

**Here is the great teaching of Jesus: “For they have all contributed from their surplus wealth, but she, from her poverty, has contributed all she had, her whole livelihood." She gave everything. She kept nothing for her. In some ways, this widow reminds us another widow, poor, as well. She reminds us of Ruth. This widow has renounced to her home country and family, to have a life, to consecrate herself to support another widow, her mother-in-law. What will the disciples have to learn from this example? The first thing never to judge according to the appearance. Sometimes a soul is holier; it has more love than many that appear to be willing to devour the heaven and the earth. Sometimes the little is worth more than the much. Tomorrow when they are in the world, people will pretend that they always have a righteous judgement and a sound discernment. This is why they must walk with the eyes of the Spirit. Not to be wrong in evaluations and in discernments they will always have to be filled of Holy Spirit. The Spirit will always be the one who will fill them with every wisdom, intelligence, knowledge, vision in spirit. Finally, one will never have to despise the houses of the poor because they will be attracted by the houses of the rich. Choosing the poorest house is true evangelic testimony. May the Mother of God make us true testimonies of the Gospel of Her Son. Amen.**