**WEDNESDAY NOVEMBER 24 – XXXIV WEEK O.T. [B]**

**“You will even be handed over by parents, brothers, relatives, and friends, and they will put some of you to death. You will be hated by all because of my name, but not a hair on your head will be destroyed.”**

**Will the life of the disciple or of the faithful in Christ be devoid of every contrast, every sufferance, every difficulties? Will it pass in a simple, quiet, serene way because of their faith and of their faithfulness to the moral Law? Even on them, the sin of the world will overthrow to destroy them. Those who will seize and persecute them, who will hand them over to synagogues and to prison, leading them before king and governors, because of the name of Jesus, will be many. The disciples of Jesus will be imprisoned, enchained, banished, denounced, betrayed, denied, sold, tortured, killed with every kind of death. This will be their history. This history will last until the consummation of the centuries. This history will attest their truth. The disciples of Jesus crucify the world. The world crucifies the disciples of Jesus. If the disciple of Jesus accepts the world, the world accepts the disciple of Jesus. Why will the disciples of Jesus be led before king and governors? Before kings and governors means: in public judgement. Why will they be led to public judgement?**

**They will be led to public judgement to bear testimony. Testimony to whom? Precisely before kings and governors. Those are the responsible of the public affairs. They are the responsible of the truth, of the sound morality, of the justice. The disciples of Jesus will attest to them what the truth of truths, what the morality of moralities, what the justice of justices is. They will attest to them publicly, in courts, officially, under oath, at the price of their lives. Theirs is an official testimony, in the same way the testimony of Jesus before the court of the Jews and the Romans has been official. Made the public, sworn testimony, in court, at the price of one’s own life, kings and governors will have no pretext of their incredulity and of their non-faith in the testimony made to them about Jesus Christ the Lord. Persecution is the official way to preach the Gospel to those who are above. This official way will never fail. Even kings and governors must be evangelized. The ways of God always dominate the ways of men. This is a really mysterious way to bear testimony to Christ Jesus. The Gospel is proclaimed through this way, as well. The Lord turns every persecution in an announcement of the Gospel.**

**The disciple of Jesus must prepare no defense beforehand. He does not know how one speaks to kings, governors, magistrates, judges. He does not know what words he should say to touch the heart of these people. Whoever knows the heart is God alone and God alone must speak in those moments. Is he led before kings and governors? He must only put himself in prayer. He must hand his life over to prayer. The Lord knows what to do of his life. If He needs it for other testimonies, as it happened for Paul, for Peter, for others, the Lord keeps it and frees him. Instead, if fort the disciple of the Lord the time to set sail to reach the other shore of the eternal Kingdom of God has come, then sails will be set and he will pass through the martyrdom. The Lord always knows what to do with us. We may be useful on earth and we may be useful in Heaven. He knows where we are more useful and He acts with us according to his will. For this reason, we must not prepare our defense.**

**Let us read the text of Lk 21,12-19**

**"Before all this happens, however, they will seize and persecute you, they will hand you over to the synagogues and to prisons, and they will have you led before kings and governors because of my name. It will lead to your giving testimony. Remember, you are not to prepare your defense beforehand, for I myself shall give you a wisdom in speaking that all your adversaries will be powerless to resist or refute. You will even be handed over by parents, brothers, relatives, and friends, and they will put some of you to death. You will be hated by all because of my name, but not a hair on your head will be destroyed. By your perseverance you will secure your lives.**

**For the disciple of the Lord, is at there, at least, on this earth, a safe shelter, a den, a hole, a place where he can find peace? Will there be some friend protecting, keeping, hiding him, if necessary? The words of Jesus are with no “hope”. There are no safe people, no safe places for the disciple of Jesus. Neither parents, nor brothers, neither relatives, nor friend are safe. Those can all turn into betrayers. Some disciples may even be killed by parents, brothers, relatives, friends. Prudence must be highest. One can trust no one. Was Jesus not betrayed, sold by one of his Apostles? What happened with Jesus can happen with each of his disciple. Nothing is sure for the disciple of Jesus. This is why he must be simple as doves but wary as serpents.**

**The hate against the disciples of Jesus is truly universal. But when does the world hate the disciple of Jesus? It hates him when the disciple of Jesus lives the entire Gospel, proclaims the entire Gospel, testifies the entire Gospel, makes the entire Gospel believable. It hates him when the disciple of Jesus made the Gospel his own life, including his mouth, his heart, his hands, his feet. If the disciple of Jesus lives a life without the Gospel, he will be revered, lauded, praised, exalted. The world loves and respects what is its, what belongs to it and every disciple of Jesus who does not live the Gospel belongs to the world, not to Jesus. This is why the world respects it. It includes him among its disciples.**

**Why will not even a hair on the head of the disciple of the Lord be destroyed? Because the Father keeps it in the treasure trove of the life before Him and He will hand it over to him, as new and shining, on the day of the resurrection of the righteous. The Scripture always speaks of the righteous persecuted. God is the guardian of the righteous. The wicked man may kill him, but the Lord will keep his life in the treasure trove of Heaven and He give it entirely new and shining on the moment of the resurrection on the last day. With this trust, the righteous does not fear to give his life for the name of Christ Jesus. It is a lost life in time but found again in eternity, entire and glorious.**

**Perseverance is in faith, in charity, in hope, in the testimony until the total gift of the life, consecrated to the Lord for the spreading of his Gospel in the world. Temptation has one only goal: making us tired in the path toward the eternal Kingdom. How does it manage to make us tired? By weakening our spirit. How does our spirit weaken? In the same way as the body weakens; either by nourishing it bad or at all, or wearing it down with beating and wounds to blood. The spirit weakens every time one deprives it of its spiritual nourishment that is the Eucharist and the prayer. The Eucharist and the prayer are the nutrients making the spirit practiced to the race toward the eternal Kingdom of God. The spirit wears itself down with the venial sin and bleeds out with the mortal sin. When one reaches the spiritual bleeding, it is easy to abandon the race, it is easy to withdraw, it is easy to fall from faith, from hope, from charity, from testimony, from evangelization. The tiredness of the spirit can take everyone. If it got tired, every other one will tire, unless, as Elijah, he eats and drinks the new food that turns us in all spiritual beings.**

**One day without spiritual nourishment is equal to forty days without material food. The spirit feels exhausted, faint, weakened, bloodless. It is easy prey, first of the venial sin and then of the mortal sin, as well. Whoever is prey of the mortal sin loses every desire of perseverating until the end. He abandons himself to his pond of evil and he slowly walks toward the death of the eternal life of Heaven. We have the means to be durable and strong in the spirit. We often neglect them, though. We do not use them. The results are below the eyes of everybody: we no longer perseverate. We have fallen from the love of once, the first love. May our heavenly Mother help us. We wish to walk from faith to faith, from light to light.**