**SATURDAY NOVEMBER 27 – XXXIV WEEK O.T. [B]**

**"Beware that your hearts do not become drowsy from carousing and drunkenness and the anxieties of daily life, and that day catch you by surprise like a trap.”**

**Carousing is the ruin of our Christian existence because when a heart is caught by it, it comes as blown out, fragmented, pulverized, and every minuscule particle of it is conquered by what happens in the world and, since many and infinite things happen in this world, the heart becomes a tramp after them. It wanders from here to there. In carousing man is no longer master of his heart, he is not able to rule it, nor direct it toward a goal. Precisely because it is dissipated, the heart is not even in man, since it is in things; however, it is not in the thing in a total way, even in the things it is dissipated, broken, fragmented and with a heart that is not inside man, but in the things, there is no path toward God, there is only some formality, lived from time to time, or as a social necessity, or as culture, namely structure of the social life.**

**With drunkenness, on the contrary, one does not own the spirit of man, that is made unusable, inefficacious, inefficient. It is a spirit that runs out in the moment and therefore impossible to constitute it as instrument and as helm so as to orientate our life toward the kingdom of heaven. With drunkenness, man also loses the sense of time, of things, of relations, he loses the sense itself of life that he drowns and kills in a moment. So that one may be vigilant, be on guard, be very careful, it is necessary that one always have the highest mastery of his own spirit that must be clever, able to discern, careful to be made, now and immediately, prompt in the decisions of salvation. With drunkenness, man only lives an animal, vegetative, non-intellective, volitional, free life; he is a slave and a prisoner of his vice, a person one cannot count on for some help, neither material nor spiritual. Here is why drunkenness are so dangerous in order to salvation of our soul, since for them one also loses the sense of having a soul to save and a kingdom of heaven to strive for, by putting every attention and every care.**

**Instead, in the anxiety of life one has both the mastery of the spirit and of the heart; the one and the other are, however, reversed, diverted, sequestered for aims not properly theirs; earth has made them prisoners of it and everything they do, they do it for the earth and to live and remain in it. Earth is everything for them, and without earth, nothing exists for them. In the anxiety, therefore, it is difficult to begin a true and authentic spiritual path, of sapiential growth, of immersion of the heart in the things dealing with God; it is difficult since the things of heart do not exist, they are as forgotten, cancelled from one’s own existence. How can one think to Heaven, then, if heaven does not exist in heart and in mind? How can one lead man to the high, if the high is not even seen as a very remote problem? Here is why Jesus warns us so that we do not let ourselves be caught by the anxieties of the things of this world. When the anxiety takes a heart and a heart, they are no longer free, they are prisoners of it for the entire time in which it remains in the heart and in the mind. It is truly the end for the spirituality of man. However, some dust of religiosity that is often shown and expressed just in the worship, remains. At least, thus was once. Today, one is missing this too and only the strictly necessary worship remains that is required by an environment and a world living it as a cultural substrate. Nothing more. The heart and the mind are not in the worship. In the worship, there is only the body and the historical tradition that is lived as it is still lived. If tomorrow someone begins no longer living it, one will abandon it with no serious damage, rather with a sense of liberation and relieve. Finally free from heaven and its reminders… This is the current mind-set, largely. Today one wishes to take every trace of God away of our earth. Nothing reminding God will have to exist.**

**Let us read the text of Lk 21,34-36**

**"Beware that your hearts do not become drowsy from carousing and drunkenness and the anxieties of daily life, and that day catch you by surprise like a trap. For that day will assault everyone who lives on the face of the earth. Be vigilant at all times and pray that you have the strength to escape the tribulations that are imminent and to stand before the Son of Man."**

**As remedy, Jesus demands the vigilance and the prayer. With the vigilance, the spirit is always in a state of waiting; it is as the watchman who is afraid of the coming of the enemy to destroy, rob, defeat, steal and he is afraid of it every moment and this is why he is vigilant, he is on guard, he concedes not even a moment of distraction to himself, as one only moment of inattention might be of great ruin for him and for all the others with him. This is the law of history, it must also be the law of the spirit. However, one often lets himself be lulled thinking that other laws are valid for the spirit, or that the law of vigilance is suspended completely, the Lord will think of remedying each inattention of ours. This is false, very false and inattentions always have eternal consequences.**

**On the contrary, with the prayer, one obtains from God that strength and that necessary light that allows us not only of remaining vigilant and attentive, but also of walking swiftly toward the appointment with eternity. The prayer frees the hearts from imperfections, from vices, from possible tiredness, from every temptation that might rise along our path with the aim of having it deviated. The prayer prepares the heart and the spirit to the holy action and gives the soul the resistance in perseverance. As the food is for the life of the body, so the prayer is the life for the soul; without the prayer, the soul weakens, decays, dies and man is prey and conquest of his concupiscence that is abandon of the life of the kingdom to merge on the paths of evil on the way toward the eternal death.**

**Since the kingdom of heaven is the dearest good, the hidden treasure, the precious pearl, the gem of the inestimable value, man must put every attention so that nothing is lost because of his inattention, of a distraction, a moment of leisure and of abandon of the law of vigilance. As for the things of earth, in certain situations of high risk, one only moment of distraction might put the life of an entire town in danger – one may think about the responsibility of a watchman in time of war, or put in very strategic places – so it is for the life of the spirit: one only temptation knocking at our door and to which we give immediate listening might be cause of eternal ruin for us. We are not vigilant for a very simple reason: we do not believe in the truth of the Word of Jesus who affirms the real possibility of ending up in the eternal damnation, of losing the future life forever, that joy that is staying with God in his dwelling. Until one takes the way of faith again, until each of us thinks that the Word of Jesus is said but it will never be fulfilled in us, what is the use of the vigilance, then? Being vigilant has a sense if the danger is real, true, imminent; if there is no danger, if life is only a performance, if hell is empty and everyone is safe in heaven, then what is the use of being vigilant, of being attentive? The true problem we must ask our spirit is: is the Word of Jesus true, or is it a word of man; does it really say our future reality of eternal perdition, or does it not exist, will it not exist, can it not exist? Is the Word of Jesus word of God, therefore guaranteed by his truthfulness, or is it a word suitable to the occasion? But what sense would a word suitable to the occasion, if the entire life is orientated and aimed so that no man is lost? It would really be the absolute countersense. Jesus gives his life so that man, accepting his truth and his grace, does not end up into perdition, and then one declares not true a word inviting and prompting us to be on our guard, to be vigilant not to lose the eternal life. That moving our spirit is really a weird logic. The logic is weird, since it is fruit of a mind corrupted by sin, or not ruled by the thought of God. When mind is ruled by the thought of God, it knows that the Word of Jesus is true, tremendously true, so that man may minimally think of a word suitable to the occasion. Mother of God, help us. Make us of true faith.**