**FRIDAY JANUARY 07 – AFTER EPIPHANY [C]**

**From that time on, Jesus began to preach and say, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."**

**Today Jesus begins his mission on our earth, fulfilling the prophecy of Isaiah. For the prophet, the light of God brightening the nations comes from the Galilee. Here is what the prophecy of Isaiah and also that of the Old Simeon says: “Then his****[yoke](https://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0839/1/16.HTM) shall be****[removed](https://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0839/X4.HTM) from them, and his****[burden](https://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0839/1/E5.HTM) from their****[shoulder](https://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0839/2/I.HTM).** **First he degraded the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali; but in the end he has glorified the seaward road, the land West of the Jordan, the District of the Gentiles. Anguish has taken wing, dispelled is darkness; for there is no gloom where but now there was distress. The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; Upon those who dwelt in the land of gloom a light has shone. You have brought them abundant joy and great rejoicing, As they rejoice before you as at the harvest, as men make merry when dividing spoils. For the yoke that burdened them, the pole on their shoulder, And the rod of their taskmaster you have smashed, as on the day of Midian. For every boot that tramped in battle, every cloak rolled in blood, will be burned as fuel for flames. For a child is born to us, a son is given us; upon his shoulder dominion rests. They name him Wonder-Counselor, God-Hero, Father-Forever, Prince of Peace.His dominion is vast and forever peaceful, From David's throne, and over his kingdom, which he confirms and sustains By judgment and justice, both now and forever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this!” (Is 8, 21-23-, 9, 1-6)** **"Now, Master, you may let your servant go in peace, according to your word, for my eyes have seen your salvation, which you prepared in sight of all the peoples, a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and glory for your people Israel." (Lk 2, 29-32) This is the eternal, divine, human truth of Jesus the Lord: He is the Light of the world. He is the Sun of truth and of justice, of mercy and of forgiveness, of reconciliation and of life. He only is the Sun. All the other lay in the land of haze and of darkness.**

**The fact that Jesus is the only Sun, given to us by the Father for our salvation, redemption, liberation from slavery and from the power of Satan is not enough to be saved. Jesus does not show up as the Sun, He does not reveal himself as the Sun. He shows up as the Word. He reveals himself as the Word. What is the first Word Jesus utters to men: "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." Who or what must all men convert to? They convert to his light and to his Word. They must convert to Him who is the Light God has sent to enlighten every man. To Him who is the Word in which the eternal light for all those who obey it is enclosed. Conversion is double: to Christ Jesus and to the Word. Not to Christ without the Word. Not to the Word without the conversion to Christ. To Christ and to his Word, to his Light and to his Truth are one only conversion. Never is Christ to be separated by the Word and never is the Word to be separated by Christ. One only Christ, one only Light, one only Light, one only truth, one only eternal life, one only peace, one only conversion.**

**Let us read the text of Mt 4,12-17.23-25**

**When he heard that John had been arrested, he withdrew to Galilee. He left Nazareth and went to live in Capernaum by the sea, in the region of Zebulun and Naphtali, that what had been said through Isaiah the prophet might be fulfilled: "Land of Zebulun and land of Naphtali, the way to the sea, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles, the people who sit in darkness have seen a great light, on those dwelling in a land overshadowed by death light has arisen." From that time on, Jesus began to preach and say, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." He went around all of Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom, and curing every disease and illness among the people. His fame spread to all of Syria, and they brought to him all who were sick with various diseases and racked with pain, those who were possessed, lunatics, and paralytics, and he cured them. And great crowds from Galilee, the Decapolis, Jerusalem, and Judea, and from beyond the Jordan followed him.**

**Every sacrament bestows the disciple with a particular, special conformation to Jesus the Lord. The conformation to Him clothes us with his own mission. In Christ the Lord, the disciple becomes light that must shine over the shadow and over darkness surrounding the earth. But this is not enough yet. It also becomes Word inviting to conversion and to the faith in the Word the disciple proclaims, Word that must be of Christ Jesus and not word of men. Everyone will have to live this double mission in the measure of his conformation to Jesus the Lord. If this double mission is not lived, our being disciples of Jesus is not only vain, useless, barren, it turns into offence and counter-testimony. Because of our omission and, moreover, with the adding of the offence and of the counter-testimony, the world precipitates in an even greater darkness and in an ever deeper darkness. The Christian makes him think that it is of no use to believe in Christ and it is of no use to obey and convert to his Word. Today this offence and this counter-testimony is becoming universal rule of life. Not only does one not live of Christ, in Christ, with Christ any longer. One declares Christ as non-necessary for the salvation of the world. Everyone can follow his rules of salvation, even when they are of deep darkness and of universal moral obscurity. May the Mother of Jesus come to our rescue soon. May She free the Christian from every darkness that has conquered his heart.**