**SATURDAY JANUARY 22 – SECOND WEEK O.T. [C]**

**When his relatives heard of this they set out to seize him, for they said, "He is out of his mind."**

**In order not to believe in the Word and in the Person of Jesus, sent by the Father to reveal us the eternal will about man, today Jesus is declared “foolish” “out of his mind.” This accusation will always accompany the disciples of Jesus together with the other one to be either a possessed or of working in the name of the prince of demons. Here is how these defamatory accusations were addressed to Christ the Lord:** “**Then they brought to him a demoniac who was blind and mute. He cured the mute person so that he could speak and see. All the crowd was astounded, and said, "Could this perhaps be the Son of David?" But when the Pharisees heard this, they said, "This man drives out demons only by the power of Beelzebul, the prince of demons." But he knew what they were thinking and said to them, "Every kingdom divided against itself will be laid waste, and no town or house divided against itself will stand. And if Satan drives out Satan, he is divided against himself; how, then, will his kingdom stand? And if I drive out demons by Beelzebul, by whom do your own people drive them out? Therefore they will be your judges. But if it is by the Spirit of God that I drive out demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you. How can anyone enter a strong man's house and steal his property, unless he first ties up the strong man? Then he can plunder his house. Whoever is not with me is against me, and whoever does not gather with me scatters. Therefore, I say to you, every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven people, but blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven. And whoever speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven; but whoever speaks against the holy Spirit will not be forgiven, either in this age or in the age to come. (Mt 12,22-32)**

**Here is the other accusation, that declaring him a possessed:** **The Jews answered and said to him, "Are we not right in saying that you are a Samaritan and are possessed?" Jesus answered, "I am not possessed; I honor my Father, but you dishonor me. I do not seek my own glory; there is one who seeks it and he is the one who judges. Amen, amen, I say to you, whoever keeps my word will never see death." (So) the Jews said to him, "Now we are sure that you are possessed. Abraham died, as did the prophets, yet you say, 'Whoever keeps my word will never taste death.' Are you greater than our father Abraham, who died? Or the prophets, who died? Who do you make yourself out to be?" Jesus answered, "If I glorify myself, my glory is worth nothing; but it is my Father who glorifies me, of whom you say, 'He is our God.' You do not know him, but I know him. And if I should say that I do not know him, I would be like you a liar. But I do know him and I keep his word. Abraham your father rejoiced to see my day; he saw it and was glad. So the Jews said to him, "You are not yet fifty years old and you have seen Abraham?" Jesus said to them, "Amen, amen, I say to you, before Abraham came to be, I AM." So they picked up stones to throw at him; but Jesus hid and went out of the temple area.” (Jn 8,48-59). Today Jesus is said to be “out of his mind” by his own relatives, by his kin.**

**Let us read the text of Mk 3,20-21**

**He came home. Again (the) crowd gathered, making it impossible for them even to eat. When his relatives heard of this they set out to seize him, for they said, "He is out of his mind."**

**If Jesus’s relatives have treated Him like that, his enemies will treat him with even more serious accusations. These accusations are not only for Jesus, they are also for those who want to fulfil his mission and to bring the Gospel of salvation into hearts. Paul, too, was accused of foolishness by Festus after he had told his vocation to King Agrippa. Here is the conclusion of his narration: "And so, King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision. On the contrary, first to those in Damascus and in Jerusalem and throughout the whole country of Judea, and then to the Gentiles, I preached the need to repent and turn to God, and to do works giving evidence of repentance. That is why the Jews seized me (when I was) in the temple and tried to kill me. But I have enjoyed God's help to this very day, and so I stand here testifying to small and great alike, saying nothing different from what the prophets and Moses foretold, that the Messiah must suffer and that, as the first to rise from the dead, he would proclaim light both to our people and to the Gentiles." While Paul was so speaking in his defense, Festus said in a loud voice, "You are mad, Paul; much learning is driving you mad." But Paul replied, "I am not mad, most excellent Festus; I am speaking words of truth and reason. The king knows about these matters and to him I speak boldly, for I cannot believe that (any) of this has escaped his notice; this was not done in a corner. King Agrippa, do you believe the prophets? I know you believe." Then Agrippa said to Paul, "You will soon persuade me to play the Christian." Paul replied, "I would pray to God that sooner or later not only you but all who listen to me today might become as I am except for these chains." (cf. Act 26, 1-29) When a missionary of Jesus is accused either of foolishness or of acting in the name of the prince of demons or of being himself a devil, these accusations are useful to declare us free from listening. If the one who speaks to us is a devil, we cannot listen to him. Devil must not be listened. Thus we can continue in our wickedness and evil of heart. May the Mother of God help us to receive the Word of light from any heart is comes to us. But, for that, we must be filled with the Holy Spirit.**