**MONDAY JANUARY 31 – IV WEEK O.T. [C]**

**As he was getting into the boat, the man who had been possessed pleaded to remain with him. But he would not permit him but told him instead, "Go home to your family and announce to them all that the Lord in his pity has done for you." Then the man went off and began to proclaim in the Decapolis what Jesus had done for him; and all were amazed.**

**Today Jesus shows the entire world how worthy the life of a man for him is: more than a herd of two thousand swine. However, it is not the value of two thousand swine that tells us how worthy is a man. Whoever wants to know how worthy a man is can establish it only looking at the Crucified, that is the Word who was made flesh, that is God nailed on the cross. If God has given his life, that is life of the true God, for the salvation of man, then one must affirm that man is as worthy as God, since God dies for his salvation. If it were not God who determined the value of man, it would be a created thing to determine him. But the entire universe is not worthy the life of a man. The universe is a created and finite measure: “Then Jesus said to his disciples, "Whoever wishes to come after me must deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me. For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it. What profit would there be for one to gain the whole world and forfeit his life? Or what can one give in exchange for his life? For the Son of Man will come with his angels in his Father's glory, and then he will repay everyone according to his conduct.” (Mt 16, 24-27) Here is also the reason why Jesus even overcomes the third temptation of Satan with great ease: “Then the devil took him up to a very high mountain, and showed him all the kingdoms of the world in their magnificence, and he said to him, "All these I shall give to you, if you will prostrate yourself and worship me." At this, Jesus said to him, "Get away, Satan! It is written: 'The Lord, your God, shall you worship and him alone shall you serve.'" (Mt 4, 8-10) All the kingdom of this world and also the entire universe is not as worthy as a man.**

**Now, if the entire created universe is not as worthy as a man, what will ever be two thousand swine given to Satan in turn of the life of a man? Nothing. Truly nothing. They are as a grain of dust before the entire universe. Instead, for man one only swine is more important than a man. Today, for man, a dog, a cat, another animal is worthier than man is. There is no bread and there is no milk for a child. There are no medicines and neither doctors for a child. For a dog, for a cat, today there are specialized hospital and megastore where the products are of the last generation or the last invention. Here is how worthy a child is, how worthy a man is: less than a dog, less than a cat. Instead, Jesus places a child and a man above the entire universe. However, man without God, without the true God, will always place a cat above a man.**

**Let us read the text of Mk 5,1-20**

**They came to the other side of the sea, to the territory of the Gerasenes. When he got out of the boat, at once a man from the tombs who had an unclean spirit met him. The man had been dwelling among the tombs, and no one could restrain him any longer, even with a chain. In fact, he had frequently been bound with shackles and chains, but the chains had been pulled apart by him and the shackles smashed, and no one was strong enough to subdue him. Night and day among the tombs and on the hillsides he was always crying out and bruising himself with stones. Catching sight of Jesus from a distance, he ran up and prostrated himself before him, crying out in a loud voice, "What have you to do with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I adjure you by God, do not torment me!" (He had been saying to him, "Unclean spirit, come out of the man!") He asked him, "What is your name?" He replied, "Legion is my name. There are many of us." And he pleaded earnestly with him not to drive them away from that territory. Now a large herd of swine was feeding there on the hillside. And they pleaded with him, "Send us into the swine. Let us enter them." And he let them, and the unclean spirits came out and entered the swine. The herd of about two thousand rushed down a steep bank into the sea, where they were drowned. The swineherds ran away and reported the incident in the town and throughout the countryside. And people came out to see what had happened. As they approached Jesus, they caught sight of the man who had been possessed by Legion, sitting there clothed and in his right mind. And they were seized with fear. Those who witnessed the incident explained to them what had happened to the possessed man and to the swine. Then they began to beg him to leave their district. As he was getting into the boat, the man who had been possessed pleaded to remain with him. But he would not permit him but told him instead, "Go home to your family and announce to them all that the Lord in his pity has done for you." Then the man went off and began to proclaim in the Decapolis what Jesus had done for him; and all were amazed.**

**The man delivered from the Legion of the unclean spirits, asks Jesus to let them follow him. Jesus gives him the command of remaining. Jesus leaves since he is driven out of the district. He will have to remain to manifest everyone the great work of God Jesus has fulfilled in him. He will have to tell every man the mercy God has used to him. Thus Jesus remains in that district in the spirit, even if the body leaves. Today Jesus is in heaven with the body, with his Holy Spirit, He remains on earth in his disciples who have to remember the great works fulfilled by Him for the salvation of the world. Mother of God, make us living presence of Christ on earth.**