**FRIDAY FEBRUARY 04 – IV WEEK O.T. [C]**

**She had an opportunity one day when Herod, on his birthday, gave a banquet for his courtiers, his military officers, and the leading men of Galilee.**

**History is the melting pot that melts hearts and shows everything that is in them with their fusion. If there is love, love is revealed in their fusion. If there is hate, hate is revealed. If there is foolishness, foolishness is revealed. If there is thirst of vengeance, this thirst immediately appears. Every man must know that he will always be melted in the melting pot of history and what is in his heart is always shown. Here is what these three hearts put together in a true melting pot of fire in a burning furnace reveal: "Blessed are you, and praiseworthy, O Lord, the God of our fathers, and glorious forever is your name. For you are just in all you have done; all your deeds are faultless, all your ways right, and all your judgments proper. You have executed proper judgments in all that you have brought upon us and upon Jerusalem, the holy city of our fathers. By a proper judgment you have done all this because of our sins; For we have sinned and transgressed by departing from you, and we have done every kind of evil. Your commandments we have not heeded or observed, nor have we done as you ordered us for our good. Therefore all you have brought upon us, all you have done to us,you have done by a proper judgment. You have handed us over to our enemies, lawless and hateful rebels; to an unjust king, the worst in all the world. Now we cannot open our mouths; we, your servants, who revere you, have become a shame and a reproach. For your name's sake, do not deliver us up forever, or make void your covenant. Do not take away your mercy from us, for the sake of Abraham, your beloved, Isaac your servant, and Israel your holy one, To whom you promised to multiply their offspring like the stars of heaven, or the sand on the shore of the sea. For we are reduced, O Lord, beyond any other nation, brought low everywhere in the world this day because of our sins. We have in our day no prince, prophet, or leader, no holocaust, sacrifice, oblation, or incense, no place to offer first fruits, to find favor with you. But with contrite heart and humble spirit let us be received; As though it were holocausts of rams and bullocks, or thousands of fat lambs, So let our sacrifice be in your presence today as we follow you unreservedly; for those who trust in you cannot be put to shame. And now we follow you with our whole heart, we fear you and we pray to you. Do not let us be put to shame, but deal with us in your kindness and great mercy. Deliver us by your wonders, and bring glory to your name, O Lord: Let all those be routed who inflict evils on your servants; Let them be shamed and powerless, and their strength broken; Let them know that you alone are the Lord God, glorious over the whole world." (Dn 3, 26-45) These hearts are entirely of the Lord. They are filled with Him. Their fusion is the burning furnace attests it. The Scripture has always revealed the heart of every man. God always melts every heart.**

**Let us read the text of Mk 6, 14-29**

**King Herod heard about it, for his fame had become widespread, and people were saying, "John the Baptist has been raised from the dead; that is why mighty powers are at work in him." Others were saying, "He is Elijah"; still others, "He is a prophet like any of the prophets." But when Herod learned of it, he said, "It is John whom I beheaded. He has been raised up." Herod was the one who had John arrested and bound in prison on account of Herodias, the wife of his brother Philip, whom he had married. John had said to Herod, "It is not lawful for you to have your brother's wife." Herodias harbored a grudge against him and wanted to kill him but was unable to do so. Herod feared John, knowing him to be a righteous and holy man, and kept him in custody. When he heard him speak he was very much perplexed, yet he liked to listen to him. She had an opportunity one day when Herod, on his birthday, gave a banquet for his courtiers, his military officers, and the leading men of Galilee. Herodias's own daughter came in and performed a dance that delighted Herod and his guests. The king said to the girl, "Ask of me whatever you wish and I will grant it to you." He even swore (many things) to her, "I will grant you whatever you ask of me, even to half of my kingdom." She went out and said to her mother, "What shall I ask for?" She replied, "The head of John the Baptist." The girl hurried back to the king's presence and made her request, "I want you to give me at once on a platter the head of John the Baptist." The king was deeply distressed, but because of his oaths and the guests he did not wish to break his word to her. So he promptly dispatched an executioner with orders to bring back his head. He went off and beheaded him in the prison. He brought in the head on a platter and gave it to the girl. The girl in turn gave it to her mother. When his disciples heard about it, they came and took his body and laid it in a tomb.**

**Today history melts the king of Herod, of Salome, of Herodias. The heart of the king is foolish, ignorant, lusty. The heart of Salome suffers from lust and of every other vice. The heart of the guests is with no truth in it. The heart of Herodias wicked, cruel, ruthless, thirsty with vengeance. This heart wants John the Baptist to be eliminated, even physically, from the earth and asks for his head. What happens on this day is a severe warning for all of us. Everyone must pay careful attention: all of us will be melted in the melting pot of history and everything will be on the great light: good and evil, truth and falsity, foolishness and ignorance, wickedness and meanness. May the Mother of God make us pure and upright in heart.**