**SATURDAY MARCH 05 – AFTER THE SACRED ASHES [C]**

**Jesus said to them in reply, "Those who are healthy do not need a physician, but the sick do. I have not come to call the righteous to repentance but sinners."**

**Who is the Lord our God? The one who has always bent toward man in order to heal each of his wound inflicted to him by sin, not only slight and of serious extent wound, but above all mortal wound. While God heals the wounds of man, always leading him to death, according to most pure wisdom in the Holy Spirit and with the powerful grace of Christ Jesus, the other physicians cure them blindly. This is the difference between the divine physicians and all the physicians sent by him to give relief and life to the children of his people: “Thus says the LORD of hosts: Glean, glean like a vine the remnant of Israel; Pass your hand, like a vintager, repeatedly over the tendrils. To whom shall I speak? whom shall I warn, and be heard? See! their ears are uncircumcised, they cannot give heed; See, the word of the LORD has become for them an object of scorn, which they will not have. Therefore my wrath brims up within me, I am weary of holding it in; I will pour it out upon the child in the street, upon the young men gathered together. Yes, all will be taken, husband and wife, graybeard with ancient.**

**Their houses will fall to strangers, their fields and their wives as well; For I will stretch forth my hand against those who dwell in this land, says the LORD. Small and great alike, all are greedy for gain; prophet and priest, all practice fraud. They would repair, as though it were nought, the injury to my people: "Peace, peace!" they say, though there is no peace. They are odious; they have done abominable things, yet they are not at all ashamed, they know not how to blush. Hence they shall be among those who fall; in their time of punishment they shall go down, says the LORD. Thus says the LORD: Stand beside the earliest roads, ask the pathways of old Which is the way to good, and walk it; thus you will find rest for your souls. But they said, "We will not walk it." When I raised up watchmen for them: "Hearken to the sound of the trumpet!" they said, "We will not hearken." (Jer 6, 9-17)**

**Even the stork in the air knows it seasons; Turtledove, swallow and thrush observe their time of return, But my people do not know the ordinance of the LORD. How can you say, "We are wise, we have the law of the LORD"? Why, that has been changed into falsehood by the lying pen of the scribes! The wise are confounded, dismayed and ensnared; Since they have rejected the word of the LORD, of what avail is their wisdom? Therefore, I will give their wives to strangers, their fields to spoilers. Small and great alike, all are greedy for gain, prophet and priest, all practice fraud. They would repair, as though it were nought, the injury to the daughter of my people: "Peace, peace!" they say, though there is no peace. They are odious; they have done abominable things, yet they are not at all ashamed, they know not how to blush. Hence they shall be among those who fall; in their time of punishment they shall go down, says the LORD.” (Jer, 8, 7-12)**

**This is the great difference between our God, divine and eternal Physician, who cures our wounds, leading man to the perfect healing, so that he may live a truly human life, better a divine life, and the “physicians” constituted by him to cure the wounds of his people. These physicians do not even care about those who are ill, rather they despise and outrage them, they exclude them from the own divine cures. This was the great sin of the scribes and of the Pharisees. Jesus says about them that they lock the gates of the divine hospitals and throw away the key. They do not let themselves be healed and those who would cannot: “Woe to you, scholars of the law! You have taken away the key of knowledge. You yourselves did not enter and you stopped those trying to enter." (Lk 11, 53) This was the religion of the scribes and of the Pharisees.**

**Let us read the text of Lk 5,27-32**

**After this he went out and saw a tax collector named Levi sitting at the customs post. He said to him, "Follow me." And leaving everything behind, he got up and followed him. Then Levi gave a great banquet for him in his house, and a large crowd of tax collectors and others were at table with them. The Pharisees and their scribes complained to his disciples, saying, "Why do you eat and drink with tax collectors and sinners?" Jesus said to them in reply, "Those who are healthy do not need a physician, but the sick do. I have not come to call the righteous to repentance but sinners."**

**Here is the lamentation of Job against those physicians who locked the gates of the divine hospitals and have thrown away the key:** “**Lo, all this my eye has seen; my ear has heard and perceived it. What you know, I also know; I fall not short of you. But I would speak with the Almighty; I wish to reason with God. You are glossing over falsehoods and offering vain remedies, every one of you! Oh, that you would be altogether silent! This for you would be wisdom. Hear now the rebuke I shall utter and listen to the reproof from my lips. Is it for God that you speak falsehood? Is it for him that you utter deceit? Is it for him that you show partiality? Do you play advocate on behalf of God? Will it be well when he shall search you out? Would you impose on him as one does on men? He will openly rebuke you if even in secret you show partiality. Surely will his majesty affright you and the dread of him fall upon you. Your reminders are ashy maxims, your fabrications are mounds of clay.” (Jb 13, 1-12) Today this is the actual condition of our humanity. The wounds are extremely lethal. But the “physicians” sent by God no longer cure. Mother of Jesus, deliver us from such a great denial of our mission.**