**FRIDAY APRIL 15 – HOLY WEEK [C]**

**It was preparation day for Passover, and it was about noon. And he said to the Jews, "Behold, your king!" They cried out, "Take him away, take him away! Crucify him!" Pilate said to them, "Shall I crucify your king?" The chief priests answered, "We have no king but Caesar." Then he handed him over to them to be crucified.**

**Here is what the Lord says to Samuel when the tribes of Israel ask him to appoint a king for them, as for all people: “They are rejecting me as their king.”** “**Therefore all the elders of Israel came in a body to Samuel at Ramah and said to him, "Now that you are old, and your sons do not follow your example, appoint a king over us, as other nations have, to judge us." Samuel was displeased when they asked for a king to judge them. He prayed to the LORD, however, who said in answer: "Grant the people's every request. It is not you they reject, they are rejecting me as their king. As they have treated me constantly from the day I brought them up from Egypt to this day, deserting me and worshiping strange gods, so do they treat you too. Now grant their request.” (cf. 1Sam 8, 1-22) At that time, the king of the children of Israel was always a son of Abraham in good and in evil. Before Pilate, the priest chiefs and the guards demand the crucifixion of Jesus, as they have no other king but Caesar. In this request, there is the greatest denial of the God of the covenant together with the rejection of their entire history. With these words, all that process of denying the Lord, already begun in the desert, takes place. Gradually, inexorably, one got to the full separation between God and his people. Now their king is Caesar. Not God anymore. With these words, it is not Christ Jesus who is refused, but their God.**

**Let us read the text of Jn 18,1-19,42**

**Then they brought Jesus from Caiaphas to the praetorium. It was morning. And they themselves did not enter the praetorium, in order not to be defiled so that they could eat the Passover. So Pilate came out to them and said, "What charge do you bring (against) this man?" They answered and said to him, "If he were not a criminal, we would not have handed him over to you." At this, Pilate said to them, "Take him yourselves, and judge him according to your law." The Jews answered him, "We do not have the right to execute anyone,"  in order that the word of Jesus might be fulfilled that he said indicating the kind of death he would die. So Pilate went back into the praetorium and summoned Jesus and said to him, "Are you the King of the Jews?" Jesus answered, "Do you say this on your own or have others told you about me?" Pilate answered, "I am not a Jew, am I? Your own nation and the chief priests handed you over to me. What have you done?" Jesus answered, "My kingdom does not belong to this world. If my kingdom did belong to this world, my attendants (would) be fighting to keep me from being handed over to the Jews. But as it is, my kingdom is not here." So Pilate said to him, "Then you are a king?" Jesus answered, "You say I am a king. For this I was born and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who belongs to the truth listens to my voice." Pilate said to him, "What is truth?" When he had said this, he again went out to the Jews and said to them, "I find no guilt in him. But you have a custom that I release one prisoner to you at Passover. Do you want me to release to you the King of the Jews?" They cried out again, "Not this one but Barabbas!" Now Barabbas was a revolutionary.**

**Once more Pilate went out and said to them, "Look, I am bringing him out to you, so that you may know that I find no guilt in him." So Jesus came out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple cloak. And he said to them, "Behold, the man!" When the chief priests and the guards saw him they cried out, "Crucify him, crucify him!" Pilate said to them, "Take him yourselves and crucify him. I find no guilt in him." The Jews answered, "We have a law, and according to that law he ought to die, because he made himself the Son of God." Pilate tried to release him; but the Jews cried out, "If you release him, you are not a Friend of Caesar. Everyone who makes himself a king opposes Caesar." When Pilate heard these words he brought Jesus out and seated him on the judge's bench in the place called Stone Pavement, in Hebrew, Gabbatha. It was preparation day for Passover, and it was about noon. And he said to the Jews, "Behold, your king!" They cried out, "Take him away, take him away! Crucify him!" Pilate said to them, "Shall I crucify your king?" The chief priests answered, "We have no king but Caesar." Then he handed him over to them to be crucified.**

**Here is the strategy of Satan: he always starts from afar. He know what falsity and deceit to introduce in the people of God. In the last six hundred years, he first separated faith from the Church: the Scripture, the faith and the grace alone were enough for salvation. The apostolic mediation in grace and in truth disappears. Then, he moved on with separating truth from the Scripture. The thought of man has substituted the truth of the Scripture. This thought, artfully cultivated by the confession of non-Catholic faith, was introduced little by little in the Church, until conquering many hearts. Now the children of the Catholic Church are the one who got to deny Christ as source of every truth and of every life for man. Removed Christ, the Church, too, has no reason to exist. Everything we would never have thought that could be consumed has been consumed so far: the declaration of universal brotherhood without Christ and without the Church, not in Christ and not in the Church, not in the Holy Spirit and neither in the Word. May the Mother of God come to our rescue. May She restore Christ in the heart of the Church.**