**MONDAY APRIL 25 – SECOND WEEK OF EASTER [C]**

**SAINT MARK THE EVANGELIST**

**But they went forth and preached everywhere, while the Lord worked with them and confirmed the word through accompanying signs.**

**Reading the Acts of the Apostles, we must confess that the evangelizing mission is led step by step by the Holy Spirit. If the Holy Spirit was not given to the Apostles in its fullness, the Church would still be in Jerusalem and maybe it would have remained in the Holy Town, either. Instead, the Spirit has always blown on it like a strong driving wind and everyone takes up the journey, always with the comfort of the Holy Spirit, though. Already on the day of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit pierces the heart of about three thousand people:** “**Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart, and they asked Peter and the other apostles, "What are we to do, my brothers?" Peter (said) to them, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the holy Spirit. For the promise is made to you and to your children and to all those far off, whomever the Lord our God will call." He testified with many other arguments, and was exhorting them, "Save yourselves from this corrupt generation." Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand persons were added that day.” (Act 2, 37-41)**

**The opening of the gates of the Gospel always happens under the initiative of the Holy Spirit:** “**The next day, while they were on their way and nearing the city, Peter went up to the roof terrace to pray at about noontime. He was hungry and wished to eat, and while they were making preparations he fell into a trance. He saw heaven opened and something resembling a large sheet coming down, lowered to the ground by its four corners. In it were all the earth's four-legged animals and reptiles and the birds of the sky. A voice said to him, "Get up, Peter. Slaughter and eat." But Peter said, "Certainly not, sir. For never have I eaten anything profane and unclean." The voice spoke to him again, a second time, "What God has made clean, you are not to call profane." This happened three times, and then the object was taken up into the sky. While Peter was in doubt about the meaning of the vision he had seen, the men sent by Cornelius asked for Simon's house and arrived at the entrance. They called out inquiring whether Simon, who is called Peter, was staying there. As Peter was pondering the vision, the Spirit said (to him), "There are three men here looking for you. So get up, go downstairs, and accompany them without hesitation, because I have sent them." Then Peter went down to the men and said, "I am the one you are looking for. What is the reason for your being here?" They answered, "Cornelius, a centurion, an upright and God-fearing man, respected by the whole Jewish nation, was directed by a holy angel to summon you to his house and to hear what you have to say." So he invited them in and showed them hospitality.” (cf. Act 10, 1-48) If the Holy Spirit had not taken the initiative, Peter would never have entered the house of a pagan.**

**Also the mission of the Apostles before all the people occurs under the motion of the Holy Spirit:** “**Now there were in the church at Antioch prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Symeon who was called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen who was a close friend of Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the holy Spirit said, "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them." Then, completing their fasting and prayer, they laid hands on them and sent them off.” (Act 13, 1-3) The entire life of the Apostle Paul was perennially guided by the Holy Spirit:** “**But now, compelled by the Spirit, I am going to Jerusalem. What will happen to me there I do not know, except that in one city after another the holy Spirit has been warning me that imprisonment and hardships await me. Yet I consider life of no importance to me, if only I may finish my course and the ministry that I received from the Lord Jesus, to bear witness to the gospel of God's grace.” (Act 20, 22-24) We know that the Spirit prompted him until Rome.**

**Let us read the text of Mk 16,15-20**

**He said to them, "Go into the whole world and proclaim the gospel to every creature. Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved; whoever does not believe will be condemned. These signs will accompany those who believe: in my name they will drive out demons, they will speak new languages. They will pick up serpents (with their hands), and if they drink any deadly thing, it will not harm them. They will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover." So then the Lord Jesus, after he spoke to them, was taken up into heaven and took his seat at the right hand of God. But they went forth and preached everywhere, while the Lord worked with them and confirmed the word through accompanying signs.**

**Today we find ourselves before a Christian who has lost the purpose of his life as Christian. What is this purpose? Spending and consuming his life to give Christ to every man, through the word and the witness of his life. Having lost the purpose, he has rested the thought of the world and considers the Gospel one of the many tales that were narrated to humankind when it was wrapped in swaddling clothes. Since today humanity evolved, then they do not need any tale. Here is the life purpose of the Christian: make every heart forget the Gospel. One uses the Gospel, but to destroy the Gospel. May the Mother of God ensure this never happen.**