**FRIDAY MAY 20 – FIFTH WEEK OF EASTER [C]**

**It was not you who chose me, but I who chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit that will remain, so that whatever you ask the Father in my name he may give you.**

**The choice of Christ Jesus is choice of the Father and it is from eternity. Thus the Apostle Paul announces this divine truth that must fill every heart with holy amazement:** “**Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavens, as he chose us in him, before the foundation of the world, to be holy and without blemish before him. In love he destined us for adoption to himself through Jesus Christ, in accord with the favor of his will, for the praise of the glory of his grace that he granted us in the beloved. In him we have redemption by his blood, the forgiveness of transgressions, in accord with the riches of his grace that he lavished upon us. In all wisdom and insight, he has made known to us the mystery of his will in accord with his favor that he set forth in him as a plan for the fullness of times, to sum up all things in Christ, in heaven and on earth. In him we were also chosen, destined in accord with the purpose of the one who accomplishes all things according to the intention of his will, so that we might exist for the praise of his glory, we who first hoped in Christ. In him you also, who have heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and have believed in him, were sealed with the promised holy Spirit, which is the first installment of our inheritance toward redemption as God's possession, to the praise of his glory.” (Eph 1, 1-14)**

**Why were the Apostles chosen? To form the body of Christ, to ensure that Christ lives his life as Saviour and Redeemer in every man until the day of Parusia. How might this happen? By preaching, the Apostles, the Gospel, inviting to conversion, baptising, making the body of Christ to nourish the body of Christ, teaching the body of Christ so that it lives the entire Word of Christ the Lord. An Apostle, a Successor of the Apostles, a Vicar of Christ Jesus would betray his Teacher with a greater guilt than that committed by Judas Iscariot, if he omitted to work with every wisdom, science, counsel, understand, fortitude, fear of the Lord, piety in the Holy Spirit for the formation of the body of Christ. Today it is not only one person who is staining himself with this heavy betrayal. Instead, many disciples of Jesus are betraying Him with such affirmations: “The baptised and the non-baptised are equal before God.” Consequently making the body of Christ and not making it is the same thing. The Apostle Paul cries out that it is in Christ that everything is accomplished and we say we do not need Him. “The Gospel and all the other religious texts are the same.” One forgets that the Gospel is the life of Christ Jesus given to us as unique and only model. The other texts are texts and nothing more. Even if in them one breathes the life of the one who has written them, between Christ’s life and the other lives there is the same difference that reigns between the most pure light and the darkness. Christ Jesus is the divine life come to enlighten every other light. All the other lights, if they are not enlightened by Christ, can at most be a wick or candlewick that fumigate. If the Gospel and the other texts are equal, preaching the Gospel is of no use. The thoughts according to flesh crying out so that the body of Christ is neither formed nor built up are many more. A Vicar of Christ Jesus, namely a Bishop, must always be vigilant so that neither one only word disorienting the faithful and inducing to think that the body of Christ should not be built up enters the mind and the heart of one only disciple of Jesus. To this obligation is also the presbyter subject, as he is co-operator of the episcopal order. If then bishops and presbyters are those who mislead with equivocal statements and with unclear or disorientating teachings, then they have betrayed Christ Jesus for they have betrayed their vocation that is only one: forming, growing, nourishing the body of Christ for all the days of their life. One only day not dedicated to the build-up of the body of Christ is for them is high treason of the mission Christ Jesus has entrusted to them.**

**Let us read the text of Jn 15,12-17**

**This is my commandment: love one another as I love you. No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends. You are my friends if you do what I command you. I no longer call you slaves, because a slave does not know what his master is doing. I have called you friends, because I have told you everything I have heard from my Father. It was not you who chose me, but I who chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit that will remain, so that whatever you ask the Father in my name he may give you. This I command you: love one another.**

**The Apostle, the Bishop, the presbyter, the deacon, the confirmed, the baptised must produce one only fruit: presenting Christ Jesus a holy body of Christ, that becomes holier every day. A numerous body of Christ with many members that becomes more numerous every day. If this fruit is not produced, the mission suffers from high treason. Doing something else is of no use, for Christ Jesus has asked for nothing else. We may even bring Him a new world, but He wants one only thing; his holy body to embrace the entire world. May the Mother of the Church, the Virgin Mary, help us so that we never betray the received mission.**