**MONDAY JULY 18 – XVI WEEK O.T. [C]**

**"An evil and unfaithful generation seeks a sign, but no sign will be given it except the sign of Jonah the prophet. Just as Jonah was in the belly of the whale three days and three nights, so will the Son of Man be in the heart of the earth three days and three nights.**

**Why is the generation evil and unfaithful? It is evil for its heart is pervert. Being this generation with evil heart, it cannot, because of the perverted heart, listen to the Lord who speaks. It is unfaithful for it has betrayed its God handing itself over to idols. Here with what image the prophet Ezekiel describes the idolatry of his people: “Thus says the Lord GOD to Jerusalem: By origin and birth you are of the land of Canaan; your father was an Amorite and your mother a Hittite. As for your birth, the day you were born your navel cord was not cut; you were neither washed with water nor anointed, nor were you rubbed with salt, nor swathed in swaddling clothes. No one looked on you with pity or compassion to do any of these things for you. Rather, you were thrown out on the ground as something loathsome, the day you were born.**

**Then I passed by and saw you weltering in your blood. I said to you: Live in your blood and grow like a plant in the field. You grew and developed, you came to the age of puberty; your breasts were formed, your hair had grown, but you were still stark naked. Again I passed by you and saw that you were now old enough for love. So I spread the corner of my cloak over you to cover your nakedness; I swore an oath to you and entered into a covenant with you; you became mine, says the Lord GOD. Then I bathed you with water, washed away your blood, and anointed you with oil. I clothed you with an embroidered gown, put sandals of fine leather on your feet; I gave you a fine linen sash and silk robes to wear. I adorned you with jewelry: I put bracelets on your arms, a necklace about your neck, a ring in your nose, pendants in your ears, and a glorious diadem upon your head. Thus you were adorned with gold and silver; your garments were of fine linen, silk, and embroidered cloth. Fine flour, honey, and oil were your food. You were exceedingly beautiful, with the dignity of a queen. You were renowned among the nations for your beauty, perfect as it was, because of my splendor which I had bestowed on you, says the Lord GOD. But you were captivated by your own beauty, you used your renown to make yourself a harlot, and you lavished your harlotry on every passer-by, whose own you became. You took some of your gowns and made for yourself gaudy high places, where you played the harlot. . . . You took the splendid gold and silver ornaments that I had given you and made for yourself male images, with which also you played the harlot. You took your embroidered gowns to cover them; my oil and my incense you set before them; the food that I had given you, the fine flour, the oil, and the honey with which I fed you, you set before them as an appeasing odor, says the Lord GOD. (Ez 16,1-19). This is the great unfaithfulness of the children of Israel: they abandoned the God who have saved, delivered, redeemed, introduced them into a land of garden and have handed themselves over to the idols of nations. Today the great idolatry is in the abandonment of the Word of the Lord and the total handover to the thought of the world, thought of the prince of evil.**

**Let us read the text of Mt 12,38-42**

**Then some of the scribes and Pharisees said to him, "Teacher, we wish to see a sign from you." He said to them in reply, "An evil and unfaithful generation seeks a sign, but no sign will be given it except the sign of Jonah the prophet. Just as Jonah was in the belly of the whale three days and three nights, so will the Son of Man be in the heart of the earth three days and three nights. At the judgment, the men of Nineveh will arise with this generation and condemn it, because they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and there is something greater than Jonah here. At the judgment the queen of the south will arise with this generation and condemn it, because she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and there is something greater than Solomon here.**

**This evil and unfaithful generation wishes to see a sign. But can an evil heart, a heart that has decided to get rid of Christ, be opened to the faith through a sign, if the entire life of Christ is a powerful sign of the presence of the Father acting in Him and through Him? Here is the decision of the Father, told to Jesus, through his Holy Spirit: the sign will be given. Not the sign they wish, though. They will be given the sign the Lord wants to give them: this sign is the glorious resurrection of his Son, a resurrection through which all the promises, the oracles, the prophecies, the oath pronounced by the Lord about his Messiah and that are contained in the Law, in the Prophets, in the Psalms, are fulfilled. Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the whale. Then he was taken to the ashore and left there. Jesus will be three days and three nights in the womb of the earth. The third day He will rise. Before the resurrection, every doubt must disappear. Whoever does not believe in Christ after this sign will attest and confirm that he is part of this evil and unfaithful generation. Today the Christian is becoming part of this evil and unfaithful generation as well. He is denying Christ the Lord in the name of the thought of the world. In the name of the love toward man, he is substituting Christ Jesus with the world and his thought. May the Mother of God come to our rescue. May She deliver us from every evil and idolatry.**