**THURSDAY JULY 21 – XVI WEEK O. T. [C]**

**'You shall indeed hear but not understand you shall indeed look but never see. Gross is the heart of this people, they will hardly hear with their ears, they have closed their eyes, lest they see with their eyes and hear with their ears and understand with their heart and be converted, and I heal them.'**

**Let us read what the Lord says to the prophet Isaiah when He speaks to his people with great attention: “And he replied: Go and say to this people: Listen carefully, but you shall not understand! Look intently, but you shall know nothing! You are to make the heart of this people sluggish, to dull their ears and close their eyes; Else their eyes will see, their ears hear, their heart understand, and they will turn and be healed. "How long, O Lord?" I asked. And he replied: Until the cities are desolate, without inhabitants, Houses, without a man, and the earth is a desolate waste. Until the LORD removes men far away, and the land is abandoned more and more. If there be still a tenth part in it, then this in turn shall be laid waste; As with a terebinth or an oak whose trunk remains when its leaves have fallen. (Holy offspring is the trunk.)” (Is 6,9-13).**

**These words must be rightly interpreted. Here is their true meaning: “You, my prophet, go to those people. The more you speak to them and the more they will harden their heart before your Word. The more you will invite them to conversion and the more they will become deaf before your invitation. This hardening of heart and deafness of their ears will ensure that they are not converted. If they are not converted, they cannot be part of my blessing. When are they converted? After having eaten the bitter fruits of their spiritual blindness. They will be converted after having experienced the deportation and the exile. Then and only then I can show them all my benevolence. This interpretation comes from the examination of the history lived by Christ Jesus among his people. The more Christ showed the perfect unity being between the Father and Him, the more the chiefs priests, the elders, the Pharisees, the scribes, the Sadducees, the Zealots, the Herodians were closed into a greater spiritual blindness. This blindness reached the highest after the resurrection of Lazarus that is the greatest deed fulfilled by Him. What is the fruit of this deed? The decision to kill Christ the Lord. To the highest manifestation of Christ, there is the highest spiritual and moral blindness of his people, or, better, of the chiefs of his people: “So the chief priests and the Pharisees convened the Sanhedrin and said, "What are we going to do? This man is performing many signs. If we leave him alone, all will believe in him, and the Romans will come and take away both our land and our nation." But one of them, Caiaphas, who was high priest that year, said to them, "You know nothing, nor do you consider that it is better for you that one man should die instead of the people, so that the whole nation may not perish." He did not say this on his own, but since he was high priest for that year, he prophesied that Jesus was going to die for the nation, and not only for the nation, but also to gather into one the dispersed children of God. So from that day on they planned to kill him.” (Cf. Jn 11,1-53). Highest grace for the salvation, highest spiritual and moral blindness. This blindness is similar in all to that of the Pharaoh at the time of Moses. The more the Lord showed his Almightiness over the creation, the more the heart of the Pharaoh hardened. With the last deed, the parting of the Red Sea, the Pharaoh was so hard of heart to want to cross the Sea, as well, with his horses and horsemen. This deed of foolishness led him to death. What was said to the Jews is also true for us: highest manifestation of the almightiness of the Lord and highest blindness and hardening of the heart from the Pharaoh.**

**Let us read the text of Mt 13,10-17**

**The disciples approached him and said, "Why do you speak to them in parables?" He said to them in reply, "Because knowledge of the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven has been granted to you, but to them it has not been granted. To anyone who has, more will be given and he will grow rich; from anyone who has not, even what he has will be taken away. This is why I speak to them in parables, because 'they look but do not see and hear but do not listen or understand.' Isaiah's prophecy is fulfilled in them, which says: 'You shall indeed hear but not understand you shall indeed look but never see. Gross is the heart of this people, they will hardly hear with their ears, they have closed their eyes, lest they see with their eyes and hear with their ears and understand with their heart and be converted, and I heal them.' "But blessed are your eyes, because they see, and your ears, because they hear. Amen, I say to you, many prophets and righteous people longed to see what you see but did not see it, and to hear what you hear but did not hear it.**

**Why must Jesus show all his almightiness of grace and of truth, knowing that his people would have reached the highest blindness? Because He has not come not to redeem only one people, but all the people of earth. His Word is of eternal life for those who believe in it, and are converted. It is of eternal death for those who harden their heart before it and plunge in their blindness and foolishness, ignorance and stubbornness. But Jesus must show himself in all his splendour of light and of grace. The salvation and the redemption of humanity demands it. May the Mother of God come to our help. May She not let our heart harden before the glorious Gospel of his Son. It would be our perdition.**