**SATURDAY AUGUST 20 – XX WEEK O.T. [C]**

**Do not be called 'Master'; you have but one master, the Messiah. The greatest among you must be your servant. Whoever exalts himself will be humbled; but whoever humbles himself will be exalted.**

**Today Jesus reveals his disciples what the true religion in which they must always remain is, teaching each other one to enter it without ever abandon it, ever betray it, ever deny it. What is then the true religion? It is handover to God, through Christ Jesus, in the Holy Spirit, of one’s own life, so that the greatest glory arises for Him from it. The true religion is exclusive service to the glory of God. How does one give God the greatest glory? Working, doing, striving to give Christ, Glory of the Father, to every man. If we use the religion to earn even one cent of our usefulness both spiritual and material we have already left the true religion. We have already precipitated in the false religion. Here is how the Apostle Paul lives of true religion: “I have not used any of these rights, however, nor do I write this that it be done so in my case. I would rather die. Certainly no one is going to nullify my boast. If I preach the gospel, this is no reason for me to boast, for an obligation has been imposed on me, and woe to me if I do not preach it! If I do so willingly, I have a recompense, but if unwillingly, then I have been entrusted with a stewardship. What then is my recompense? That, when I preach, I offer the gospel free of charge so as not to make full use of my right in the gospel. Although I am free in regard to all, I have made myself a slave to all so as to win over as many as possible. To the Jews I became like a Jew to win over Jews; to those under the law I became like one under the law - though I myself am not under the law - to win over those under the law. To those outside the law I became like one outside the law - though I am not outside God's law but within the law of Christ - to win over those outside the law. To the weak I became weak, to win over the weak. I have become all things to all, to save at least some. All this I do for the sake of the gospel, so that I too may have a share in it.” (Cfr. 1Cor 9,1-23). Here is now how the Apostle Peter teaches the presbyters or the elders of the Churches the true religion: “So I exhort the presbyters among you, as a fellow presbyter and witness to the sufferings of Christ and one who has a share in the glory to be revealed. Tend the flock of God in your midst, (overseeing) not by constraint but willingly, as God would have it, not for shameful profit but eagerly. Do not lord it over those assigned to you, but be examples to the flock. And when the chief Shepherd is revealed, you will receive the unfading crown of glory” (1Pt 5,1-4). The true religion is the consecration of our life all aimed at taking care of the interests of Christ. If we do not care about the interests of Christ, the Gospel of Christ, the Church of Christ, our religion is false.**

**Let us read the text of Mt 23,1-13**

**Then Jesus spoke to the crowds and to his disciples, saying, "The scribes and the Pharisees have taken their seat on the chair of Moses. Therefore, do and observe all things whatsoever they tell you, but do not follow their example. For they preach but they do not practice. They tie up heavy burdens (hard to carry) and lay them on people's shoulders, but they will not lift a finger to move them. All their works are performed to be seen. They widen their phylacteries and lengthen their tassels. They love places of honor at banquets, seats of honor in synagogues, greetings in marketplaces, and the salutation 'Rabbi.' As for you, do not be called 'Rabbi.' You have but one teacher, and you are all brothers. Call no one on earth your father; you have but one Father in heaven. Do not be called 'Master'; you have but one master, the Messiah. The greatest among you must be your servant. Whoever exalts himself will be humbled; but whoever humbles himself will be exalted.**

**Whoever seeks the glory of God in the care of the interests of Christ Jesus must always sacrifice all himself and put himself entirely at the service of the glory of Jesus the Lord, in the same way as Jesus the Lord has sacrificed his life, putting it entirely at the service of the glory of the Father. To do it, it would be enough to ask: “What I am saying, doing, thinking, meditating, planning is of use for the glory of Christ Jesus, or is it only at the exclusive service of my glory? Do I work to build up his Church and to spread his Gospel?” If what is fruit of my heart, of my mind, of my science and intelligence is not at the service of the glory of Christ Jesus, my life has already precipitated in the false religion. I repeat that: even working for the earning of one only cent makes us leave the true religion and makes us precipitate in the false. Here is how the Apostle Paul teaches us in the Holy Spirit the way to remain in the true religion always,: “So whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do everything for the glory of God. Avoid giving offense, whether to Jews or Greeks or the church of God, just as I try to please everyone in every way, not seeking my own benefit but that of the many, that they may be saved.” (1Cor 10,31-33). When a disciple of Jesus works for some personal interests, he has already fallen in the false religion. He has forgotten the glory of the Lord: “Non nobis, Domine, non nobis, sed nomini tuo da gloriam” (Psal 113,9). To you alone, Lord, the glory. Your glory, Lord, is Christ Jesus, your Only Begotten Son made flesh for our salvation. Mother of God, teach us to consecrate our entire life at the service of the glory of Jesus.**