**THURSDAY AUGUST 23 – XXI WEEK O.T. [C]**

**"Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, you hypocrites. You cleanse the outside of cup and dish, but inside they are full of plunder and self-indulgence. Blind Pharisee, cleanse first the inside of the cup, so that the outside also may be clean.”**

**Spiritual and moral rottenness and most high holiness of Christ Jesus will always be in contrast. The hypocrite will always be stumbled in Christ the Lord. Darkness does not stand light. But today we are beyond the stumbling block. We have come to commit the same sin of Satan. The heart of many people is filled with hate against Christ Jesus and wants it to disappear from our earth. Of Him, not even his memory must remain. One wishes to uproot Him from every mind and from every mind. Simply, He must not reign into hearts, neither govern them nor influence them in some ways. Earth is of men and they want to live as they best please. Christ must disappear. There is no place for Him. We are beyond the stumbling block and beyond the sin of hypocrisy. We are in the sin of satanic, devilish, hellish pride. We are in the hate for Jesus, the Lord and God. This is the great rottenness dwelling in many hearts. Then, one hides this rottenness embellishing the outside of the cup. Cunning of yesterday, cunning of today.**

**We who are faithful in Christ Jesus and in his Gospel, are forced to distinguish moral prescription and ritual prescription. Word of man and Word of Jesus the Lord. Aim of the man and Commandment of our Redeemer and Saviour. For some disciples of Jesus the vow not to eat a candy is a most serious obligation to confess. Abortion passes as a right of the woman. It is part of her self-determination. As if a man or a woman could determine themselves on their own. The moral Law obliges everyone. Before the moral law there is obedience, there might never be neither self-determination nor right. Every transgression of the Commandments is an offence caused to the Lord and to the Creator of the man. Before the murder of a person already conceived, there is no self-determination, but crime. Before the divorce there is no self-determination, but violation of a perennial Law of the Lord. Even before homosexuality there might never be self-determination. One breaks a law of nature that is essence of man. One breaks the Law of the Lord, that is universal, perennial, unmodifiable in the centuries and the none affirms that there is no offence, no crime, no transgression. Rather, the own States establish laws against the moral Law written by God for man. Not only do they write laws against the Law of God, they also write sanctions for those who do not respect their laws. Thus one gives universal value to the law of men against the Law of God, one fights the Law of the Lord in the name of man. One is punished by men for one has observed the Law of his Lord. God must not enter the relations with men. But if God does not enter the relations with men through his Law that reveals the truth of our humanity means that the man has decided to condemn himself to inhumanity, to the total falsity of himself. This is the dictatorship of the thought of man today, that is the worst of all the other dictatorships existing in the world. With arrogance, overbearingness, deceit, lie, one wants to impose one’s own thought as unique and universal.**

**Let us read the text of Mt 23,23-26**

**"Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, you hypocrites. You pay tithes of mint and dill and cummin, and have neglected the weightier things of the law: judgment and mercy and fidelity. (But) these you should have done, without neglecting the others. Blind guides, who strain out the gnat and swallow the camel! "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, you hypocrites. You cleanse the outside of cup and dish, but inside they are full of plunder and self-indulgence. Blind Pharisee, cleanse first the inside of the cup, so that the outside also may be clean.**

**We must affirm that today in our world there is the idolatry of the body. To make it beautiful one, one is subjected to every sacrifice, every renunciation. There is a science entirely dedicated to such idolatry. One has no time to cure the soul and the spirit. Rather, today one lives as the soul and the spirit did not exist. Not only. With our body we charge soul and spirit with most heavy sins and we force them to a perennial spiritual death. If this idolatry were of the one who does not know Christ, it would be almost connatural. The one who does not know Christ often suffocates the truth in unrighteousness. But the fact that this idolatry is of the disciples of Jesus is the sign that we have fallen from the righteous faith and we have handed ourselves over to the idolatry of the body, as well. Instead, the Christian is called to subject the body to the divine Law that is given for his spirit and for his soul. If this law is transgressed, the Christian becomes worse than those who do not know Christ Jesus. They are enemies of the cross of Christ. This is the cry that is raised from the heart of the Apostle Paul: Join with others in being imitators of me, brothers, and observe those who thus conduct themselves according to the model you have in us. For many, as I have often told you and now tell you even in tears, conduct themselves as enemies of the cross of Christ. Their end is destruction. Their God is their stomach; their glory is in their "shame." Their minds are occupied with earthly things. But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we also await a savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. He will change our lowly body to conform with his glorified body by the power that enables him also to bring all things into subjection to himself.” (Phil 3,17-21) Mother of God, help us!**