**THURSDAY NOVEMBER 24 – XXXIV WEEK [C]**

**When you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, know that its desolation is at hand**

**The fall of Jerusalem and its destruction is the fruit of its non-obedience to the voice of its Lord and God. Jesus does nothing but confirming the Word of all the prophets who preceded Him. Here are the Words on which the covenant between God and his people is founded: “Moses went up the mountain to God. Then the LORD called to him and said, "Thus shall you say to the house of Jacob; tell the Israelites: You have seen for yourselves how I treated the Egyptians and how I bore you up on eagle wings and brought you here to myself. Therefore, if you hearken to my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my special possession, dearer to me than all other people, though all the earth is mine. You shall be to me a kingdom of priests, a holy nation. That is what you must tell the Israelites."(Ex 19,3-6). If the children of Israel listen to the voice of the Lord – and voice of the Lord are all the prophets sent by God. Jesus is the mother voice of every voice sent by God to proclaim his people the conversion and the faith in the Gospel – he will pour every blessing on them. If they do not listen to his voice, He will have to abandon them to their will. Since the people of the Lord is perennial creation of his Lord, without the listening of his voice, the Lord can never create it and it will be destroyed: "But if you do not heed me and do not keep all these commandments, if you reject my precepts and spurn my decrees, refusing to obey all my commandments and breaking my covenant, then I, in turn, will give you your deserts. I will punish you with terrible woes - with wasting and fever to dim the eyes and sap the life. You will sow your seed in vain, for your enemies will consume the crop. I will turn against you, till you are beaten down before your enemies and lorded over by your foes. You will take to flight though no one pursues you. "If even after this you do not obey me, I will increase the chastisement for your sins sevenfold, to break your haughty confidence. I will make the sky above you as hard as iron, and your soil as hard as bronze, so that your strength will be spent in vain; your land will bear no crops, and its trees no fruit. "If then you become defiant in your unwillingness to obey me, I will multiply my blows another sevenfold, as your sins deserve. I will unleash the wild beasts against you, to rob you of your children and wipe out your livestock, till your population dwindles away and your roads become deserted. "If, with all this, you still refuse to be chastened by me and continue to defy me, I, too, will defy you and will smite you for your sins seven times harder than before. I will make the sword, the avenger of my covenant, sweep over you. Though you then huddle together in your walled cities, I will send in pestilence among you, till you are forced to surrender to the enemy. And as I cut off your supply of bread, ten women will need but one oven for baking all the bread they dole out to you in rations - not enough food to still your hunger. "If, despite all this, you still persist in disobeying and defying me, I, also, will meet you with fiery defiance and will chastise you with sevenfold fiercer punishment for your sins, till you begin to eat the flesh of your own sons and daughters. I will demolish your high places, overthrow your incense stands, and cast your corpses on those of your idols. In my abhorrence of you, I will lay waste your cities and devastate your sanctuaries, refusing to accept your sweet-smelling offerings. So devastated will I leave the land that your very enemies who come to live there will stand aghast at the sight of it. You yourselves I will scatter among the nations at the point of my drawn sword, leaving your countryside desolate and your cities deserted. Yet even so, even while they are in their enemies' land, I will not reject or spurn them, lest, by wiping them out, I make void my covenant with them; for I, the LORD, am their God. I will remember them because of the covenant I made with their forefathers, whom I brought out of the land of Egypt under the very eyes of the Gentiles, that I, the LORD, might be their God." (Cf Lev 26,1-45). All the ancient prophecies end with a thought of hope. The Lord, even when He abandons his people, abandons it for its salvation and redemption. Apparently, it seems that the Lord has abandoned his people. Instead, He is always at work to lead it back to him again. His love is truly eternal.**

**Let us read the text of Lk 21,20-24**

**"When you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, know that its desolation is at hand. Then those in Judea must flee to the mountains. Let those within the city escape from it, and let those in the countryside not enter the city, for these days are the time of punishment when all the scriptures are fulfilled. Woe to pregnant women and nursing mothers in those days, for a terrible calamity will come upon the earth and a wrathful judgment upon this people. They will fall by the edge of the sword and be taken as captives to all the Gentiles; and Jerusalem will be trampled underfoot by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.**

**The destruction of Jerusalem is the sign that Jesus is true prophet of the living God. The non-building of the temple reveals that the people has not come back to the Lord yet. The temple of Jerusalem has always been re-built. Today it is no longer re-built and will never be re-built for, by now, the New Temple of God is only Christ Jesus. It is in Him that the entire fullness of the divinity dwells bodily. It is in Him that one becomes participative of such fullness. Mother of God, obtain the grace to listen to the voice of your Son.**