**11 DECEMBER – THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT [A]**

**This is the one about whom it is written: 'Behold, I am sending my messenger ahead of you; he will prepare your way before you.'**

**There is a universal principle that must be highlighted well, if we want to understand what happens today in the Gospel offered to our reflection and meditation. Prophet is the one who listens to a Word of the Lord and refers it. Prophet is also the one who receives a vision by the Almighty Lord and reveals them to his people. Here is what John the Baptist sees and what reveals to the people of God: “And this is the testimony of John. When the Jews from Jerusalem sent priests and Levites (to him) to ask him, "Who are you?" he admitted and did not deny it, but admitted, "I am not the Messiah." So they asked him, "What are you then? Are you Elijah?" And he said, "I am not." "Are you the Prophet?" He answered, "No." So they said to him, "Who are you, so we can give an answer to those who sent us? What do you have to say for yourself?" He said: "I am 'the voice of one crying out in the desert, "Make straight the way of the Lord,"' as Isaiah the prophet said." Some Pharisees were also sent. They asked him, "Why then do you baptize if you are not the Messiah or Elijah or the Prophet?" John answered them, "I baptize with water; but there is one among you whom you do not recognize, the one who is coming after me, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to untie." This happened in Bethany across the Jordan, where John was baptizing. The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world. He is the one of whom I said, 'A man is coming after me who ranks ahead of me because he existed before me.' I did not know him, but the reason why I came baptizing with water was that he might be made known to Israel." John testified further, saying, "I saw the Spirit come down like a dove from the sky and remain upon him. I did not know him, but the one who sent me to baptize with water told me, 'On whomever you see the Spirit come down and remain, he is the one who will baptize with the holy Spirit.' Now I have seen and testified that he is the Son of God." The next day John was there again with two of his disciples, and as he watched Jesus walk by, he said, "Behold, the Lamb of God." (Jn 1,19-36). Jesus is the one who baptizes in the Holy Spirit. Jesus is the Lamb of God who removes the sin of the world. Jesus is the Son of God.**

**John has seen and listened to all these truths. However, he does not know how these truths would have been fulfilled in history. This has not been revealed to him. It was not revealed to him that Jesus would have baptised in the Holy Spirit, however making the water and the blood, the grace and the Holy Spirit from his body pierced and died on the cross, body tore by the spear of the Roman soldier who wants to be certain that Jesus was really dead. He does not know that the death by crucifixion must happen first and only then there would have been the baptism in the Holy Spirit. Neither did he know that the Lamb of God is the Suffering Servant of the Lord who takes all the sins of the world upon him and removes them hanging them on the wood of the cross in his body. He does not know all of that, for it has not been revealed to Him. However, not hearing that Jesus is baptising in Holy Spirit, in the same way as he baptised in the water, he sends some of his disciples to Jesus with a very clear question to ask him: “Are you the one who is to come, or should we look for another?" Jesus does not reply in a direct way, but indirect: “Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind regain their sight, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have the good news proclaimed to them. And blessed is the one who takes no offense at me." The prophecies are being fulfilled all. If the prophecies are fulfilled, I am the one who is to come. Indirect and not direct way. Reply through the fulfilment of the prophecies.**

**Let us read the text of Mt 11,2-11**

**When John heard in prison of the works of the Messiah, he sent his disciples to him with this question, "Are you the one who is to come, or should we look for another?" Jesus said to them in reply, "Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind regain their sight, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have the good news proclaimed to them. And blessed is the one who takes no offense at me." As they were going off, Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John, "What did you go out to the desert to see? A reed swayed by the wind? Then what did you go out to see? Someone dressed in fine clothing? Those who wear fine clothing are in royal palaces. Then why did you go out? To see a prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. This is the one about whom it is written: 'Behold, I am sending my messenger ahead of you; he will prepare your way before you.' Amen, I say to you, among those born of women there has been none greater than John the Baptist; yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.**

**In the reply, even if indirect, there is truth that is valid for John the Baptist and for every other man: “And blessed is the one who takes no offense at me." If we know that Jesus is the One who baptise in Holy Spirit, we know that He is the Son of God, we know that He is the Lamb of God, whatever He does, we must trust Him. We are not allowed to know the mystery. We are allowed to believe in it, instead. Today are we not taking offense at Christ and of each of his mystery? Never will we be blessed. May the Mother of God not allow that we take offense at Him.**