**MONDAY DECEMBER 19 – FOURTH WEEK OF ADVENT [A]**

**He will go before him in the spirit and power of Elijah to turn the hearts of fathers toward children and the disobedient to the understanding of the righteous, to prepare a people fit for the Lord.**

**If the perfect knowledge of the history of the salvation to accept the Word the Lord turns to us today in purity of faith? Reading the history of Exodus, as it is narrated by the Books of Exodus, of Numbers, of Leviticus and of Deuteronomy, always, before a new event, a new difficulty, the faith of yesterday, founded on the experience of the Almightiness of God, was no longer enough. Complaints, murmuring, declarations to return to Egypt, hostile cries against God and against Moses began. If history is not enough, on what should one found faith so that there is an immediate answer to the Lord who speaks, manifests himself, invites, orientates, guides, does? The answer cannot be but one: on the might of the Holy Spirit who dwells in us and in whom one grows, enlivening light, truth, wisdom, understanding, knowledge, righteousness, fortitude day after day. Without a constant and uninterrupted growth in the Holy Spirit, the new history can turn into the death of our faith. Zechariah is a righteous and irreprehensible man in the Law and in the Commandment of the Lord. The Angel announces the great mystery of the birth of John, the precursor of the Christ of God, and his faith is obstructed. He does not believe in the heard words. He sees himself and not God. He thinks about the barrenness of the wife instead of the almightiness of his Lord. All the strength, the wisdom, the counsel, the science of the Holy Spirit, the one who puts the thoughts of man with the will of the Lord in perfect communion, lacks in him. In him, there is no perfect communion between his spirit and the Holy Spirit, between his thought and the thought of the Holy Spirit. Lacking this perfect link, he sees everything from his history and he sees nothing from the Almightiness of his Lord. This is not true only for Zechariah, it is also true for every disciples of Jesus. When one loses this link, it is the death of the faith in the Word. Even if one first believed in the Word, it is enough that the direct link with the Holy Spirit is broken and all the faith is lost. One thinks from his own heart, his own mind, his own history. Instead of saying “Nothing will be impossible for God”, one says: “This will be not possible for God.” When one comes to that, it is then that we can declare the death of our faith. It is then that the triumph of the human thoughts happens. However, we know that the human thoughts can never be thoughts of salvation.**

**Let us read the text of Lk 1,5-25**

**In the days of Herod, King of Judea, there was a priest named Zechariah of the priestly division of Abijah; his wife was from the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth. Both were righteous in the eyes of God, observing all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blamelessly. But they had no child, because Elizabeth was barren and both were advanced in years. Once when he was serving as priest in his division's turn before God, according to the practice of the priestly service, he was chosen by lot to enter the sanctuary of the Lord to burn incense. Then, when the whole assembly of the people was praying outside at the hour of the incense offering, the angel of the Lord appeared to him, standing at the right of the altar of incense. Zechariah was troubled by what he saw, and fear came upon him. But the angel said to him, "Do not be afraid, Zechariah, because your prayer has been heard. Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you shall name him John. And you will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth, for he will be great in the sight of (the) Lord. He will drink neither wine nor strong drink. He will be filled with the holy Spirit even from his mother's womb, and he will turn many of the children of Israel to the Lord their God. He will go before him in the spirit and power of Elijah to turn the hearts of fathers toward children and the disobedient to the understanding of the righteous, to prepare a people fit for the Lord." Then Zechariah said to the angel, "How shall I know this? For I am an old man, and my wife is advanced in years." And the angel said to him in reply, "I am Gabriel, who stand before God. I was sent to speak to you and to announce to you this good news. But now you will be speechless and unable to talk until the day these things take place, because you did not believe my words, which will be fulfilled at their proper time." Meanwhile the people were waiting for Zechariah and were amazed that he stayed so long in the sanctuary. But when he came out, he was unable to speak to them, and they realized that he had seen a vision in the sanctuary. He was gesturing to them but remained mute. Then, when his days of ministry were completed, he went home. After this time his wife Elizabeth conceived, and she went into seclusion for five months, saying, "So has the Lord done for me at a time when he has seen fit to take away my disgrace before others."**

**Today there is a complete detachment of the Christian from the Word of Christ Jesus, from his Gospel. The detachment from the Gospel attests and reveals a detachment from the Holy Spirit. The Spirit of God is the true, perfect, holy, divine, eternal, immortal communion between the Christian and the Word. The Christian departs from the Spirit, he will necessarily depart from the Word. How will he approach the Word again? Growing in wisdom and in grace. This is impossible today, though. One can neither preach the Commandments and one can neither teach the morality. One must leave man in his flesh. Flesh, Holy Spirit, Word can never enter into communion. Because of a false and liar anthropology, one condemns man to the eternal falsity. Today the earthily success is of the one who works from the thoughts according to flesh. On our earth, there is no longer place so that one may work with the thoughts of God. Mother of God, intercede for us.**