**THURSDAY JULY 1 – XIII WEEK O.T. [B]**

**"Why do you harbor evil thoughts? Which is easier, to say, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Rise and walk'? But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins" - he then said to the paralytic, "Rise, pick up your stretcher, and go home."**

**Who can forgive sins? Since sin is an offence to God, because his rule has been transgressed and he has been insulted, offended, deceived, He only can forgive sins.**

**Here is the prayer of the Psalmist: “Blessed is the one whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man against whom the Lord counts no iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no deceit. For when I kept silent, my bones wasted away through my groaning all day long. For day and night your hand was heavy upon me; my strength was dried up** **as by the heat of summer. I acknowledged my sin to you, and I did not cover my iniquity; I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the Lord," and you forgave the iniquity of my sin.” (Psal 32,1-5).**

**Thus David prays after his sin: “Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love; according to your abundant mercy blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin! For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me. Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight, so that you may be justified in your words and blameless in your judgment. Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me. Behold, you delight in truth in the inward being, and you teach me wisdom in the secret heart. Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. Let me hear joy and gladness; let the bones that you have broken rejoice. Hide your face from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities. Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right****spirit within me. Cast me not away from your presence, and take not your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and uphold me with a willing spirit.” (cf. Psal 51, 3-14)**

**Can a man say to another man: “Courage, child, your sins are forgiven”? He can say it if he is a prophet of the Lord. Let us read in the Holy Scripture: “The LORD sent Nathan to David, and when he came to him, he said: "Judge this case for me! In a certain town there were two men, one rich, the other poor. The rich man had flocks and herds in great numbers. But the poor man had nothing at all except one little ewe lamb that he had bought. He nourished her, and she grew up with him and his children. She shared the little food he had and drank from his cup and slept in his bosom. She was like a daughter to him. Now, the rich man received a visitor, but he would not take from his own flocks and herds to prepare a meal for the wayfarer who had come to him. Instead he took the poor man's ewe lamb and made a meal of it for his visitor."**

**David grew very angry with that man and said to Nathan: "As the LORD lives, the man who has done this merits death! He shall restore the ewe lamb fourfold because he has done this and has had no pity." Then Nathan said to David: "You are the man! Thus says the LORD God of Israel: 'I anointed you king of Israel. I rescued you from the hand of Saul. I gave you your lord's house and your lord's wives for your own. I gave you the house of Israel and of Judah. And if this were not enough, I could count up for you still more. Why have you spurned the LORD and done evil in his sight? You have cut down Uriah the Hittite with the sword; you took his wife as your own, and him you killed with the sword of the Ammonites. Now, therefore, the sword shall never depart from your house, because you have despised me and have taken the wife of Uriah to be your wife.' Thus says the LORD: 'I will bring evil upon you out of your own house. I will take your wives while you live to see it, and will give them to your neighbor. He shall lie with your wives in broad daylight. You have done this deed in secret, but I will bring it about in the presence of all Israel, and with the sun looking down.'" Then David said to Nathan, "I have sinned against the LORD." Nathan answered David: "The LORD on his part has forgiven your sin: you shall not die. But since you have utterly spurned the LORD by this deed, the child born to you must surely die." Then Nathan returned to his house. (2Sam 12,1-14).**

**Let us read the text of Mt 9, 1-8**

**He entered a boat, made the crossing, and came into his own town. And there people brought to him a paralytic lying on a stretcher. When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, "Courage, child, your sins are forgiven." At that, some of the scribes said to themselves, "This man is blaspheming." Jesus knew what they were thinking, and said, "Why do you harbor evil thoughts? Which is easier, to say, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Rise and walk'? But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins" - he then said to the paralytic, "Rise, pick up your stretcher, and go home." He rose and went home. When the crowds saw this they were struck with awe and glorified God who had given such authority to human beings.**

**The Lord remitted your sin. You shall not die. These are the words of a man, not of a God. These are the words of a prophet of the Lord. In the name of the Lord Nathan declares the sin of David forgiven. No one may forgive sins in his own name, but only and always in the name of God. This is a truth revealed, codified in the Holy Scriptures. Scribes were obliged to know this passage of the Holy Scripture, for this reason Jesus says to them: "Why do you harbor evil thoughts?”. A scribe is always obliged to think from the Holy Scripture, never from his heart, in the same way that a scribe become disciple of the reign is always obliged to think from the Gospel, or better, from the thought of Christ Jesus and never from his heart, never from his desires, never from his feelings.**

**Not thinking from the heart of the Holy Scriptures, but from his own heart, and imposing his own heart as unique and only rule to measure the truth of the thought and of the words of Christ that are always drawn from the heart of the Father through his Holy Spirit, the scribe thinks wicked things. Christ Jesus does not descends to quarrel with the scribes starting from the Holy Scriptures. They would have accused him of false and wicked interpretation or who knows what other misdeed. He limits himself, instead, to demonstrate and show to all those present that He is true man of God, true envoy from the Lord. He passes from an invisible action such as the forgiveness of sins to a visible action: the healing of the paralytic. Healing this man, Jesus attests to all those present that He is true man sent by God. He does not speak and does not act in his name, but always in the name of the One who sent him, and the one who sent him is God, his Father, the Lord.**

**Here is what Jesus will say to the scribes tomorrow: “Then one of the scholars of the law said to him in reply, "Teacher, by saying this you are insulting us too." And he said, "Woe also to you scholars of the law! You impose on people burdens hard to carry, but you yourselves do not lift one finger to touch them. Woe to you! You build the memorials of the prophets whom your ancestors killed. Consequently, you bear witness and give consent to the deeds of your ancestors, for they killed them and you do the building. Therefore, the wisdom of God said, 'I will send to them prophets and apostles; some of them they will kill and persecute' in order that this generation might be charged with the blood of all the prophets shed since the foundation of the world, from the blood of Abel to the blood of Zechariah who died between the altar and the temple building. Yes, I tell you, this generation will be charged with their blood! Woe to you, scholars of the law! You have taken away the key of knowledge. You yourselves did not enter and you stopped those trying to enter." (Lk 11,45-52). When one’s own heart is raised up as unique standard of truth and justice, the entire Word of God is reduced to a lie and every lie of men is raised up to most pure truth of God. It is this wickedness of heart that Jesus reveals and manifests today. A wicked heart can do nothing. A wicked heart is only nourished of hate against truth. The more it hates truth, the more it remains hungry and the more it has to hate with a hate that never quiets down.**

**Mother of God, make us from pure heart. We will love truth.**