**FRIDAY JULY 09 – XIV WEEK O.T. [B]**

**Brother will hand over brother to death, and the father his child; children will rise up against parents and have them put to death. You will be hated by all because of my name, but whoever endures to the end will be saved.**

**Jesus has never deceived one only man and he will never deceive him. To the one who wants to be his disciple, here is what he says:** **"Whoever wishes to come after me must deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me. For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it. What profit would there be for one to gain the whole world and forfeit his life? Or what can one give in exchange for his life? For the Son of Man will come with his angels in his Father's glory, and then he will repay everyone according to his conduct.” (Mt 16, 24-27) Whoever wants to be disciple of Jesus must be ready to follow him up to the Golgotha or to be pierced by the sword of iniquity and of wickedness in the spirit or to be nailed on the cross and, like Jesus, be made spectacle face to the world.** “**For as I see it, God has exhibited us apostles as the last of all, like people sentenced to death, since we have become a spectacle to the world, to angels and human beings alike. We are fools on Christ's account, but you are wise in Christ; we are weak, but you are strong; you are held in honor, but we in disrepute. To this very hour we go hungry and thirsty, we are poorly clad and roughly treated, we wander about homeless and we toil, working with our own hands. When ridiculed, we bless; when persecuted, we endure; when slandered, we respond gently. We have become like the world's rubbish, the scum of all, to this very moment.” (1Cor 4, 9-13)**

**Jesus warns us. He sends us as sheep in the midst of wolves and asks us to be wise as serpents and harmless as doves. Whoever does not love Christ Jesus, whoever does not dwell in the tent of the Gospel, might always turn up into wolf. Here is how in the Old Testament the Lord had already revealed these things to the prophet Micah:** “**Alas! I am as when the fruit is gathered, as when the vines have been gleaned; There is no cluster to eat, no early fig that I crave. The faithful are gone from the earth, among men the upright are no more! They all lie in wait to shed blood, each one ensnares the other. Their hands succeed at evil; the prince makes demands, The judge is had for a price, The great man speaks as he pleases, The best of them is like a brier, the most upright like a thorn hedge. The day announced by your watchmen! your punishment has come; now is the time of your confusion. Put no trust in a friend, have no confidence in a companion; Against her who lies in your bosom guard the portals of your mouth. For the son dishonors his father, the daughter rises up against her mother, The daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law, and a man's enemies are those of his household. But as for me, I will look to the LORD, I will put my trust in God my savior; my God will hear me!” (Mi 7, 1-7)**

**Whoever does not want to behave as a wolf must dwell in the tent of the Gospel. One does not dwell in the Gospel just because, by the way or by accident, we quote some phrases of the Gospel as justification of our false and liar thoughts. Using the Gospel like this is true sacrilege. One takes the holiest thing existing on earth, one takes the most precious gift that God gave us: the Word of his Only Begotten Son – let us put aside the Eucharist, of course – and we make a use of sin. One always makes of the Word of the Lord a sinful use, when we do not dwell in the tent of the Gospel, and then we use it to defend our silly and nonsense, atheist positions as misbelievers. When does one dwell in the Gospel? When we make our life of it. Here are the three modalities of dwelling in the Gospel taught to us by the Apostle Paul:**

**“Let love be sincere; hate what is evil, hold on to what is good; love one another with mutual affection; anticipate one another in showing honor. Do not grow slack in zeal, be fervent in spirit, serve the Lord. Rejoice in hope, endure in affliction, persevere in prayer. Contribute to the needs of the holy ones, exercise hospitality. Bless those who persecute (you), bless and do not curse them. Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep. Have the same regard for one another; do not be haughty but associate with the lowly; do not be wise in your own estimation.” (Rm 12, 9-16)**

**“If I speak in human and angelic tongues but do not have love, I am a resounding gong or a clashing cymbal. And if I have the gift of prophecy and comprehend all mysteries and all knowledge; if I have all faith so as to move mountains but do not have love, I am nothing. If I give away everything I own, and if I hand my body over so that I may boast but do not have love, I gain nothing. Love is patient, love is kind. It is not jealous, (love) is not pompous, it is not inflated, it is not rude, it does not seek its own interests, it is not quick-tempered, it does not brood over injury, it does not rejoice over wrongdoing but rejoices with the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.” (1Cor 13,1-7).**

**“We cause no one to stumble in anything, in order that no fault may be found with our ministry; on the contrary, in everything we commend ourselves as ministers of God, through much endurance, in afflictions, hardships, constraints, beatings, imprisonments, riots, labors, vigils, fasts; by purity, knowledge, patience, kindness, in a holy spirit, in unfeigned love, in truthful speech, in the power of God; with weapons of righteousness at the right and at the left; through glory and dishonor, insult and praise. We are treated as deceivers and yet are truthful; as unrecognized and yet acknowledged; as dying and behold we live; as chastised and yet not put to death; as sorrowful yet always rejoicing; as poor yet enriching many; as having nothing and yet possessing all things.” (2Cor 6,3-10)**

**If one is not in the Gospel, we will always quote it for a purpose that is not in the Gospel. We turn a most holy purpose that is of salvation and redemption into a purpose of sin: we clothe our falsity and our darkness with the wool of the Gospel to deceive men.**

**Let us read the text of Mt 10,16-23**

**"Behold, I am sending you like sheep in the midst of wolves; so be shrewd as serpents and simple as doves. But beware of people, for they will hand you over to courts and scourge you in their synagogues, and you will be led before governors and kings for my sake as a witness before them and the pagans. When they hand you over, do not worry about how you are to speak or what you are to say. You will be given at that moment what you are to say. For it will not be you who speak but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you. Brother will hand over brother to death, and the father his child; children will rise up against parents and have them put to death. You will be hated by all because of my name, but whoever endures to the end will be saved. When they persecute you in one town, flee to another. Amen, I say to you, you will not finish the towns of Israel before the Son of Man comes.**

**How can we guard ourselves from the men whose purpose is not that of destroying us – we are a necessary and collateral damage – but of eliminating the Gospel from earth, the only Word of light among the words of falsity, darkness, lies of men? We can if we are full of Holy Spirit. The more we grow in the Holy Spirit, the more prudence and simplicity will grow in us. The less we grow in the Holy Spirit and the less we will be prudent and simple. Jesus always had on his mouth a most prudent Word, most prudent behaviours, always lived with the greatest simplicity. He knew how far he could go in the dialogue and where he could go no further. He brought his mission to fulfilment.**

**Most Prudent Virgin, let, by your intercession, our prudence and our simplicity to be perfect, upon the example of Jesus.**