**WEDNESDAY JULY 28 – XVII WEEK O.T. [B]**

**"The kingdom of heaven is like a treasure buried in a field, which a person finds and hides again, and out of joy goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.”**

**Now Jesus reveals us how precious the reign of God is. It is worth the sale of everything we possess and of our own life. Nothing is comparable to preciousness of the reign of God and to its value. Not only does this parable reveal us the greatness of the reign of God, it also says to us the wisdom of the man who found the hidden treasure. The wisdom is this: according to the law, the found treasure is property of the holder of the field. What does the one who finds it do? He hides it again. He does not tell anyone of having found the treasure. Why? Because he cannot buy the treasure.**

**It is infinitively more than everything he possesses. He can buy the field, though. He sells everything he owns and buys it. Buying the filed, he becomes the owner of the treasure, too. The treasure is his. He can do whatever he wants of it. Among what he sells, what he leaves, what he abandons and what he acquires there is no comparison. It is as if one leaves nothing for everything. In fact, one leaves the time for the eternity, the temporary things for the eternal things, what is not worth for what it is worth, what does not last for what lasts. One leaves things to possess God. For this reason, the man is full of joy when he sells his poor things. The joy arises from the hope that, in him, is the certainty of possessing the hidden treasure. Instead, in the ignorance one makes of the misery his all.**

**Another truth is this one: no one might ever buy the treasure. The entire world is dust compared to it on the balance. It has no weight. Despite this, whoever wants the treasure must buy the field and knowing this is proper of the intelligence and of the wisdom. To buy the field we must divest ourselves of everything we possess. The loss is for one only moment. The moment is that of our life on earth. Giving God the moment, we come into possession of the eternity. For Saint Paul Apostle, the hidden treasure is Christ the Lord and referring to the gain of Christ Jesus and of Christ Crucified, thus he speaks in the Letter to Philippians:** “**Finally, my brothers, rejoice in the Lord. Writing the same things to you is no burden for me but is a safeguard for you. Beware of the dogs! Beware of the evil workers! Beware of the mutilation! For we are the circumcision, we who worship through the Spirit of God, who boast in Christ Jesus and do not put our confidence in flesh, although I myself have grounds for confidence even in the flesh. If anyone else thinks he can be confident in flesh, all the more can I. Circumcised on the eighth day, of the race of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrew parentage, in observance of the law a Pharisee, in zeal I persecuted the church, in righteousness based on the law I was blameless. (But) whatever gains I had, these I have come to consider a loss because of Christ. More than that, I even consider everything as a loss because of the supreme good of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have accepted the loss of all things and I consider them so much rubbish, that I may gain Christ and be found in him, not having any righteousness of my own based on the law but that which comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God, depending on faith to know him and the power of his resurrection and (the) sharing of his sufferings by being conformed to his death, if somehow I may attain the resurrection from the dead.**

**It is not that I have already taken hold of it or have already attained perfect maturity, but I continue my pursuit in hope that I may possess it, since I have indeed been taken possession of by Christ (Jesus). Brothers, I for my part do not consider myself to have taken possession. Just one thing: forgetting what lies behind but straining forward to what lies ahead, I continue my pursuit toward the goal, the prize of God's upward calling, in Christ Jesus. Let us, then, who are "perfectly mature" adopt this attitude. And if you have a different attitude, this too God will reveal to you. Only, with regard to what we have attained, continue on the same course.  Join with others in being imitators of me, brothers, and observe those who thus conduct themselves according to the model you have in us. For many, as I have often told you and now tell you even in tears, conduct themselves as enemies of the cross of Christ. Their end is destruction. Their God is their stomach; their glory is in their "shame." Their minds are occupied with earthly things. But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we also await a savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. He will change our lowly body to conform with his glorified body by the power that enables him also to bring all things into subjection to himself. (Phil 3,1-21).**

**This is not foolishness. It is true faith. This is the faith making the great saint and the great apostles of the Lord. How much is the reign of heaven worth for us? Nothing at all. We have reduced faith to a miserable earthly hope. This is the sin of us Christians. With this sin, we cannot surely pretend to raise the world until God.**

**Let us read the text of Mt 13, 44-46**

**"The kingdom of heaven is like a treasure buried in a field, which a person finds and hides again, and out of joy goes and sells all that he has and buys that field. Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant searching for fine pearls. When he finds a pearl of great price, he goes and sells all that he has and buys it.”**

**The second parable differs from the first one for a little, great detail. In the first case, the treasure is found. One sees it. One hides it. One acts with intelligence. In this second case, the treasure is a research. In the heart of man, there is the desire of eternity, of God, of truth, of salvation, of redemption, of holiness. The research does not stop at the first thing found. It is made with wise and intelligent discernment. One distinguishes pearl from pearl, fine pearl from a finer, very fine pearl. In the man, there is the ability of the wise and holy discernment. Without this ability, that is always a gift of God, one might never separate the good from the evil, the good from the best, the best from the excellent.**

**However, this choice requires the greatest freedom, the freedom to sacrifice even one’s own life for the supreme good found. Whoever does not have this freedom might never buy the fine pearl found. Without this freedom, one will live of the little things of the present life, but these ones do not give the true joy. The true joy is the eternal, divine one that comes from God. This is the freedom which was missing in the rich man who locked himself in the prison of his goods and consumed his days in them. Jesus had offered him to buy the pearl of great price. Without this supreme and utmost freedom from everything, from everyone, from ourselves, from our life that must be handed over even to the cross, to the martyrdom, we might never buy the fine pearl. To possess the reign of God we need will of research, discernment, utmost freedom, total separation from the things of this world. Letting oneself be made slaves by men and things is not the life solution.**

**Unfortunately, men prefer slavery to freedom, immobility to research, passivity to discernment, ignorance to science, passivity to tenacity and to “violence”. The Christian faith is freedom, research, discernment, science, tenacity, “violence”, perseverance until the end. Man can search for the best. If he can, he has to. If he has to, he is free to do so. If he does not do it, he is responsible before God and men. Man is capable of God, of eternity, of beauty, of truth, of holiness. Man is able to transcend himself. One can transcend since the Lord places the pearl of great price before him. One can raise himself since the pearl exists and one can always find it. Who is the Christian then? He is the one who places the fine pearl before men, so that all of them are put into possibility of willing and knowing how to choose what is better for their present and future life. Mother of God, help every Christian so that he shows the entire world the fine pearl of great price that is Christ Jesus.**