**FRIDAY JULY 30 – XVII WEEK O.T. [B]**

**"Where did this man get such wisdom and mighty deeds? Is he not the carpenter's son? Is not his mother named Mary and his brothers James, Joseph, Simon, and Judas? Are not his sisters all with us? Where did this man get all this?"**

**The native place of Jesus is Nazareth. In Nazareth, he enters the synagogue and he starts to teach. We know that teaching in the synagogue of Nazareth was a habit of Jesus the Lord. On Saturday, Jesus was at the synagogue and spoke to teach them the truth of what was read. Before the teaching of Jesus those people was astonished and said: "Where did this man get such wisdom and mighty deeds?” People know his humble origin, his poverty, they know he did not attend any rabbinical school. People see Jesus according to appearances, they do not see him in the fullness of his essence and his truth. To have the right vision, one needs a particular grace: the light of the Holy Spirit. This light must always be asked. Every one of us may be deceived by appearances. This deceit may lead us not to judge according to truth, not to discern in fullness of wisdom and revelation. In order not to fall in this judgement according to appearances, the grace of God is necessary. This grace must always be asked. This grace must always be asked in the great humility of heart and of mind. Whoever trusts only his eyes and his mind will never ask for this grace, he will always judge according to appearances.**

**Jesus has a carpenter as father. What possible great can come from a son of a carpenter? They ignored that the carpenter was the son of David. The relatives of Jesus were of very humble conditions, too. They ignore that God really uses the humility to make great things. The judgement according to appearance is always a fruit of a great ignorance: ignorance of God and of men, of history and of things in themselves. The judgement according to appearance is sign of a great pride ruling the heart of men. Together with the pride, there is also the arrogance and above all a closed heart to the manifestation of God. The humble heart is always able to recognize the Lord in each of its smallest manifestation. We must always ask the Lord this humble, pure, simple heart, able to see God. The prayer must be constant, daily, with no interruptions. It is easy to fall in the judgement according to appearance, since it is easy to fall into the seduction of satan.**

**The offense is true non-faith in the person of Jesus, in his deeds, in his mission. This offense does not arise from something bad Jesus did before or against them. This offense arises from their preconceptions, from their thoughts not educated to the truth, from their heart closed to humility. This offense is about the Person and about the mission of Christ Jesus. Because of the humble origins of Jesus, from the good and mighty deeds, they do not come to the goodness and the holiness of his person and of his mission. When the goodness of the deed is true, incontrovertible, holy, pure, free, merciful, righteous, then from the deed one may always come to the truth of the person and of his mission. Whoever is offended attests that his heart is impure and his mind proud, his thoughts wrong, his will weak and infirm. One is not a prophet by descent according to flesh or blood. One is a prophet since the Holy Spirit places itself upon him and constitutes him a prophet among the people of the Lord. The origin of the true prophecy always descends from above, from God, from his Holy Spirit, from Heaven. The place of the prophecy and of the grace of mighty deeds is heaven, not on earth. For Heaven there is no distinction neither of men nor of women, neither of rich nor of poor, neither of wealthy people not of humble conditions, neither of professionals, nor of workers or farmers. Heaven chooses what it wants, when it wants, where it wants, among who it wants.**

**Let us read the text of Mt 13,54-58**

**He came to his native place and taught the people in their synagogue. They were astonished and said, "Where did this man get such wisdom and mighty deeds? Is he not the carpenter's son? Is not his mother named Mary and his brothers James, Joseph, Simon, and Judas? Are not his sisters all with us? Where did this man get all this?" And they took offense at him. But Jesus said to them, "A prophet is not without honor except in his native place and in his own house." And he did not work many mighty deeds there because of their lack of faith.**

**Before the incredulity, Jesus stops. He stops for a very simple reason: man is one. From the unity of man, the unity of his truth and of his deed. No one who is wise in heart might ever separate this mystery of unity: the person from the deed. Deed and person are inseparable, as person and mission are inseparable. The one does not believe in the Person and in the mission of the Person, how can he believe in the deeds, if the deeds are the way for one to believe in the truth of the Person and of the mission? If one wants the deeds, one wants them all for themselves. But the deeds are never for themselves, they are always the fruit of a person and of a mission. Whoever wants the deeds must want the Person and his mission in an inseparable and unbreakable unity. But also whoever gives the deeds, must give them in the unbreakable unity of the mission of the person. When this unity is broken, Jesus stops himself from performing the mighty deeds. He performs mighty deeds for those few people who accept and live the mystery of this unity. Today this is one of the great mistakes that is unfolding within the Church. One wants the social, charitable, human deed of the Church. One does not want the Church in its mystery and its mission, in its supernatural essence and its mission of truth. This is the offense of yesterday toward Christ Jesus. This is the offense of today toward the Church, toward the men of the Church. To us, the commitment not to let ourselves be dragged in this mistake. Jesus never let himself be dragged.**

**He never separated the miracle from the faith in his Person and in his mission. Today much creeping incredulity about the mystery of the Church reigns, yet one wants the human deed of the Church. Being vigilant so that this does not happen is our responsibility, our duty of greater justice. We have not been sent to work mighty deeds. We have been sent to save man and man can be saved in one only way: with the gift of grace and of truth. Unbreakable and inseparable unity, among person, mission, deed: one must never separate the deed from the person, the mission from the deed and from the person. This unity must always remain unbreakable. The one who must be vigilant so that this unity never be crumbled is the one who received the mission and to whom the deed has been ordered. Remaining, he, in the perfect obedience to his Lord, this unity shall bear good fruits in every man of good will. The offense arises from a strong absence of true faith in the heart: Every work of God is not fulfilled by virtue of the nature, of the lineage and bloodline, of education, of formation, of school, of human teachers. One fulfils it by a gift from Above, from Heaven, from God. If it is by God and not by nature, every nature, every person can be constituted, by the Lord, his vessel to manifest his glory, his will, his deeds. Those of Nazareth were offended by the human and earthly humility of Christ Jesus. This offense was able to infect almost a whole town. We must always avoid this contamination from taking our life and leading it out of the truth of God.**

**The incredulity closes the door to mighty deeds: the mighty deed is a sign arising from faith and leads to a greater faith. Incredulity deprives the mighty deed of its true, divine aim. With no true aim, working the mighty deed becomes useless. For this reason, Jesus can perform few miracles in Nazareth, since there are few people opening themselves to the faith in Him. One becomes unworthy to receive the gift of God when one falls into the sin against the Holy Spirit and when our heart, hard as a stone, is hostile to God and to the envoys of God. Since we do not know who is worthy and who is unworthy, we must act in the same way as Christ Jesus: always giving the gift of God with supreme prudence. Prudence is a right rule, the perennial rule of the good missionary of Christ Jesus: “Be shrewd as serpents and simple as doves.” Mother of Wisdom, teach us the holy virtues necessary to our mission.**