**TUESDAY AUGUST 10 – XIX WEEK O.T. [B]**

**SAINT LAWRENCE**

**Unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains just a grain of wheat; but if it dies, it produces much fruit. Whoever loves his life loses it, and whoever hates his life in this world will preserve it for eternal life.**

**The Apostle Paul asks the Romans to make of their body a living sacrifice to the Lord: “I urge you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God, your spiritual worship. Do not conform yourselves to this age but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and pleasing and perfect. (Rm 12,1-2). According to what is revealed by the Psalm, the Eternal Word of the Father lives to make the will of the Father, but it has no body to offer Him: “In sacrifice and offering you have not delighted, but you have given me an open ear.****Burnt offering and sin offering you have not required. Then I said, "Behold, I have come; in the scroll of the book it is written of me: I delight to do your will, O my God; your law is within my heart." (Psal 40,7-9).**

**The Holy Spirit gives the Eternal Word of the Father a body. The Word of the Father is born as true man from the womb of the Virgin Mary. In Her, it becomes flesh: "The holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. Therefore the child to be born will be called holy, the Son of God.” (Lk 1, 35) Thus this truth is announced by the Apostle John: “And the Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us, and we saw his glory, the glory as of the Father's only Son, full of grace and truth.”(Jn 1, 14)**

**Being he made true man, the Eternal Son of the Father can offer his body to the Father and fulfil the human redemption. This truth is thus revealed in the Letter to Hebrews: “For this reason, when he came into the world, he said: "Sacrifice and offering you did not desire, but a body you prepared for me; holocausts and sin offerings you took no delight in. Then I said, 'As is written of me in the scroll, Behold, I come to do your will, O God.'" First he says, "Sacrifices and offerings, holocausts and sin offerings, you neither desired nor delighted in." These are offered according to the law. Then he says, "Behold, I come to do your will." He takes away the first to establish the second. By this "will," we have been consecrated through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. (Hb 10,5-10).**

**Christ Jesus is the poorest among the poor of the earth. He has nothing. What is his alms, what is his charity, what is his work of mercy fulfilled in our favor and that deserved the eternal salvation for us? His alms consists of having given his body to the Father. Upon it, the Father charged all our sins and he nailed them in his body on the cross, so that they remain on the wood for the eternity. This truth is thus revealed by the Holy Spirit by mouth of the prophet Isaiah:** “**Yet it was our infirmities that he bore, our sufferings that he endured, While we thought of him as stricken, as one smitten by God and afflicted. But he was pierced for our offenses, crushed for our sins, Upon him was the chastisement that makes us whole, by his stripes we were healed. We had all gone astray like sheep, each following his own way; But the LORD laid upon him the guilt of us all. Though he was harshly treated, he submitted and opened not his mouth; Like a lamb led to the slaughter or a sheep before the shearers, he was silent and opened not his mouth. Oppressed and condemned, he was taken away, and who would have thought any more of his destiny? When he was cut off from the land of the living, and smitten for the sin of his people, A grave was assigned him among the wicked and a burial place with evildoers, Though he had done no wrong nor spoken any falsehood. (But the LORD was pleased to crush him in infirmity.) If he gives his life as an offering for sin, he shall see his descendants in a long life, and the will of the LORD shall be accomplished through him.” (Is 53,4-10).**

**Jesus falls from heaven on the earth. In his body, the Father charges the faults of humanity and He atones them for us, in our sted. Here is the great alms that Christ Jesus did in our favor: he made us gift of his body. The gift is double. He gives his body in sacrifice of expiation for the cancellation of the sins of the world. But he also gives his body and his blood in the Sacrament of the Eucharist so that his life entirely lives in our life and until the day of Parusia. He might offer our body in sacrifice of expiation for the sin of all our brothers. What the Apostle Paul says of Christ Jesus must be said of each of his disciples and can be said only because Christ gave us his life so that he entirely lives in our body:** “**And all this is from God, who has reconciled us to himself through Christ and given us the ministry of reconciliation, namely, God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting their trespasses against them and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation. So we are ambassadors for Christ, as if God were appealing through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. For our sake he made him to be sin who did not know sin, so that we might become the righteousness of God in him. (2Cor 5,18-21). When do we become justice of God in Christ? When the entire life of Christ lives in our body. This is the goal of the Eucharist and this means to eat the body of Christ: giving Christ our body so that He may perpetuate in us his mystery of redemption until the end of the world. If we eat Christ Jesus and we do not give Him our body so that He lives in us all life long, in the fullness of his mystery – he is made sin in our favour, we are made sin in Him in favour of the entire world – then, the Eucharist is received by us not according to truth. We receive it vainly and many times in an unworthy and sacrilegious way, as well.**

**Let us read the text of Jn 12,24-26**

**Amen, amen, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains just a grain of wheat; but if it dies, it produces much fruit. Whoever loves his life loses it, and whoever hates his life in this world will preserve it for eternal life. Whoever serves me must follow me, and where I am, there also will my servant be. The Father will honor whoever serves me.**

**Every disciple of Jesus has a body. The body is his richness. If he offers this richness to the Father, so that the Father makes of it a “sacrament” so that today Christ Jesus may fully live in Him and perpetuate his mission as Servant of the Lord in the centuries, then his alms will be truly great, most great. Through this offer, the Father might redeem and save the world. Instead, if the Christian keeps the life for himself, it will rot in time and also in eternity. The Lord gives the life so that we make of it a sacrifice to Him. The Holy Spirit had already revealed this truth by mouth of David, but only for material things:** **"Blessed may you be, O LORD, God of Israel our father, from eternity to eternity. "Yours, O LORD, are grandeur and power, majesty, splendor, and glory. For all in heaven and on earth is yours; yours, O LORD, is the sovereignty; you are exalted as head over all. "Riches and honor are from you, and you have dominion over all. In your hand are power and might; it is yours to give grandeur and strength to all. Therefore, our God, we give you thanks and we praise the majesty of your name." (1Cr 29,10-14). Our body is yours, oh Lord. You gave it to us, so that we entirely give it back to you. How does one give the body to the Lord our God? Clothed with every virtues. Free from every stain or shadow of sin, even light. Our body must be given to the Father clothed with Christ and his Gospel. Most pure Virgin, help us to make our body an offering pleasing to God, so that Jesus the Lord might live the mystery of redemption in us.**