**TUESDAY AUGUST 17 – XX WEEK O.T. [B]**

**"Amen, I say to you, it will be hard for one who is rich to enter the kingdom of heaven. Again I say to you, it is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for one who is rich to enter the kingdom of God."**

**The rich young man goes away. Jesus starts to speak and says to his disciples: "Amen, I say to you, it will be hard for one who is rich to enter the kingdom of heaven.” It is a judgement and a prophecy of eternal death for the rich. What is this word based on? Jesus himself gives us the answer when he warns his disciples to pay every attention so that they are not conquered by the deceit of mammon. Life does not depend on richness neither on earth nor in eternity. Richness is everything man does not need neither for the soul nor for the spirit neither for the body nor for the time nor for eternity, neither for the earth nor for heaven. The first fruit of mammon is the immersion of man into vices. When vice enters the heart of man, as its first action it excludes God from it. A heart without God becomes with no wisdom. Without the wisdom of God, one abandons the Commandments, one falls into sin. Jesus confirms what he has just said: “Again I say to you, it is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for one who is rich to enter the kingdom of God." Words leaving no hope, no appeal that are eternal condemnation. Can a camel pass through the eye of a needle? Of course, never. A miracle can pass, only if its body becomes as thin as the filament or invisible like the spirit. A true transformation of nature is necessary. Thus will be for the rich. Better, it will be even more difficult. The miracle should be even greater for him. But only God can perform the miracle. No rich person can perform the miracle of the change of nature on his own. If he cannot, he does not even enter. These words must not be intended metaphorically, but for real. Jesus says them with all the seriousness and divine truth illuminating his heart. These are not words to be taken as light. They are true, authentic, immortal prophecy.**

**The disciples understand the seriousness and the eternal heaviness of Jesus’ words and remain surprised. The reaction consists of one only question: Who can be saved, then? They believe in the reality and concreteness of the Word of Jesus. They believe that it is really difficult to be saved for those who let themselves be conquered by mammon and become its worshippers. No idolatry leads to Paradise. The idolatry of mammon is one of the worst idolatries. Because of mammon, one kills, one tortures, one hands himself over evil, to crime, to extortions, to every evil and wickedness. Because of it, one sells the father and the mother and one becomes sower of death. It is the dark evil of desire. The thirst for wealth moves every war. The calamities it provokes are infinite. When the heart lets itself be dragged by this thirst, there is no money that is enough. The more one has, the more one wants to have. The thirst for money is the cause of the whole evil. The perdition is eternal because the thirst for wealth inevitably drags us, earlier or later, out of the obedience to Commandments and to Beatitudes. It hardens the heart and it makes it become of stone. There is no life with the heart of stone.**

**Jesus reassures his disciples: this is impossible to men, but everything is possible to God. What is the true, deep meaning of this word of Jesus the Lord? Is he denying what he previously said? Not at all. Jesus also subjects the idolatry of mammon to the law of grace and of conversion. Until one is slave of mammon, there is no eternal life. One is excluded from the reign of heaven. This applies to every idolatry. Idolatry is perdition. Can one convert from idolatry? With the grace of God, one can convert himself. At the time of conversion, one abandons what he previously worshipped and enters the true obedience to God, according to the Commandments and the Beatitudes. In order that conversion occurs, one needs that the Christian is bearer of the Holy Spirit in his heart. His word of invitation to conversion, uttered in the Spirit of the Lord, can operate the great miracle of conversion. To God everything is possible, as well as everything is possible to the Holy Spirit. But the one who has to bear the Spirit of conversion is the Christian, the minister of the Word, the missionary of Christ Jesus. With the Holy Spirit, the conversion is possible. The Word of Jesus must always be interpreted with the Word of Jesus. Now Jesus says an absolute truth: when a man is slave and idolater of mammon, this will make him so inhuman to make him lose the eternal salvation. But Jesus has always said that conversion is possible. However, the conversion has its laws and rules: it must be operated by the Holy Spirit. The Spirit must be brought by the body of Christ. Every Christian is body of Christ. If the Christian, who is body of Christ, does not live in Christ, with Christ, for Christ, because he does not dwell in the Word, he will never bear the Spirit of conversion and the idolaters will continue with their idolatry and the unchaste in their immorality.**

**Let us read the text of Mt 19,23-30**

**Then Jesus said to his disciples, "Amen, I say to you, it will be hard for one who is rich to enter the kingdom of heaven. Again I say to you, it is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for one who is rich to enter the kingdom of God." When the disciples heard this, they were greatly astonished and said, "Who then can be saved?" Jesus looked at them and said, "For human beings this is impossible, but for God all things are possible." Then Peter said to him in reply, "We have given up everything and followed you. What will there be for us?" Jesus said to them, "Amen, I say to you that you who have followed me, in the new age, when the Son of Man is seated on his throne of glory, will yourselves sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. And everyone who has given up houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or lands for the sake of my name will receive a hundred times more, and will inherit eternal life. But many who are first will be last, and the last will be first.**

**Peter promptly intervenes and manifests Jesus that they are not like the rich young man who goes away. That is, we have given up everything and followed you. What advantage will this discipleship bear to them? So, what will we have from it? Jesus has already given an answer to the rich young man. You will be perfect on earth and in heaven, you will have a treasure in heavens. On earth, treasures are useless. The only true treasure on earth is the alms and the mercy. Whoever is in the Gospel, whoever lives in Christ, with Christ, for Christ, whoever is moved by the Holy Spirit, whoever is true son of the Father needs nothing. He has all the richness of the universe and of eternity.**

**Firstly, Jesus reveals his disciples what is the eternal richness that will be given to them. When the Son of man will be seated on the throne of his glory, on the regeneration of the world, they, too, will be seated on twelve thrones. The Lord will constitute them judges of the twelve tribes of Israel. In glory, they are raised above all their fathers. The judge is the one who is placed above the other ones. On earth, He set the place of God. The disciple of Jesus will have a most high glory in heavens. In the Paradise, there is glory and glory. That of the disciples of Jesus will be glory above the other glories. The honour the Lord will give them will be extremely great. They will be eternal glory and honour, immortal, who will never fail. Now let us move to the reward they will receive on earth. Everyone who has given up houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or lands for the sake of my name will receive a hundred times more, and will inherit eternal life. The Word of Jesus must not be interpreted literally. We speak of fullness of heart. How much can a house, a brother, a sister, a father, a mother, a son fill a heart? Jesus promises that he will fill it a hundred times more. The joy He will give to those who will have given up everything will be a hundred times more than that one would have obtained without giving up. That of earth is an imperfect, patchy joy, always inadequate, always to be filled. What Jesus gives is perfect joy, full, nothing must be added, it might never be filled. A hundred times more, however, indicates a finite perfection, as there might never be infinite perfection on earth. In the reign of Christ Jesus, the one who serves is great. The one who takes and occupies the last place is the first. Only the one who is subjected to the Lord and remains in the great humility is the one who deserves honour and glory. In the reign of heaven, every measure is overwhelmed. May the Mother of God raised above the choirs of the Angels and above the Saints help us to understand. From the right understanding our new life is born. Amen.**