**SATURDAY OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY**

# Queen of Peace

Once we wrote: Prince of Peace is the Messiah of the Lord. This is his name forever: *“For a child is born to us, a son is given us; upon his shoulder dominion rests. They name him Wonder-Counselor, God-Hero, Father-Forever, Prince of Peace. His dominion is vast and forever peaceful, From David's throne, and over his kingdom, which he confirms and sustains By judgment and justice, both now and forever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this! ”* (Is 9,5-6). Gesù si annunzia ai suoi prima come datore della vera pace e dopo la sua gloriosa risurrezione la dona ai suoi discepoli: *“Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give it to you. Do not let your hearts be troubled or afraid. You heard me tell you, 'I am going away and I will come back to you.' If you loved me, you would rejoice that I am going to the Father; for the Father is greater than I. And now I have told you this before it happens, so that when it happens you may believe. I will no longer speak much with you, for the ruler of the world is coming. He has no power over me, but the world must know that I love the Father and that I do just as the Father has commanded me. Get up, let us go.* (Jn14,27-31). *“On the evening of that first day of the week, when the doors were locked, where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in their midst and said to them, "Peace be with you." When he had said this, he showed them his hands and his side. The disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. (Jesus) said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you." And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the holy Spirit. Whose sins you forgive are forgiven them, and whose sins you retain are retained."* (Jn 20,19-23). Jesus gives peace by recreating man, regenerating him, making him partaker of the divine nature through his Holy Spirit. Peace in man's heart returns in only one way: by returning God, the true God, into it and remaining there. As soon as God leaves the heart, immediately the war of his concupiscence, of his evil desires, of his disobedience, pride, vainglory, arrogance, overbearingness, foolishness, insipience is unleashed in man. Jesus puts God into the heart of man, putting Himself, his Word, his truth, his Holy Spirit. Without a true relationship with God, there can never be peace in hearts, and where peace does not reign, there the true God does not reign either.

The Virgin Mary is invoked as Queen of Peace. Why does this title suit Her, indeed does it express her maternal mission more than any other? Because She is a solicitous, vigilant Mother, who hides the sinner under the mantle of her mercy, invokes for him every grace of repentance, conversion, salvation and redemption, prompts and guides him so that each day he may grow in love for the Word of Jesus, in which is every gift of grace and truth, which are the foundation of true peace. Without her motherly, loving, rescuing mission, which anticipates each of our desire for good, we would all be like sheep without a shepherd. Instead, the Virgin Mary binds us to Herself to deliver us all to her Divine Son. She is the Mother who always leads to the Son, so that the Son can then hand us over to the Father. Mary is the essential, primary way to our peace. An example of how peace is brought is the wedding feast of Cana. There the Virgin Mary brings it by anticipating, by interceding even before the reason for non-peace arose. At Calvary, the Virgin Mary brings peace by asking the heavenly Father for forgiveness for all his misguided children, incapable of truth, piety, compassion, true faith, true religion, true adoration of God. She also asks for peace by offering Herself, in her Beloved Son, as a victim of peace, a holocaust of reconciliation, a Mother who sees the miserable spiritual state of all her children and does not hesitate for a moment to offer God her own life for them, in that cruel martyrdom that pierced her soul. Mary asks for peace and obtains it for her children by her silence adoring the mystery, by her ever-ready obedience, by the consecration of her entire life to the ministry of Mother that the Father in heaven has placed on her shoulders. Mary is the true Queen of Peace.

Today it must be added: one wants peace with a barren and vain prayer, because it is raised to a God who is not the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. We seem to be witnessing today what happened on Mount Carmel with the false prophets of the false God Baal:

*Long afterward, in the third year, the LORD spoke to Elijah, "Go, present yourself to Ahab," he said, "that I may send rain upon the earth." So Elijah went to present himself to Ahab. Now the famine in Samaria was bitter, and Ahab had summoned Obadiah, his vizier, who was a zealous follower of the LORD. When Jezebel was murdering the prophets of the LORD, Obadiah took a hundred prophets, hid them away fifty each in two caves, and supplied them with food and drink.*

*Ahab said to Obadiah, "Come, let us go through the land to all sources of water and to all the streams. We may find grass and save the horses and mules, so that we shall not have to slaughter any of the beasts." Dividing the land to explore between them, Ahab went one way by himself, Obadiah another way by himself. As Obadiah was on his way, Elijah met him. Recognizing him, Obadiah fell prostrate and asked, "Is it you, my lord Elijah?" "Yes," he answered. "Go tell your master, 'Elijah is here!'" But Obadiah said, "What sin have I committed, that you are handing me over to Ahab to have me killed? As the LORD, your God, lives, there is no nation or kingdom where my master has not sent in search of you. When they replied, 'He is not here,' he made each kingdom and nation swear they could not find you. And now you say, 'Go tell your master: Elijah is here!' After I leave you, the spirit of the LORD will carry you to some place I do not know, and when I go to inform Ahab and he does not find you, he will kill me. Your servant has revered the LORD from his youth. Have you not been told, my lord, what I did when Jezebel was murdering the prophets of the LORD - that I hid a hundred of the prophets of the LORD, fifty each in two caves, and supplied them with food and drink? And now you say, 'Go tell your master: Elijah is here!' He will kill me!" Elijah answered, "As the LORD of hosts lives, whom I serve, I will present myself to him today." So Obadiah went to meet Ahab and informed him. Ahab came to meet Elijah, and when he saw Elijah, said to him, "Is it you, you disturber of Israel?" "It is not I who disturb Israel," he answered, "but you and your family, by forsaking the commands of the LORD and following the Baals. Now summon all Israel to me on Mount Carmel, as well as the four hundred and fifty prophets of Baal and the four hundred prophets of Asherah who eat at Jezebel's table."*

*So Ahab sent to all the Israelites and had the prophets assemble on Mount Carmel. Elijah appealed to all the people and said, "How long will you straddle the issue? If the LORD is God, follow him; if Baal, follow him." The people, however, did not answer him. So Elijah said to the people, "I am the only surviving prophet of the LORD, and there are four hundred and fifty prophets of Baal. Give us two young bulls. Let them choose one, cut it into pieces, and place it on the wood, but start no fire. I shall prepare the other and place it on the wood, but shall start no fire. You shall call on the name of your gods, and I will call on the name of the LORD. The God who answers with fire is God." All the people answered, "Agreed!" Elijah then said to the prophets of Baal, "Choose one young bull and prepare it first, for there are more of you. Call upon your gods, but do not start the fire." Taking the young bull that was turned over to them, they prepared it and called on Baal from morning to noon, saying, "Answer us, Baal!" But there was no sound, and no one answering. And they hopped around the altar they had prepared. When it was noon, Elijah taunted them: "Call louder, for he is a god and may be meditating, or may have retired, or may be on a journey. Perhaps he is asleep and must be awakened." They called out louder and slashed themselves with swords and spears, as was their custom, until blood gushed over them. Noon passed and they remained in a prophetic state until the time for offering sacrifice. But there was not a sound; no one answered, and no one was listening.*

*Then Elijah said to all the people, "Come here to me." When they had done so, he repaired the altar of the LORD which had been destroyed. He took twelve stones, for the number of tribes of the sons of Jacob, to whom the LORD had said, "Your name shall be Israel." He built an altar in honor of the LORD with the stones, and made a trench around the altar large enough for two seahs of grain. When he had arranged the wood, he cut up the young bull and laid it on the wood. "Fill four jars with water," he said, "and pour it over the holocaust and over the wood." "Do it again," he said, and they did it again. "Do it a third time," he said, and they did it a third time. The water flowed around the altar, and the trench was filled with the water.*

*At the time for offering sacrifice, the prophet Elijah came forward and said, "LORD, God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, let it be known this day that you are God in Israel and that I am your servant and have done all these things by your command. Answer me, LORD! Answer me, that this people may know that you, LORD, are God and that you have brought them back to their senses." The LORD'S fire came down and consumed the holocaust, wood, stones, and dust, and it lapped up the water in the trench. Seeing this, all the people fell prostrate and said, "The LORD is God! The LORD is God!"*

*Then Elijah said to them, "Seize the prophets of Baal. Let none of them escape!" They were seized, and Elijah had them brought down to the brook Kishon and there he slit their throats. Elijah then said to Ahab, "Go up, eat and drink, for there is the sound of a heavy rain."*

*So Ahab went up to eat and drink, while Elijah climbed to the top of Carmel, crouched down to the earth, and put his head between his knees. "Climb up and look out to sea," he directed his servant, who went up and looked, but reported, "There is nothing." Seven times he said, "Go look again!" And the seventh time the youth reported, "There is a cloud as small as a man's hand rising from the sea." Elijah said, "Go and say to Ahab, 'Harness up and leave the mountain before the rain stops you.'" In a trice, the sky grew dark with clouds and wind, and a heavy rain fell. Ahab mounted his chariot and made for Jezreel. But the hand of the LORD was on Elijah, who girded up his clothing and ran before Ahab as far as the approaches to Jezreel. (1Kg 18,1-46).*

Beginning from this event and others by the prophet Elijah, here is what the Apostle James teaches about prayer: *“Where do the wars and where do the conflicts among you come from? Is it not from your passions that make war within your members? You covet but do not possess. You kill and envy but you cannot obtain; you fight and wage war. You do not possess because you do not ask. You ask but do not receive, because you ask wrongly, to spend it on your passions. Adulterers! Do you not know that to be a lover of the world means enmity with God? Therefore, whoever wants to be a lover of the world makes himself an enemy of God. Or do you suppose that the scripture speaks without meaning when it says, "The spirit that he has made to dwell in us tends toward jealousy"? But he bestows a greater grace; therefore, it says: "God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble." So submit yourselves to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you of two minds. Begin to lament, to mourn, to weep. Let your laughter be turned into mourning and your joy into dejection. Humble yourselves before the Lord and he will exalt you. (Jm 4,1-10). Is anyone among you suffering? He should pray. Is anyone in good spirits? He should sing praise. Is anyone among you sick? He should summon the presbyters of the church, and they should pray over him and anoint (him) with oil in the name of the Lord, and the prayer of faith will save the sick person, and the Lord will raise him up. If he has committed any sins, he will be forgiven. Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The fervent prayer of a righteous person is very powerful. Elijah was a human being like us; yet he prayed earnestly that it might not rain, and for three years and six months it did not rain upon the land. Then he prayed again, and the sky gave rain and the earth produced its fruit. (Jm 5,13-18).*

True faith that makes prayer true. True faith is the foundation and principle of true peace. Where there is no true faith, there is no true prayer, there is no true peace. Also because non-peace, in whatever form it manifests itself, testifies that true faith is not in our heart. Here is true faith that makes all peace, but also true faith that prevents any war from being born: *"You have heard that it was said, 'An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.' But I say to you, offer no resistance to one who is evil. When someone strikes you on (your) right cheek, turn the other one to him as well. If anyone wants to go to law with you over your tunic, hand him your cloak as well. Should anyone press you into service for one mile, go with him for two miles. Give to the one who asks of you, and do not turn your back on one who wants to borrow. "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I say to you, love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be children of your heavenly Father, for he makes his sun rise on the bad and the good, and causes rain to fall on the just and the unjust. For if you love those who love you, what recompense will you have? Do not the tax collectors do the same? And if you greet your brothers only, what is unusual about that? Do not the pagans do the same? So be perfect, just as your heavenly Father is perfect.” (Mt 5,38-48).* The Virgin Mary is Queen in peace in true faith. True faith is also in the confession of the truth of the Virgin Mary. If we acknowledge Her as our true Mother, we must also acknowledge Her as the true Mother of those we offend. Now no one will be able to say that the Virgin Mary is his true Mother if I offend even one of her other children. That is why our prayer today is false, because it is founded on a false faith, false faith on God the Father, false faith on Christ the Lord, false faith on the Holy Spirit, false faith on the Virgin Mary, false faith on the Church, false faith on the Gospel. May the Virgin Mary, Queen of Peace, come and teach us how to walk from faith to faith in true and holy faith. **09 February 2025**