**And blessed is the one who takes no offense at me**

**WEDNESDAY DICEMBER 16 (Lk 7,19-23)**

For whom will Jesus never be a cause of scandal? For those who allow themselves to be guided by the light and wisdom of the Holy Spirit. St. Paul reveals that the Crucifix is a scandal for the Jews and foolishness for the Greeks:

*Where is the wise one? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made the wisdom of the world foolish? For since in the wisdom of God the world did not come to know God through wisdom, it was the will of God through the foolishness of the proclamation to save those who have faith. For Jews demand signs and Greeks look for wisdom, but we proclaim Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, but to those who are called, Jews and Greeks alike, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. For the foolishness of God is wiser than human wisdom, and the weakness of God is stronger than human strength.* *When I came to you, brothers, proclaiming the mystery of God, I did not come with sublimity of words or of wisdom. For I resolved to know nothing while I was with you except Jesus Christ, and him crucified. I came to you in weakness and fear and much trembling, and my message and my proclamation were not with persuasive (words of) wisdom, but with a demonstration of spirit and power, so that your faith might rest not on human wisdom but on the power of God. (1Cor 1,20-25; 2,1-5).*

Instead, he reveals to the Galatians that the scandal that arises from the cross of Christ must never be annulled for his preaching. To remove the scandal is to remove Jesus Crucified from his preaching: *You were running well; who hindered you from following (the) truth? That enticement does not come from the one who called you. A little yeast leavens the whole batch of dough. I am confident of you in the Lord that you will not take a different view, and that the one who is troubling you will bear the condemnation, whoever he may be. As for me, brothers, if I am still preaching circumcision, why am I still being persecuted? In that case, the stumbling block of the cross has been abolished. Would that those who are upsetting you might also castrate themselves!* *(Gal 5,7-12).* Today the Crucifix is a scandal for the world.

The Apostle Peter, quoting the Psalm, says that Jesus is truly a stone of scandal: “Come to him, a living stone, rejected by human beings but chosen and precious in the sight of God, and, like living stones, let yourselves be built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. For it says in scripture: "Behold, I am laying a stone in Zion, a cornerstone, chosen and precious, and whoever believes in it shall not be put to shame." Therefore, its value is for you who have faith, but for those without faith: "The stone which the builders rejected has become the cornerstone, "and "A stone that will make people stumble, and a rock that will make them fall." They stumble by disobeying the word, as is their destiny” *(Cfr. 1Pt 2,1-10).* The crucifix is a scandal for those who do not believe.

*At that time, John summoned two of his disciples and sent them to the Lord to ask, "Are you the one who is to come, or should we look for another? "When the men came to him, they said, "John the Baptist has sent us to you to ask, 'Are you the one who is to come, or should we look for another?' "At that time he cured many of their diseases, sufferings, and evil spirits; he also granted sight to many who were blind. And he said to them in reply, "Go and tell John what you have seen and heard: the blind regain their sight, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, the poor have the good news proclaimed to them. And blessed is the one who takes no offense at me."*

Who is blessed? Blessed is he who, reading the whole Gospel, contemplating Christ in all his truths, studying and reflecting on his life, will find that everything is according to the will of the Father. This truth is also valid for Jesus’ contemporaries and for all his disciples and also for John the Baptist. Whatever Jesus says or does is from the will of the Father and is obedience to his command. Those who are scandalized see it with the eyes of the flesh and certainly not with the eyes of the Holy Spirit.

Mother of Redemption, Angels and Saints, make that we never take offense at the crucifix.