**THURSDAY JUNE 30 – XIII WEEK O.T. [C]**

**Jesus knew what they were thinking, and said, "Why do you harbor evil thoughts? Which is easier, to say, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Rise and walk'?**

**God, our God, sometimes argues with a word of light, truth, wisdom. Other times He argues with a word of almightiness. Moses is before the Pharaoh of Egypt, who refuses to acknowledge that the Lord is the Lord:** “**After that, Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh and said, "Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel: Let my people go, that they may celebrate a feast to me in the desert." Pharaoh answered, "Who is the LORD, that I should heed his plea to let Israel go? I do not know the LORD; even if I did, I would not let Israel go." They replied, "The God of the Hebrews has sent us word. Let us go a three days' journey in the desert, that we may offer sacrifice to the LORD, our God; otherwise he will punish us with pestilence or the sword." The king of Egypt answered them, "What do you mean, Moses and Aaron, by taking the people away from their work? Off to your labor! Look how numerous the people of the land are already," continued Pharaoh, "and yet you would give them rest from their labor!" (Ex 5, 1-5) Before the refusal of the Pharaoh to acknowledge the Lord, Moses with the word of almightiness, must attest that only the Lord is the Lord:** “**The LORD told Moses and Aaron, "If Pharaoh demands that you work a sign or wonder, you shall say to Aaron: Take your staff and throw it down before Pharaoh, and it will be changed into a snake." Then Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh and did as the LORD had commanded. Aaron threw his staff down before Pharaoh and his servants, and it was changed into a snake. Pharaoh, in turn, summoned wise men and sorcerers, and they also, the magicians of Egypt, did likewise by their magic arts. Each one threw down his staff, and it was changed into a snake. But Aaron's staff swallowed their staffs. Pharaoh, however, was obstinate and would not listen to them, just as the LORD had foretold.” (Ex 7, 8-13) Before the word of almightiness, also the magicians of Egypt surrender. They acknowledge that Moses acts with the finger of God:** **Thereupon the LORD said to Moses, "Tell Aaron to stretch out his staff and strike the dust of the earth, that it may be turned into gnats throughout the land of Egypt." They did so. Aaron stretched out his hand, and with his staff he struck the dust of the earth, and gnats came upon man and beast. The dust of the earth was turned into gnats throughout the land of Egypt. Though the magicians tried to bring forth gnats by their magic arts, they could not do so. As the gnats infested man and beast, the magicians said to Pharaoh, "This is the finger of God." Yet Pharaoh remained obstinate and would not listen to them, just as the LORD had foretold.” (Ex 8, 12-15) Jesus, too, when in the light of the Holy Spirit, knows that words are useless, He always argues with the word of almightiness. We often find in the Gospels that He only uses this word of almightiness because of the hardened hearts incapable to move through the right path of sound rationality and intelligence and of the right discernment that are gifts proper to human nature.**

**Let us read the text of Mt 9,1-8**

**He entered a boat, made the crossing, and came into his own town. And there people brought to him a paralytic lying on a stretcher. When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, "Courage, child, your sins are forgiven." At that, some of the scribes said to themselves, "This man is blaspheming." Jesus knew what they were thinking, and said, "Why do you harbor evil thoughts? Which is easier, to say, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Rise and walk'? But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins"  - he then said to the paralytic, "Rise, pick up your stretcher, and go home." He rose and went home. When the crowds saw this they were struck with awe and glorified God who had given such authority to human beings.**

**Jesus has given also to his Apostles the power of arguing with signs, miracles and mighty deeds. The Apostle Paul has always brought the Gospel with words and deeds, with the power of signs and of mighty deeds, with the strength of the Holy Spirit. He, too, used the argument for almighty word:** “**I myself am convinced about you, my brothers, that you yourselves are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, and able to admonish one another. But I have written to you rather boldly in some respects to remind you, because of the grace given me by God to be a minister of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles in performing the priestly service of the gospel of God, so that the offering up of the Gentiles may be acceptable, sanctified by the holy Spirit. In Christ Jesus, then, I have reason to boast in what pertains to God. For I will not dare to speak of anything except what Christ has accomplished through me to lead the Gentiles to obedience by word and deed, by the power of signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit (of God), so that from Jerusalem all the way around to Illyricum I have finished preaching the gospel of Christ.” (Rm 15, 14-19) The argument for word of almightiness is necessary for every disciple of Jesus in the announcement and in the witness of the Gospel. To obtain it, he is to be clothed with the same almightiness of Christ the Lord. The more he will obey Jesus and the more the creation will obey him. Today this argument for word of almightiness is the most necessary thing for every disciple of Christ Jesus. So far many hearts have become of bronze and it is difficult to proceed for sound rationality. May the Mother of God obtain for us this gift.**