**TUESDAY JULY 12 – XV WEEK O.T. [C]**

**But I tell you, it will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom on the day of judgment than for you.**

**We know the destiny of Sodom well. It was destroyed with sulphurous fire come down from heaven:** **As dawn was breaking, the angels urged Lot on, saying, "On your way! Take with you your wife and your two daughters who are here, or you will be swept away in the punishment of the city." When he hesitated, the men, by the LORD'S mercy, seized his hand and the hands of his wife and his two daughters and led them to safety outside the city. As soon as they had been brought outside, he was told: "Flee for your life! Don't look back or stop anywhere on the Plain. Get off to the hills at once, or you will be swept away." "Oh, no, my lord!" replied Lot. "You have already thought enough of your servant to do me the great kindness of intervening to save my life. But I cannot flee to the hills to keep the disaster from overtaking me, and so I shall die. Look, this town ahead is near enough to escape to. It's only a small place. Let me flee there - it's a small place, isn't it? - that my life may be saved." "Well, then," he replied, "I will also grant you the favor you now ask. I will not overthrow the town you speak of. Hurry, escape there! I cannot do anything until you arrive there." That is why the town is called Zoar. The sun was just rising over the earth as Lot arrived in Zoar; at the same time the LORD rained down sulphurous fire upon Sodom and Gomorrah (from the LORD out of heaven). He overthrew those cities and the whole Plain, together with the inhabitants of the cities and the produce of the soil. But Lot's wife looked back, and she was turned into a pillar of salt. Early the next morning Abraham went to the place where he had stood in the LORD'S presence. As he looked down toward Sodom and Gomorrah and the whole region of the Plain, he saw dense smoke over the land rising like fumes from a furnace. Thus it came to pass: when God destroyed the Cities of the Plain, he was mindful of Abraham by sending Lot away from the upheaval by which God overthrew the cities where Lot had been living.” (cf. Gen 19, 1-29) Today Jesus reveals that the sin of non-faith in his Word makes the towns that did not convert worse than Sodom and Gomorrah. Their fate will be harder than that of the two towns destroyed with sulphurous fire.**

**Let us read the text of Mt 11,20-24**

**Then he began to reproach the towns where most of his mighty deeds had been done, since they had not repented. "Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the mighty deeds done in your midst had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would long ago have repented in sackcloth and ashes. But I tell you, it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon on the day of judgment than for you. And as for you, Capernaum: 'Will you be exalted to heaven? You will go down to the netherworld.' For if the mighty deeds done in your midst had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. But I tell you, it will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom on the day of judgment than for you."**

**This truth of the sin of non-faith of those who have been benefited by the grace of the Lord is already affirmed in the Book of the Lamentations.** “**How tarnished is the gold, how changed the noble metal; How the sacred stones lie strewn at every street corner! Zion's precious sons, fine gold their counterpart, Now worth no more than earthen jars made by the hands of a potter! Even the jackals bare their breasts and suckle their young; The daughter of my people has become as cruel as the ostrich in the desert. The tongue of the suckling cleaves to the roof of its mouth in thirst; The babes cry for food, but there is no one to give it to them. Those accustomed to dainty food perish in the streets; Those brought up in purple now cling to the ash heaps. The punishment of the daughter of my people is greater than the penalty of Sodom, Which was overthrown in an instant without the turning of a hand. Brighter than snow were her princes, whiter than milk, More ruddy than coral, more precious than sapphire. Now their appearance is blacker than soot, they are unrecognized on the streets; Their skin shrinks on their bones, as dry as wood. Better for those who perish by the sword than for those who die of hunger, Who waste away, as though pierced through, lacking the fruits of the field! The hands of compassionate women boiled their own children, To serve them as mourners' food in the downfall of the daughter of my people. The LORD has spent his anger, poured out his blazing wrath; He has kindled a fire in Zion that has consumed her foundations. The kings of the earth did not believe, nor any of the world's inhabitants, That enemy or foe could enter the gates of Jerusalem. Because of the sins of her prophets and the crimes of her priests, Who shed in her midst the blood of the just!” (Lam 4, 1-13)**

**The greater the graces we receive from the Lord are and the more our responsibility grow, the greater our sin of incredulity and of non-faith is. For every grace one receives by the Lord, one is to answer with a greater faith and an obedience equivalent to the greater faith. If the Lord multiplies his graces, man must multiply his faith and also his obedience. Is there a greater faith than the Eucharist? For every Eucharist received tomorrow we must give account to the Lord, if it was received but it has not made faith grow in us and has not increased obedience. The fate of the Christian is not at all equal to the fate of the non-Christian. This truth must always be kept in the heart. May the Mother of God obtain for us to grow in faith and in obedience always.**