**TUESDAY DECEMBER 13 – THIRD WEEK OF ADVENT [A]**

**Amen, I say to you, tax collectors and prostitutes are entering the kingdom of God before you. When John came to you in the way of righteousness, you did not believe him; but tax collectors and prostitutes did. Yet even when you saw that, you did not later change your minds and believe him.**

**Our God, who is the Lord and the Creator of heaven and of earth, who is the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and of Jacob, who is the Father of the Lord our Jesus Christ, Father by eternal generation before all centuries, is the God who offers man every grace so that he may be converted and obey his voice again. The prophets sent by God are a particular grace. Here is this truth revealed by the Book of Wisdom, by all the prophets and in a completely particular way by the prophet Ezekiel. Even Jesus in his Gospel reveals that salvation is from the life according to his Word:**

**“For with you great strength abides always; who can resist the might of your arm? Indeed, before you the whole universe is as a grain from a balance, or a drop of morning dew come down upon the earth. But you have mercy on all, because you can do all things; and you overlook the sins of men that they may repent. For you love all things that are and loathe nothing that you have made; for what you hated, you would not have fashioned. And how could a thing remain, unless you willed it; or be preserved, had it not been called forth by you? But you spare all things, because they are yours, O LORD and lover of souls, for your imperishable spirit is in all things! Therefore you rebuke offenders little by little, warn them, and remind them of the sins they are committing, that they may abandon their wickedness and believe in you, O LORD!” (Wis 11,21-12,2).**

**“But if the wicked man turns away from all the sins he committed, if he keeps all my statutes and does what is right and just, he shall surely live, he shall not die. None of the crimes he committed shall be remembered against him; he shall live because of the virtue he has practiced. Do I indeed derive any pleasure from the death of the wicked? says the Lord GOD. Do I not rather rejoice when he turns from his evil way that he may live? And if the virtuous man turns from the path of virtue to do evil, the same kind of abominable things that the wicked man does, can he do this and still live? None of his virtuous deeds shall be remembered, because he has broken faith and committed sin; because of this, he shall die. (Cf. Ez 18.1-23).**

**"Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father in heaven. Many will say to me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name? Did we not drive out demons in your name? Did we not do mighty deeds in your name?' Then I will declare to them solemnly, 'I never knew you. Depart from me, you evildoers.' "Everyone who listens to these words of mine and acts on them will be like a wise man who built his house on rock. The rain fell, the floods came, and the winds blew and buffeted the house. But it did not collapse; it had been set solidly on rock. And everyone who listens to these words of mine but does not act on them will be like a fool who built his house on sand. The rain fell, the floods came, and the winds blew and buffeted the house. And it collapsed and was completely ruined." (Mt 7,21-27).**

**John is true prophet of the living God. As true prophet, he is powerful grace of conversion for the salvation of the entire people of the Lord. What happened, instead? Tax collector and prostitutes, world despised and declared cursed by the chief priests, by the scribes and by the Pharisees have received the grace of conversion and have re- entered the fulfilment of the divine will. Chief priests, elders of the people, scribes and the Pharisees, not accepting this powerful grace of the Lord, have made the plan of salvation of their God and Lord vain for them. Where is the most serious mistake of the scribes, of the Pharisees, of the chief priests and of the elders of the people? They are saints and they can commit any sin. They are saints and will remain saints in eternity. They can refuse any grace of the Lord. They can refuse John the Baptist and they can even crucify the Messiah of the Lord. Their holiness will remain stable forever. They affirm against the Word of the Lord trampled and razed to the ground by them.**

**Let us read the text of Mt 21, 28-32**

**"What is your opinion? A man had two sons. He came to the first and said, 'Son, go out and work in the vineyard today.' He said in reply, 'I will not,' but afterwards he changed his mind and went. The man came to the other son and gave the same order. He said in reply, 'Yes, sir,' but did not go. Which of the two did his father's will?" They answered, "The first." Jesus said to them, "Amen, I say to you, tax collectors and prostitutes are entering the kingdom of God before you. When John came to you in the way of righteousness, you did not believe him; but tax collectors and prostitutes did. Yet even when you saw that, you did not later change your minds and believe him.**

**Jesus is the grace mother of every grace, it is the truth generating every truth. If He is not accepted with true conversion, for man there will be no other grace. Jesus does not come so that we make him hear sounds of bagpipes and of pipes. He comes to let us listen to the most pure Word of his Father. Mother of God ensure that we listen to your Son.**