**THURSDAY JANUARY 12 – I WEEK O.T. [A]**

**A leper came to him (and kneeling down) begged him and said, "If you wish, you can make me clean." Moved with pity, he stretched out his hand, touched him, and said to him, "I do will it. Be made clean."**

**Christ Jesus is fire of grace, truth, righteousness, holiness. He is divine and eternal incarnated fire. Fire of mercy, piety, compassion, charity. Not a fire of small dimensions. He is furnace always lighted, whose flames enlighten heaven and earth. If man saw this fire, his eyes would never turn away from it. He is infinitively more than the bush that burned and was not consumed seen by Moses in the desert: “Meanwhile Moses was tending the flock of his father-in-law Jethro, the priest of Midian. Leading the flock across the desert, he came to Horeb, the mountain of God. There an angel of the LORD appeared to him in fire flaming out of a bush. As he looked on, he was surprised to see that the bush, though on fire, was not consumed. So Moses decided, "I must go over to look at this remarkable sight, and see why the bush is not burned." When the LORD saw him coming over to look at it more closely, God called out to him from the bush, "Moses! Moses!" He answered, "Here I am." God said, "Come no nearer! Remove the sandals from your feet, for the place where you stand is holy ground. I am the God of your father," he continued, "the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, the God of Jacob." Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look at God.” (Ex 3,1-6). Of Christ Jesus we only have a doctrinal, scientific, sapiential knowledge. We know everything of Him in the same way as a scientist in a desert knows everything of the water, without having anything to quench his thirst. He has the perfect science and he dies from thirst. We have the perfect science of Christ Jesus and we lead our life toward the eternal death. We lack the meeting with this Fire of love and of truth capable in one moment to turn our life, in the same way as the life of Saul of Tarsus was turned on the way of Damascus: “Now Saul, still breathing murderous threats against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest and asked him for letters to the synagogues in Damascus, that, if he should find any men or women who belonged to the Way, he might bring them back to Jerusalem in chains. On his journey, as he was nearing Damascus, a light from the sky suddenly flashed around him. He fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?" He said, "Who are you, sir?" The reply came, "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. Now get up and go into the city and you will be told what you must do." The men who were traveling with him stood speechless, for they heard the voice but could see no one. Saul got up from the ground, but when he opened his eyes he could see nothing; so they led him by the hand and brought him to Damascus. For three days he was unable to see, and he neither ate nor drank.” (Act 9,1-9). After his meeting with this divine, eternal, incarnated, crucified, risen Fire, in the glory of his Father, here is what he attests: “I am grateful to him who has strengthened me, Christ Jesus our Lord, because he considered me trustworthy in appointing me to the ministry. I was once a blasphemer and a persecutor and an arrogant man, but I have been mercifully treated because I acted out of ignorance in my unbelief. Indeed, the grace of our Lord has been abundant, along with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. This saying is trustworthy and deserves full acceptance: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. Of these I am the foremost. But for that reason I was mercifully treated, so that in me, as the foremost, Christ Jesus might display all his patience as an example for those who would come to believe in him for everlasting life.” (1Tm 1,12-16). In one moment, this Fire has turned the life of a man.**

**Let us read the text of Mk 1,40-45**

**A leper came to him (and kneeling down) begged him and said, "If you wish, you can make me clean." Moved with pity, he stretched out his hand, touched him, and said to him, "I do will it. Be made clean." The leprosy left him immediately, and he was made clean. Then, warning him sternly, he dismissed him at once. Then he said to him, "See that you tell no one anything, but go, show yourself to the priest and offer for your cleansing what Moses prescribed; that will be proof for them." The man went away and began to publicize the whole matter. He spread the report abroad so that it was impossible for Jesus to enter a town openly. He remained outside in deserted places, and people kept coming to him from everywhere.**

**Today a leper meets this divine fire. The divine fire touches his sick flesh and in one moment it is cured, healed. There is no sign of sickness. Why, has Jesus, with this man only with the touch, performed such a great mighty deed and with us, who yet eat more times a day this divine, eternal incarnated, crucified, dead, risen Fire, in the glory of his Father, nothing happens and nothing is fulfilled? The answer is in our non-faith. Without true faith in Christ is as if we ate ash instead of fire. However, faith is not only believing in this fire, it is instead believing in the Word that this fire has come to bring on our earth. Through the faith we are burned by the fire that is Christ Jesus and from this fire turned into his perfect image. Great is the mystery of Christ Fire of Word and of love who turns into his image. May the Mother of God let us live this mystery. The mystery of the Fire of the Word and the mystery of the Fire of the charity that turns everything and renew with eternal life, light, grace, truth.**