



1) Opening prayer

God our Father,
you redeem us
and make us your children in Christ.
Look upon us,
give us true freedom
and bring us to the inheritance you promised.
We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

2) Gospel Reading - Luke 6,43-49

Jesus said to his disciples: 'There is no sound tree that produces rotten fruit, nor again a rotten tree that produces sound fruit. Every tree can be told by its own fruit: people do not pick figs from thorns, nor gather grapes from brambles.

Good people draw what is good from the store of goodness in their hearts; bad people draw what is bad from the store of badness. For the words of the mouth flow out of what fills the heart. 'Why do you call me, "Lord, Lord" and not do what I say?

'Everyone who comes to me and listens to my words and acts on them—I will show you what such a person is like. Such a person is like the man who, when he built a house, dug, and dug deep, and laid the foundations on rock; when the river was in flood it bore down on that house but could not shake it, it was so well built. But someone who listens and does nothing is like the man who built a house on soil, with no foundations; as soon as the river bore down on it, it collapsed; and what a ruin that house became!'

3) Reflection

- In today's Gospel we have the last part of the Discourse of the Plains that is, the version which Luke presents in the Sermon on the Mountain of the Gospel of Matthew. And Luke puts together what follows:

- Luke 6, 43-45: The parable of the tree that bears good fruit. "There is no sound tree that produces rotten fruit, nor again a rotten tree that produces sound fruit. Every tree can be known by its own fruit: people do not pick figs from thorns, or gather grapes from brambles". The letter of James the Apostle serves as a comment to this parable of Jesus: "Does any water supply give a flow of fresh water and salt water out of the same pipe? Can a fig tree yield olives, my brothers, or a vine yield figs? No more can sea water yield fresh water" (James 3, 11-12). A person who is well formed in the tradition of living together in community develops within self a good nature which leads him/her to do

good. "The good of the treasure of his/her heart is brought out", but the person who does not pay attention to his/her formation will have difficulty in producing good deeds. Rather, "from his/her evil treasure evil will come out evil, because the mouth speaks of the fullness of the heart". Concerning the "good treasure of the heart" it is worthwhile to remember what the Book of Ecclesiasticus' says on the heart, the source of good counsel: "Stick to the advice your own heart gives you, no one can be truer to you than that; since a person's soul often gives a clearer warning than seven watchmen perched on a watchtower. And besides all this beg the Most High to guide your steps into the truth" (Si 37, 13-15).

- Luke 6, 46: It is not sufficient to say, Lord, Lord. What is important is not to say beautiful things about God, but rather to do the will of the Father and in this way be a revelation of his face and of his presence in the world.

- Luke 6, 47-49: To construct the house on rock. To listen and to put into practice, this is the conclusion of the Sermon on the Mountain. Many people sought security and religious power in the extraordinary heads (gifts) or in the observance. But true security does not come from power; it does not come from any of those things. It comes from God! And God becomes the source of security, when we seek to do his will. And in this way he will be the rock which will support us, in the difficult hours and in the storms.

God is the rock of our life. In the Book of Psalms, we frequently find the expression: "God is my rock, my fortress... My God, my Rock, my refuge, my shield, the force which saves me..." (Ps 18, 3). He is the defence and the force of those who believe in him and who seek justice (Ps 18, 21-24). The persons, who trust in this God, become, in turn, a rock for others. Thus the prophet Isaiah invites the people who were in exile: "Listen to me, you who pursue saving justice, you who seek Yahweh. Consider the rock from which you were hewn, the quarry from which you were dug. Consider Abraham your father and Sarah who gave you birth" (Is 51, 1-2). The prophet asks the people not to forget the past and to remember Abraham and Sarah who because of their faith in God became a rock, the beginning of the People of God. Looking toward this rock, the people should draw courage to fight and get out of the exile. And thus Matthew exhorts the communities to have as an incentive or encouragement this same rock (Mt 7, 24-25) and in this way be themselves rocks to strengthen their brothers in the faith. This is also the significance which Jesus gives to Peter: "You are Peter and on this Rock I will build my Church" (Mt 16, 18). This is the vocation of the first communities called to unite themselves to Jesus, the living Rock, so as to become themselves living rocks, listening and putting into practice the Word (P 2, 4-10; 2, 5; Ep 2,19-22).

4) Personal questions

- Which is the quality of my heart?
- Is my house built on rock?

5) Concluding Prayer

Lord, you created my inmost self,
knit me together in my mother's womb.

For so many marvels I thank you; a wonder am I,
and all your works are wonders. (Ps 139,13-14)