



1) Opening prayer

Almighty and ever-living God,
strengthen our faith, hope and love.
May we do with loving hearts
what you ask of us
and come to share the life you promise.
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 13,31-35

Some Pharisees came up to Jesus and, 'Go away,' they said. 'Leave this place, because Herod means to kill you.' He replied, 'You may go and give that fox this message: Look! Today and tomorrow I drive out devils and heal, and on the third day I attain my end. But for today and tomorrow and the next day I must go on, since it would not be right for a prophet to die outside Jerusalem.

'Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you that kill the prophets and stone those who are sent to you! How often have I longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you refused! Look! Your house will be left to you. Yes, I promise you, you shall not see me till the time comes when you are saying: Blessed is he who is coming in the name of the Lord!'

3) Reflection

? The Gospel today makes us feel the threatening and dangerous context in which Jesus lived and worked. Herod, as he had killed John the Baptist, wanted to kill Jesus.

? Luke 13, 31: The warning of the Pharisees to Jesus. "Just at that time some Pharisees came up. Go away, they said, Leave this place because Herod means to kill you" It is important to notice that Jesus receives the warning of the Pharisees. Sometimes, the Pharisees are together with the group of Herod wanting to kill Jesus (Mk 3, 6; 12, 13). But here they are in solidarity with Jesus and want to avoid his death. At that time the

power of the king was absolute. He did not render an account to anyone of his way of governing. Herod had already killed John the Baptist and now he wanted to finish also with Jesus.

? Luke 13, 32-33: the response of Jesus. "He replied: You may go and give that fox this message, 'Look! Today and tomorrow I drive out evils and heal, and on the third day I attain my end'". Jesus' response is very clear and courageous. He calls Herod: fox. To announce the Kingdom Jesus does not depend on the permission of the political authority. He sends a message informing that he continues his work today and tomorrow and that he will have finished only day after tomorrow, that is on the third day. In this response is discovered all the liberty to the power which wanted to prevent him from carrying out the mission received from the Father. Therefore, the one who determines the time and the hour is God and not Herod. At the same time, in the response there arises also a certain symbolism connected to the death and resurrection on the third day in Jerusalem. This is to indicate that he will not die in Galilee, but in Jerusalem, capital of his people, and that he will resurrect on the third day.

? Luke 13, 34-35: Admonishment of Jesus to Jerusalem. "Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those who are sent to you! How often have I longed to gather your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you refused!" This admonishment of Jesus on the capital of his people recalls the long and sad story of the resistance of the authority to God's calls which reached through so many prophets and wise men. At another moment Jesus speaks of the prophets persecuted and killed from Abel to Zechariah (Lk 11, 51). Reaching Jerusalem a short time before his death, looking toward the city from the top of the Mountain of Olives, Jesus weeps on it, because it does not recognize the time in which God comes to visit it" (Lk 19, 44).

4) Personal questions

? Jesus qualifies the public power with the name of fox. Can your political power deserve to be qualified like this?

? Jesus tried many times to convert the people of Jerusalem, but the religious authority resisted. And you, how many times do you resist?

5) Concluding prayer

Yahweh and his strength,
tirelessly seek his presence!

Remember the marvels he has done, his wonders,
the judgements he has spoken. (Ps 105,4-5)