



1) Opening prayer

Father of all that is good,
keep us faithful in serving you,
for to serve you is our lasting joy.
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 19,41-44

As Jesus drew near and came in sight of the city he shed tears over it and said, 'If you too had only recognised on this day the way to peace! But in fact it is hidden from your eyes!'

Yes, a time is coming when your enemies will raise fortifications all round you, when they will encircle you and hem you in on every side; they will dash you and the children inside your walls to the ground; they will leave not one stone standing on another within you, because you did not recognise the moment of your visitation.'

3) Reflection

- The Gospel today tells us that Jesus when arriving close to Jerusalem, in seeing the city he began to shed tears and to pronounce words which made one foresee a very dark future for the city, the capital city of his people.
- Luke 19, 41-42 Jesus sheds tears over Jerusalem. "At that time, when Jesus was near Jerusalem, when he saw the city he shed tears over it and said: 'If you too had only recognized on this day the way to peace! But in fact it is hidden from your eyes!'" Jesus sheds tears because he loves his homeland, his people, the capital city of his land, the Temple. He sheds tears, because he knows that everything will be destroyed because of the fault of his people who were not aware of the call made by God through the facts of life. People were not aware of the way that could lead them to Peace, Shalom. But, in fact, it is hidden from your eyes! This affirmation recalls the criticism of Isaiah to the person who adored the idols: "He hankers after ashes, his deluded heart has led him astray; he will not save himself, he will not think. What I have in my hand is nothing but a lie!" (Is 44, 20). The lie was in their look and, because of this; they became incapable to

perceive the truth. As Saint Paul says: "But for those who out of jealousy have taken for their guide not truth but injustice, there will be a fury of retribution" (Rm 2, 8). It is the truth that remains the prisoner of injustice. On another occasion, Jesus complains that Jerusalem did not know how to become aware of God's visit, nor of accepting it: "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, it will be deserted" (Lk 13, 34-35).

- Luke 19, 43-44 Announcement of the destruction of Jerusalem. "Yes, a time is coming when your enemies will raise fortifications all round you, when they will encircle you and hem you in on every side; they will dash you and your children inside your walls to the ground; they will leave not one stone standing on another within you, because you did not recognise the moment of your visitation" Jesus describes what will happen to Jerusalem. He uses the images of war which were common at that time when an army attacked a city: trenches, killing of people and total destruction of the walls and of the houses. Thus, in the past this is the way Jerusalem was destroyed by Nabuchadnezzar. In this way, the Roman legions used to do with the rebellious cities and this is what will be done again, forty years later, to the city of Jerusalem. In fact, in the year 70, Jerusalem was surrounded and invaded by the Roman army. Everything was destroyed. Before this historical background, the gesture of Jesus becomes a very serious warning for all those who pervert the sense of the Good News of Jesus. They should have listened to the final warning: "Because you did not recognize the moment of your visitation" In this warning, everything which Jesus does is defined as a "visitation from God".

4) Personal questions

- Do you weep over a world situation? Looking at the present day situation of the world, would Jesus shed tears? The prevision is dark. From the point of view of Ecology, we have already gone beyond the limit. The prevision is tragic.
- In Jesus, God visits his people. In your life, have you received some visit from God?

5) Concluding prayer

Sing a new song to Yahweh:

his praise in the assembly of the faithful!

Israel shall rejoice in its Maker,

the children of Zion delight in their king. (Ps 149,1-2)