

# Friday of the Fifteenth Week in Ordinary Time

**Gospel text (Mt 12:1-8):** Jesus was going through a field of grain on the Sabbath. His disciples were hungry and began to pick the heads of grain and eat them. When the Pharisees saw this, they said to him, "See, your disciples are doing what is unlawful to do on the Sabbath." He said to them, "(...) If you knew what this meant, I desire mercy, not sacrifice, you would not have condemned these innocent men (...)."

*The mercy perfects to the justice*

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Today, the Lord corrects the rabbis' meticulous casuistry making the Sabbath rest law totally unbearable. "Look at your disciples; they are doing what is prohibited on the Sabbath!". And the unbelievable thing is they sincerely meant it.

No reason could exist excusing us from not helping others. True charity respects the demands for justice, by avoiding our falling into arbitrariness or whim, while preventing harshness to kill the true spirit of God's Law; for charity is nothing but a continuous invitation to loving, to give ourselves to others. God, who is rich in mercy, wants us to be merciful. And how far away from God are we when we let our heart turn into hard stone! Jesus Christ accused the Pharisees of condemning the innocent. That is a serious accusation. Are we seriously interested in other people's problems? Do we consider them with affection and sympathy, as if we were judging a friend or a brother?

—We beg you, O Mother of God, to make us merciful and to show us how to forgive.