# Friday of the Tenth Week in Ordinary Time

**Gospel text (*Mt* 5:27-32):** Jesus said to his disciples: “You have heard that it was said, You shall not commit adultery. But I say to you, everyone who looks at a woman with lust has already committed adultery with her in his heart. If your right eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one of your members than to have your whole body thrown into Gehenna. And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one of your members than to have your whole body go into Gehenna.

“It was also said, Whoever divorces his wife must give her a bill of divorce. But I say to you, whoever divorces his wife (unless the marriage is unlawful) causes her to commit adultery, and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery.”

***”Everyone who looks at a woman with lust has already committed adultery”***

Fr. Pablo CASAS Aljama
*(Sevilla, Spain)*

Today Jesus speaks clearly to us about indissoluble love, the fruit of chaste love. As Pope Francis stated, “The holiness and indissolubility of Christian matrimony, often disintegrating under tremendous pressure from the secular world, must be deepened by clear doctrine and supported by the witness of committed married couples.” Unfortunately, today, this can be a controversial subject, because it seems that practicing chastity and the virtue of holy purity in the middle of this world is considered outdated, or could even take away our freedom.

Our "eyes" also speak about what’s in our hearts. The gaze of spouses, for example, must be an expression of a chaste and pure love that lasts forever. "Everyone who looks at a woman with lust has already committed adultery with her in his heart" (Mt 5:28).

This purity of heart is expressed by treating our bodies with dignity: Saint Paul says "Your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit" (1Cor 6:19). Today's Gospel must lead us to understand the sacredness of marriage. It is not about understanding the Gospel in a literal way, since losing an eye or a hand does not exempt us from sinning —and is generally considered a bad thing to have happen to someone. Rather, the words of Jesus refer to the sacrifices we must make in order to remain faithful to the project of fidelity to God; and in respecting the sanctity of marriage as a true sacrament, by living according to the purpose for which it was established.

Jesus wants to restore the divine law to its full strength, and says: “Whoever divorces his wife … causes her to commit adultery” (Mt 5:32). With these words he shows the extent to which each one is responsible for the holiness of his or her spouse: We are called to be "one" in holy marriage. It is true that marriage is often not an easy thing: living with holiness implies the cross. As Benedict XVI would say: “Love does not leave us indifferent.”

## *Thoughts on Today's Gospel*

- “The appetites are inflamed by the sensuality of the gaze and our eyes, used to looking lustfully at our neighbor because we are so idle, spark impure desires.” (Saint Clement of Alexandria)

- “Adultery, like theft, corruption and all the other sins, are first conceived in the depth of our being and, once the wrong choice is made in the heart, it is carried out in concrete behaviour. Let us think a little bit about this: about the wicked thoughts that go along this line.” (Francis)

- “Jesus came to restore creation to the purity of its origins. In the Sermon on the Mount, he interprets God's plan strictly: ‘You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall not commit adultery.’ But I say to you that every one who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart’ (Mt 5,27:28). What God has joined together, let not man put asunder (Cf. Mt 19:6). The tradition of the Church has understood the sixth commandment as encompassing the whole of human sexuality.” (Catechism of the Catholic Church, Nº 2336)

## *Other comments*

***”Everyone who looks at a woman with lust has already committed adultery”***

Fr. Josep LIÑÁN i Pla SchP
*(Sabadell, Barcelona, Spain)*

Today, Jesus keeps digging deeper on the demands of the Sermon on the Mount. He does not abolish the Law; on the contrary, He brings the Law to its fullness; thus, the observance of the Law is not just supposed to be the simple fulfillment of some minimum conditions to put our house in order. God's Law of Love is given to us for us to reach the summit, but, somehow, we manage to transform it into the law of minimum effort. God is so exacting…! Yes, maybe, but He also has given us the maximum, for He has given Himself to us!

Today, Christ aims high and points out his authority over the sixth and ninth Commandments, those referring to our sexuality and to our purity of thought. Sexuality is our language to express love and alliance; consequently, we cannot trivialize it, nor can we use the other person as an object to selfishly

gratify one's pleasure, not even in our thinking! Hence, Jesus' stern assertion: “Everyone who looks at a woman with lust has already committed adultery with her in his heart” (Mt 5:28). We must, therefore, cut out the root of all evil and avoid those thoughts and occasions that would lead us to do what God does not want us to; this is what these words, that may look so radical and exaggerated to us, actually mean; yet, words, those who listened to Jesus, did understand in its expressivity: pull out, cut off, throw away...

Last, but not least, the dignity of the sacrament of matrimony must always be protected, as it is part of God's project regarding man and woman, who, through love and mutual deliverance, become one flesh; and, at the same time, it is sign and participation of Christ's covenant with the Church. A Christian cannot live the man-woman relationship, nor his conjugal life, dominated by the allurements of this world: “Don't believe that because you are married you can keep a mundane life and let yourself go to a life of loafing and laziness; on the contrary, you must work more intently, and watch more carefully over your salvation” (St. Basil).