

SEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST JULY 23RD 2006.

Dearly beloved:

Next Sunday, July 23rd is the Seventh Sunday after Pentecost. The Holy Gospel reading for this Sunday is about blasphemy against the Holy Spirit. The Gospel of Mark records the reaction of Jesus' relatives when he began his public ministry. They said He is out of his mind and they went out to seize Him. On one occasion Jesus remarked that *a man s enemies will be the members of his own household.*

Jesus' numerous exorcisms brought freedom to many who were troubled and oppressed by the works of evil spirits. Jesus himself encountered personal opposition and battle with Satan when he was put to the test in the wilderness just before his public ministry. He overcame the Satan through his obedience to the will of his father. But some Jewish leaders opposed Him with malicious slander. Our foe and the arch-enemy of God, who is Satan, is stronger than us. Unless we are in God's strength, we cannot withstand Satan with our own strength. If we disobey God's word, we open to door to the power of sin and Satan. If we want to live in freedom from sin and Satan, then our house must be occupied by Jesus where he is enthroned as Lord and Saviour.

There are no limits to the mercy of God, but any who refuses to accept His mercy by repenting, rejects the forgiveness of His sins and the salvation offered by the Holy Spirit. The love and mercy of Jesus Christ, the forgiveness of sins, and the gift of the Holy Spirit are freely given to those who acknowledge Jesus as their Lord and Saviour. God forgives all sins, except the one against the Holy Spirit. If we ignore the goodness of others, that is sin against Holy Spirit.

Lord Jesus, you are our hope and salvation, the ruler of our heart and the master of our home'.

Please read the following Bible verses, in preparation for this Sunday's commemoration.

Bible readings for Sunday, July 23rd, 2006.

(Seventh Sunday After Pentecost)

Before Holy Qurbana:

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| Leviticus | - | 16: 29-34 |
| Hosea | - | 5: 1-5 |
| Isaiah | - | 57: 15-19 |

Holy Qurbana

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| General Epistles: | Acts | - | 4: 32-37 |
| Epistles of St. Paul: | Ephesians | - | 2: 11-22 |
| Holy Gospel: | St. Mark | - | 3: 20-30 |

With prayers,
Thomas Alex