

**A House Divided**      Third Week in Ordinary Time      Monday, January 28, 2019      Heb  
9:15, 24-28;      **Mk 3:22-30**      St. Thomas Aquinas, priest and Doctor of the Church  
(Looking at the work of the Holy Spirit and calling it unclean, that is blaspheming the Holy Spirit.)

This is a very intriguing dialogue between Jesus and the scribes. They observe his miraculous power in delivering people who are demonized, and they say that well this power he has is from Satan. And he now reverts to logic and says how could that be? “If I’m from Satan and I’m driving out Satan’s demons, then the house of Satan is divided, and it will not stand.” That’s true in general: **a house divided against itself will not stand. Churches divided against themselves will not stand. Nations divided against themselves will not stand. Unity is absolutely essential.**

Then he describes himself in very unflattering terms as someone who ties up the strongman to plunder his property. So **he pictures himself as tying up, binding, evil so that he can plunder the property of evil.** Well that refers to the idea that people are under the bondage of Satan, under the bondage of the devil. **Through the fear of death they are in slavery.** And now he is going to plunder the house of Satan and rescue the property, the people, the slaves.

Then he adds this very interesting point: that **“all sins and all blasphemies that people utter will be forgiven them. But whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit will never have forgiveness.”** Now what is that? Well we don’t know exactly. All kinds of theologians have offered their opinions over centuries, but that’s just their opinions. It seems to me that what he is referring to is looking at this work of holiness, this work of liberation, this work of redemption, and calling it evil. **Looking at the work of the Holy Spirit and calling it unclean, that is blaspheming the Holy Spirit.** It’s unforgivable, it seems to me, because it completely perverts the order of good and evil. **It says evil is good and good is evil.** Well we may acknowledge weaknesses, sins, bad judgments, and so on, but then **we have to acknowledge them as being weaknesses or sins or bad judgments. If we call them virtues, well then how can we ever be healed?** That’s the question he is raising.