Thursday after Ash Wednesday

Gospel text (*Lk* 9:22-25): Jesus said to his disciples: “The Son of Man must suffer greatly and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed and on the third day be raised.”

Then he said to all, “If anyone wishes to come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me. For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will save it (...)."

First announcement of the Passion. The path of the cross

EDITORIAL TEAM evangeli.net (based on texts by Benedict XVI)
(Città del Vaticano, Vatican)

Today, starting with Lent, Jesus Christ announces to us the final destiny of the journey we are to undertake with Him: His Passion and His Resurrection. This announcement scandalized Simon Peter, who had just recognized Him as the Messiah. But, precisely, following Him in the sign of the cross should be our path, which can be explained in an anthropological way: it is the journey of "losing oneself", which is necessary for man and without which he cannot find himself.

To love one must lose oneself! Christians must continuously be instructed, over the centuries, by the Lord, to make them aware that their path is not that of glory and worldly powers, but "the path of the cross". Today too, Christians take the Lord aside to tell Him: "No, Lord, this cannot happen to You"!

—Jesus has to tell us again and again: "get out of my sight, you Satan!" The whole scene shows a disturbing actuality, since ultimately we keep on thinking in terms of "flesh and blood" and not according to the revelation that we receive through faith.