

Wednesday 1st of Lent

Gospel text (Lk 11,29-32): As the crowd increased, Jesus began to speak in this way, «People of the present time are evil people. They ask for a sign, but no sign will be given to them except the sign of Jonah. As Jonah became a sign for the people of Nineveh, so will the Son of Man be a sign for this generation (...), and here there is greater than Jonah».

Jesus, the "true Jonah"

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

Today Jesus is presented as "one who is greater than Jonah". Jesus Christ loaded the blame of all mankind's guilt upon his shoulders; He bore it down into the depths of the Jordan. He inaugurated his public life by stepping into the place of sinners. His inaugural gesture is an anticipation of the Cross. He is, as it were, the true Jonah who said to the crew of the ships: "Take me and throw me into the sea" (Jon 1:12).

If in Lazarus' resurrection we can see Jesus' response to the request of signs by His contemporaries, His principal answer was, however: "for as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the whale, so the Son of Man will be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth" (Mt 12:40).

—God's sign for men is the Son of Man; it is Jesus himself. And at the deepest level, He is this sign in His Paschal Mystery, in the mystery of His death and Resurrection. He himself is the "sign of Jonah". To believe and follow Him is God's great sign.