

# Saturday 1st of Lent

**Gospel text (Mt 5,43-48): Jesus said to his disciples, «You have heard that it was said: ‘Love your neighbor and do not do good to your enemy’. But this I tell you: Love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be children of your Father in Heaven. For he makes his sun rise on both the wicked and the good (...). For your part you shall be righteous and perfect in the way your heavenly Father is righteous and perfect».**

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## *Charity. Loving our enemies*

EDITORIAL TEAM evangeli.net (based on texts by Benedict XVI)

(Città del Vaticano, Vatican)

Today's Jesus opposes against the provisions of the "Torah" a new radicalism of justice before God: not only are we not to kill, but we must offer reconciliation to our unreconciled brother; not only are we to be even-handed in justice ("eye for eye, tooth for tooth"), but we must let ourselves be struck without sticking back; we are to love not simply our neighbor but also our enemy... It is "loving to an extreme" that Christ will consummate on the Cross by praying for His "enemies".

But is this actually realistic? God does not demand of us a feeling which we ourselves are incapable of producing. God has loved us first and He makes us experience His love, and from this "before" God, love can also blossom as a response within us. With God I love even the person I do not like or even know.

—In the intimate encounter with God, I learn to look on this other person not simply with my eyes and my feelings, but from the perspective of Jesus Christ, the same of the heavenly Father.