Saturday of the Fifth Week of Lent

Gospel text (*Jn* 11:45-56): Many of the Jews who had come to Mary and seen what Jesus had done began to believe in him. But some of them went to the Pharisees and told them what Jesus had done. So the chief priests and the Pharisees convened the Sanhedrin and said, “What are we going to do? This man is performing many signs. If we leave him alone, all will believe in him, and the Romans will come and take away both our land and our nation.” But one of them, Caiaphas, who was high priest that year, said to them "(...) It is better for you that one man should die instead of the people, so that the whole nation may not perish.” He did not say this on his own, but since he was high priest for that year, he prophesied that Jesus was going to die for the nation, and not only for the nation, but also to gather into one the dispersed children of God. So from that day on they planned to kill him (...).

The Sanhedrin decides to kill Jesus

EDITORIAL TEAM evangeli.net (based on texts by Benedict XVI)
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Today, John recounts a session at the Sanhedrin to form an opinion —and to shape an eventual decision— in the "case" of Jesus. John dates this session before Palm Sunday, and sees as its immediate occasion the popular movement generated by the raising of Lazarus. Without such a deliberate process, the arrest of Jesus during the night of Gethsemane would have been unconceivable.

John expresses with great clarity this striking combination in Caiaphas of carrying out God’s will and blind self seeking: the Cross corresponded to a divine "necessity" and Caiaphas, in making the decision he did, was ultimately carrying out God’s will, even if his motivation was impure and reflected, not God’s will, but his own selfish purposes (attitude which led to the catastrophe of the year 70).

—"Jesus was going to die (...) "to gather into one the children of God who were scattered": here echoes the "key word" of Jesus’ high-priestly prayer toward the unity of all believers within their Church.