Holy Thursday (Lord's Supper)

Gospel text (*Jn* 13:1-15): Before the feast of Passover, Jesus knew that his hour had come to pass from this world to the Father. He loved his own in the world and he loved them to the end. The devil had already induced Judas, son of Simon the Iscariot, to hand him over. So, during supper (...), he rose from supper and took off his outer garments. He took a towel and tied it around his waist. Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and dry them with the towel around his waist (...).

So when he had washed their feet and put his garments back on and reclined at table again, he said to them, "Do you realize what I have done for you? You call me 'teacher' and 'master,' and rightly so, for indeed I am. If I, therefore, the master and teacher, have washed your feet, you ought to wash one another's feet (...)."

The extreme hour of Jesus

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

Today, with the Last Supper, "Jesus' hour" has arrived, the goal to which His ministry had been directed from the beginning. The essence of this hour is described by John with two key words: it is the hour of his 'departing'; It is the hour of the "agape" (the love that reaches to the end).

The two concepts shed light on one another and are inseparable. Love is the very process of passing over, of transformation, of stepping outside the limitations of fallen humanity, in which we are all "separated" from one another, into an infinite otherness. It is love to the end that brings about the seemingly impossible "transformation": stepping outside the limits on one's closed individuality; this is precisely the "agape", breaking through into the divine sphere.

—The "hour" of Jesus is the hour of the great "stepping beyond", the hour of transformation of the being brought about through the "agape". "It is finished," the Crucified will say: it is an agape "to the end", meaning totally giving oneself even unto death.

Charity

Fr. Jaume GONZÁLEZ i Padrós
(Barcelona, Spain)

Today, Saint John describes for us Our Lords' last supper within the context of the Jewish Passover. He highlights for us the fact that Our Lord was very conscious that His hour had come to leave this world and be united to The Father. To express his charity to others, he tightens his belt and washes the Apostles feet.

The sublime moment of great Love is approaching, the sacrifice of He who is innocent on the cross. Jesus gathers with his own to celebrate the Passover with His Blood, love spilt in humble service to the poorest of the poor, all of humanity needs to be rescued from sin.

—Lord, that we also may understand, as Peter did, this gesture of service, of charity, without looking for anything in exchange. Help us to let our feet be washed by you, allowing ourselves to be purified by your words of forgiveness, always fresh. That the Eucharist that you instituted be the genuine fountain where your priests and all of us may always bathe in your Love.