Solemnity of Most Sacred Heart of Jesus (C)

Gospel text (*Lk* 15:3-7): Jesus addressed this parable to the Pharisees and scribes: "... I tell you, in just the same way there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous people who have no need of repentance."

The Heart of God is touched by the sight of human weakness and offers his forgiveness

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

Today, on this solemnity of the Sacred Heart of Jesus the Church contemplates the mystery of the Heart of God. God's heart, as the expression of his will, is spoken of twenty-six times in the Old Testament. His heartfelt pain at sins of mankind makes God decide on the flood, but then he is touched by the sight of human weakness and offers his forgiveness.

Israel, however, responds to God's constant offer of love with indifference and even outright ingratitude. "The more I called them", the Lord is forced to admit, "the more they went from me" (Hos 11:2). Even so, he never abandons Israel to the power of its enemies, because "my heart"—the Creator of the universe observes— "recoils within me, my compassion grows warm and tender" (cf. Hos 11:8).

—The symbol of this love which transcends death is the Son of God's side, pierced by a spear: "One of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear, and at once there came out blood and water" (cf. Jn 19:34).