Thursday of the Twenty-fifth Week in Ordinary Time

Gospel text (*Lk* 9:7-9): Herod the tetrarch heard about all that was happening, and he was greatly perplexed because some were saying, “John has been raised from the dead”; others were saying, “Elijah has appeared”; still others, “One of the ancient prophets has arisen.” But Herod said, “John I beheaded. Who then is this about whom I hear such things?”...

The authority of the State and its limits

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

Today, in view of the unreasonable actions of the "Prince", we wonder: how far up we ought to obey the political powers? Christians are bound to the State judicial laws as a moral order. But if the State punishes "being a Christian" as such, it does not then exert its power as a guarantor, but as a destroyer of unalienable rights.

In this case, it is not a shame, but an honor, to be punished. Those who suffer for this reason are walking in the Footsteps of Christ. The crucifixion of Christ points to the limitations of the State power and shows just where its rights end and it becomes necessary to stand firm, no matter our suffering. The faith of the New Testament does not acknowledge revolutionaries, but martyrs: they recognize the authority of the State, but also its limits. Their resistance implies doing everything at the service of the law and of the community (even if it comes from authorities strange or hostile to the faith), but not obeying when they are told to do evil.

—O Lord – our King, we pray to You for our authorities and we worship You.