Friday of the Thirty-fourth Week in Ordinary Time

Gospel text (*Lk* 21:29-33): Jesus told his disciples a parable. “Consider the fig tree and all the other trees. When their buds burst open, you see for yourselves and know that summer is now near; in the same way, when you see these things happening, know that the Kingdom of God is near. Amen, I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all these things have taken place. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.”

The infant Church distanced itself from the Temple and its sacrifices

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

Today, we admire the early Christians discerning the signs of their time: they had to get together and read the fragments —mysterious— of the words of Jesus Christ. This was no easy task, but it was begun on the day of Pentecost and, before the outward demise of the Temple, all the essential elements of the new synthesis had already been worked out in the Pauline theology.

For preaching and prayer, the infant Church met in the Temple, but "the breaking of bread" (the new worship center, linked to the Last Supper, Death and Resurrection of the Lord) is celebrated in their houses. It began, therefore, to be outlined that an essential distinction had been drawn: the place of the sacrifices has now been taken by "the breaking of bread".

—In the new theological synthesis there are two names that stand out. For Stephen something new had begun in which the worship’s original meaning is brought to fulfillment: with Jesus the era of the stone Temple has come to an end. But the life and the message of the "Protomartyr" —declaring before the Sanhedrin— were cut short by his stoning. It would be another, Saulo —later on St. Paul!— to complete this theological vision.