Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time (A)

Gospel text (*Mt* 5:1-12): When he saw the crowds, he went up the mountain, and after he had sat down, his disciples came to him. He began to teach them, saying: "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are they who mourn... the meek... they who hunger and thirst for righteousness... the merciful... the clean of heart... the peacemakers... Rejoice and be glad, for your reward will be great in heaven. Thus they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

The Beatitudes in the Sermon on the Mountain

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

Today, at the beginning of the "Sermon on the Mountain" we find the Beatitudes. Its teachings can be inserted in a long tradition of messages in the Old Testament. They are not a kind of Christian superior ethics in view of the "Ten Commandments", but rather words of moral orientation (discernment) and at the same time words of promise.

Each one of the Beatitudes is born out of Jesus' regard directed to His disciples. They describe the disciples' real situation: they are poor, hungry, crying, hated and persecuted… These are "practical" but also "theological recommendations", for those who belong to Jesus' new family. In spite of the concrete threatening situation, this becomes a promise when you look at it with the provident light which comes from the Father.

- Christ continues to suffer in those sent by Him: if they are indeed still immersed in Jesus' Passion, one can also recognize there the glory of the resurrection that gives a joy greater than all the happiness which could have been formerly felt in the world.