September 15th: Memorial of Our Lady of Sorrows

Gospel text (*Lk* 2:33-35): [Jn 19:25-27] Standing by the cross of Jesus were his mother and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary of Magdala. When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple there whom he loved, he said to his mother, "Woman, behold, your son." Then he said to the disciple, "Behold, your mother." And from that hour the disciple took her into his home.

Our Lady of Sorrows

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

Today, the Gospel not only tells us which women were next to the Cross, but also that Jesus Christ does not leave His mother alone: He places her in the custody of John. When St. John speaks of human acts like this, he certainly remembers events that had actually occurred, but he always wants to go deeper than mere facts of the past. So, what is he trying to say?

The first clue comes from His form of address to Mary: "Woman". Jesus had used this same form of address at the marriage feast of Cana, anticipation of the definitive marriage feast, of the "new wine" that the Lord wanted to bestow. What had then been merely a prophetic sign now becomes a reality. Second, the Church has not had any difficulty to recognize in the "Woman", on the one hand, Mary herself, and, on the other hand —transcending time— the "Church", bride and Mother, in which the mystery of Mary spreads out into history.

—O Jesus, I wish to receive Mary as a person (our Mother!) in my own personal existence and as Church, thus fulfilling your last will, as St. John also did.