Wednesday of the Twenty-fifth Week in Ordinary Time

Gospel text (*Lk* 9:1-6): Jesus summoned the Twelve and gave them power and authority... and he sent them to proclaim the Kingdom of God...

The Apostles' succession. The apostolic College

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

Today, Jesus calls the Twelve, who represent the future People of God. Thanks to their faithful testimony and the one of their successors (the bishops) the word and the life of Jesus has become present in the world in a permanent way, building the living Tradition of the Church.

The succession in the episcopal role gave continuity to the Apostles ministry. The Twelve were joined in the first place by Matthias (replacing Judas Iscariot) and later by Paul, then by Barnabas and later on by others, until – in the second and third generation – the definitive configuration of the bishop´s ministry was completed. Therefore, the apostolic continuity is expressed in this historical chain. And it is in this "continued succession" of the apostolic College that we can find the guarantee to the perseverance of the ecclesial community assembled "by" and "in" Christ.

- This continuity is not only an historical succession; it must also be understood in the spiritual sense: the apostolic succession in the ministry is considered a privileged place for the action and the transmission of the Holy Spirit.