January 13th: St. Hilary of Poitiers, bishop and doctor of the Church

Gospel text (*Mt* 5:13-19): Jesus said to his disciples: "You are the salt of the earth. But if salt loses its taste, with what can it be seasoned? It is no longer good for anything but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot. You are the light of the world. A city set on a mountain cannot be hidden. Nor do they light a lamp and then put it under a bushel basket; it is set on a lampstand, where it gives light to all in the house. Just so, your light must shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your heavenly Father..."

St. Hilary of Poitiers, bishop and doctor of the Church (310-367)

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

Today, I would like to talk about a great Father of the Church of the West, St Hilary of Poitiers. In the controversy with the Arians, who considered Jesus the Son of God to be an excellent human creature but only human, Hilary devoted his whole life to defending faith in the divinity of Jesus Christ, Son of God and God as the Father who generated him from eternity.

Banished to Phrygia in present-day Turkey, Hilary found himself in contact with a religious context totally dominated by Arianism. Here too, his concern as a Pastor impelled him to work strenuously to re-establish the unity of the Church on the basis of right faith as formulated by the Council of Nicea. To this end he began to draft his own best-known and most important dogmatic work: De Trinitate (On the Trinity).

Hilary explained in it his personal journey towards knowledge of God and took pains to show that not only in the New Testament but also in many Old Testament passages, in which Christ's mystery already appears, Scripture clearly testifies to the divinity of the Son and his equality with the Father.

— "Obtain, O Lord, that I may keep ever faithful to what I have professed in the symbol of my regeneration, when I was baptized in the Father, in the Son and in the Holy Spirit. That I may worship you, our Father, and with you, your Son; that I may deserve your Holy Spirit, who proceeds from you through your Only Begotten Son... Amen" ("De Trinitate").