January 21st: Memorial of Saints Fructuosus, bishop and deacons Augurius and Eulogius, Martyrs

Gospel text (*Jn* 17:11b-19): Lifting up his eyes to heaven, Jesus prayed, saying: “Holy Father, keep them in your name that you have given me... I gave them your word, and the world hated them, because they do not belong to the world any more than I belong to the world..."

Saint Fructuosus, bishop and martyr and deacon’s martyrs Augurius and Eulogius (3rd Century)

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

Today, in the Dioceses of Catalonia the Church celebrates the feast of Saint Fructuosus, bishop and martyr and of his deacon’s martyrs Augurius and Eulogius. We are well informed about their martyrdom by the authentic Acta; in particular, by the so-called “Passió dels sants màrtirs Fructuós o Fruitós, Auguri i Eulogi” (Passion of the saints martyrs’ Fructuosus or Fruitos, Augurius and Eulogius). They died at the stake a day like today, January 21st, of the year 259, under the emperors Valerian and Gallienus. Before the crying people of God who gathered at the Tarragon amphitheater, Fructuosus encouraged them by saying: «You will not long be lacking a shepherd, nor can the love and promises of the Lord fail you either here or in the hereafter. For what you look upon now seems but the weakness of a single hour».

Tertullian, a Christian writer, had already stated, a few years before, that "the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church". And it did actually so happen in that Imperial city. From that See, Christianity quickly spread to many other places.

- We, Christians, must all bear witness to Christ. Even by giving our own life if necessary. «Unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed»