January 31st: Memorial of Saint John Bosco, Priest

Gospel text (*Mt* 18,1-5): The disciples came to Jesus and said: «Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?». Then Jesus called a little child, set the child in the midst of the disciples, and said, «(...) Whoever becomes lowly like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven, and whoever receives such a child in my name receives me».

St. John Bosco, priest (1815-1888)

EDITORIAL TEAM evangeli.net (based on texts by Saint John Paul II)
(Città del Vaticano, Vatican)

Today, we celebrate the memory of St. John Bosco, founder of the Salesian Society (Don Bosco's Salesians). He was brought up with profound human and Christian insight by his mother, and was endowed by Providence with gifts which from his early years made him the generous and conscientious friend of his companions. His boyhood years were a sign of an extraordinary mission of education that was to follow. As a priest in a Turin then in a phase of rapid development, he came into contact with young people in prison and with other dramatic human situations.

And indeed he carried out for them a striking series of activities by his words, writings, institutes, journeys, meetings with civil and religious personalities; for them, above all else, he showed an attentive concern for each one individually, so that in his fatherly love the boys might see a sign of a higher love still.

So great a spirit of initiative was the result of a profound interior disposition. His stature as a Saint gives him a unique place among the great Founders of religious Institutes in the Church. He is outstanding from many points of view: The happy expression: "That you are young is enough to make me love you very much"l0 was the watchword and, even before that, the fundamental educational option of the Saint.