April 23rd: Memorial of Saint George, martyr

Gospel text (*Jn* 15:1-8): Jesus said to his disciples: “I am the true vine, and my Father is the vine grower... Remain in me, as I remain in you. Just as a branch cannot bear fruit on its own unless it remains on the vine, so neither can you unless you remain in me... If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask for whatever you want and it will be done for you. By this is my Father glorified, that you bear much fruit and become my disciples.”

Saint George, Catalonia's second patron

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Today, we celebrate the feast of Saint George, Catalonia's second patron. He was a bold knight, who probably suffered martyrdom at Lydda, in Israel. If History is not very explicit regarding George's biography, the legend has certainly more than “completed” his figure. Venerated since the 4th century, he has been chosen as patron by different countries and places: Greece, England, Portugal, Latvia, Georgia, Genoa... In the 13th century, his devotion was introduced in Catalonia and Aragon, where he was also elected as their patron.

Saint George embodies not only patriotic, cultural, literary and chivalrous values, but also and most than all, profound Christian values. Because, where could Saint George get the courage to fight the dragon and rescue the princess? From his union and communion with Jesus that nourished him with the sap of his own life: “I am the vine, you are the branches” (Jn 15:5). Where did he get the strength to remain faithful and be able to stand his martyrdom? From the Lord who said: “without me you can do nothing” (Jn 15:5).

—Saint George’s festivity invites us to remain well united to Jesus to receive his life, and to the others, to make them participate.