June 13th: Memorial of Saint Anthony of Padua, Priest and Doctor of the Church

Gospel text (*Lk* 10,1-9): The Lord appointed seventy-two other disciples and sent them two by two ahead of him to every town and place, where he himself was to go. And he said to them, «The harvest is rich, but the workers are few. So you must ask the Lord of the harvest to send workers to his harvest (…)».

St. Anthony of Padua, presbyter and doctor of the Church (1195-1231)

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

Today is the day of St. Anthony, who belonged to the first generation of the Friars Minor. He is one of the most popular Saints in the whole Catholic Church. With his outstanding gifts of intelligence, balance, apostolic zeal and, primarily, mystic fervour, Anthony contributed significantly to the development of Franciscan spirituality.

He dedicated himself with interest and solicitude to the study of the Bible and of the Church Fathers, acquiring the theological knowledge that was to bear fruit in his teaching and preaching activities. He embarked on apostolic work in Italy and France that was intense and effective. Anthony was also one of the first theology teachers of the Friars Minor. Anthony laid the foundations of Franciscan theology which was to reach its apex with St Bonaventure and Bl. Duns Scotus. Having become Provincial Superior of the Friars Minor in northern Italy, he continued his ministry of preaching, alternating it with his office of governance.

The Venerable Pope Pius XII proclaimed Anthony a Doctor of the Church, attributing to him the title “Doctor Evangelicus”. Anthony, in the school of Francis, always put Christ at the center of his life and thinking, of his action and of his preaching: thus all human dignity appears in the mirror of the Crucified One and our gazing upon him is ever a source of acknowledgement of human dignity.

—“If you preach Jesus, he will melt hardened hearts; if you invoke him he will soften harsh temptations; if you think of him he will enlighten your mind; if you read of him he will satisfy your intellect” (St. Anthony).