July 11th: Memorial of Saint Benedict, Abbot, patron saint of Europe

Gospel text (*Mt* 19,27-29): Peter said to Jesus: «You see we have given up everything to follow you: what will be our lot?». Jesus answered, «You who have followed me, listen to my words: (...) As for those who have left houses, brothers, sisters, father, mother, children or property for my Name's sake, they will receive a hundredfold and be given eternal life».

Saint Benedict of Norcia, abbot (480-547)

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

Today is the St. Benedict's festivity: with his life and his work, had a fundamental influence on the development of European civilization and culture. In fact, the Saint's work and particularly his Rule were to prove heralds of an authentic spiritual leaven which, in the course of the centuries, changed the face of Europe, inspiring a new spiritual and cultural unity, that of the Christian faith shared by the peoples of the Continent. This is how the reality we call “Europe” came into being.

St Benedict's life was steeped in an atmosphere of prayer, the foundation of his existence. Without prayer there is no experience of God. Seeing God, he understood the reality of man and his mission. In his Rule he describes monastic life as “a school for the service of the Lord” and advises his monks, “let nothing be preferred to the Work of God”. However, Benedict states that in the first place prayer is an act of listening, which must then be expressed in action. “The Lord is waiting every day for us to respond to his holy admonitions by our deeds”.

—Today, in seeking true progress, let us also listen to the “Rule” of St Benedict as a guiding light on our journey. The great monk is still a true master at whose school we can learn to become proficient in true humanism.