August 20th: Memorial of Saint Bernard, Abbot and Doctor of the Church

Gospel text (*Jn* 17:20-26): Jesus said, « (...) Father, since you have given them to me, I want them to be with me where I am and see the Glory you gave me, for you loved me before the foundation of the world. Righteous Father, the world has not known you but I have known you, and these have known that you have sent me. As I revealed your Name to them, so will I continue to reveal it, so that the love with which you loved me may be in them and I also may be in them».

St Bernard, Abbot and Doctor of the Church (1090-1153)

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

Today we remember this saint as the "last of the Fathers" of the Church, because in the 12th century he renewed the important theology of the Fathers. He entered Cîteaux, he was sent with only 25 years to found the Claraval monastery. The young abbot propelled sober and moderate life. From 1130 he began to deal with important matters of the Holy See and the Church.

In the face of the complex dialectical reasoning of his time Bernard insists that Jesus alone is "honey in the mouth, song to the ear, jubilation in the heart" (hence the title "Doctor mellifluus"). There is only one name that counts, that of Jesus Nazarene. In fact, true knowledge of God consisted in a personal, profound experience of Jesus Christ and of his love.

- "Per Mariam ad Iesum": through Mary we are led to Jesus. Bernard - following Tradition - clearly testifies Mary's subordination to Jesus. But, at the same time, he indicates the Virgin's privileged place in the economy of salvation, subsequent to the Mother's most particular participation ("compassio") in the sacrifice of the Son.