August 23rd: Memorial of Saint Rose of Lima, Patroness of the Americas and Philippines)

Gospel text (*Mt* 13:44-46): Jesus said to the crowds: «The kingdom of heaven is like a treasure hidden in a field. The one who finds it buries it again; and so happy is he, that he goes and sells everything he has, in order to buy that field (...)».

St. Rose of Lima, virgin (1585-1617) (Patroness of the Americas)

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Today, we are filled with joy celebrating the first saint (and patron saint) of the American Continent, Saint Rose of Lima (1585-1617). She found the "treasure" (cf. Mt 13,44) and found it because she prayed. Rose would have preferred to enter a convent: this would have been the simplest solution, given the permanent opposition of her familiar environment. But God implied that He expected her to remain with her family.

For this reason, St. Rose was linked to the Third Order of St. Dominic, taking Saint Catherine of Siena as a role model. And there, in her family home, she gave herself virginally to the Lord, working in the garden of the house and sewing. She experienced the happiness of the troth with Jesus and, thus, was able to live with joy the demands —in his case, the thorns— of family and social life. She died at 31, in 1617, at the feast of the apostle Saint Bartholomew, of which she was very devoted because he had suffered a particularly painful martyrdom.

—«If only mortals would learn how great it is to possess divine grace, how beautiful, how noble. No one would complain about his cross or about troubles that may happen to him» (St. Rose of Lima).