August 31st: Memorial of Saint Raymond Nonnatus, Religious

Gospel text (*Mt* 25:31-40): «'Lord, when did we see you hungry and give you food; thirsty and give you drink, or a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? When did we see you sick or in prison and go to see you?'. The King will answer, 'Truly, I say to you: whenever you did this to these little ones who are my brothers and sisters, you did it to me'».

St. Raymond Nonnatus, religious

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Today the memory of St. Raymond Nonnatus (1204-1240) brings two theological aspects to our attention. The first, the circumstance of the "unborn child" (that is, that he was not born but was extracted by performing a C-section in the womb of the deceased mother) invites us to think about the grace of Baptism. Strictly speaking, on the supernatural level - with the sole exception of Jesus and the Virgin Mary - we are all in reality "unborn". The sacrament of regeneration gives birth to the true life, that of children of God.

Secondly, St. Raymond Nonnatus left us a precious testimony of the practice of the works of mercy. He joined the Order of Mercedarians and, in fact, devoted himself fully to the tasks of those heroic missionaries, namely, the care of the captives (then in the land of the Moors). Works of mercy have not gone out of fashion simply because the sick, the imprisoned, the marginalized, the captives of drug addiction... have not gone out of style either!

Lord, give us light to discover You in the person of our brothers in need.