October 15th: Memorial of Saint Teresa of Jesus, Virgin and Doctor of the Church

Gospel text (*Mt* 11:25-30): At that time Jesus said in reply, “I give praise to you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, for although you have hidden these things from the wise and the learned you have revealed them to the childlike. Yes, Father, such has been your gracious will…"

St. Teresa of Jesus (of Avila), Virgin & Doctor of the Church (1515-1582)

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

Today, we celebrate the Saint who is one of the peaks of Christian spirituality, Saint Teresa of Avila. While she was still a child she had the opportunity to read the lives of several Martyrs which inspired in her such a longing for martyrdom. Her two fundamental principles: “all things of this world will pass away”, while God alone is “for ever, ever and ever.” When she was 20 she entered the Carmelite Monastery of the Incarnation. The fortuitous discovery of the statue of “a Christ most grievously wounded”, left a deep mark on her life. Parallel to her inner development, the Saint began in practice to realize her ideal of the reform of the Carmelite Order. Teresa of Jesus had no academic education but always set great store by the teachings of theologians, men of letters and spiritual teachers. Teresa had the opportunity to build up relations of spiritual friendship with many Saints and with St John of the Cross in particular.

Among her most important works we should mention: “El libro de la vida” (The book of life); “El Castillo interior” [The Interior Castle] (mystical work); “Libro de la fundaciones” [Book of the foundations]… Some essential points of Teresa’s spirituality: the evangelical virtues as the basis of all Christian and human life; a profound harmony with the great biblical figures and eager listening to the word of God; prayer; the centrality of Christ’s humanity (Christian life is the personal relationship with Jesus); unconditional love for the Church; perfection, as the aspiration of the whole of Christian life and as its ultimate goal.

—At the end of the route through “The Interior Castle”, in the last “room”, Teresa describes this fullness, achieved in the indwelling of the Trinity, in union with Christ through the mystery of his humanity.