August 1st: Memorial of Saint Alphonsus Liguori, Bishop and Doctor of the Church

Gospel text (*Mt* 5:13-19): Jesus said to his disciples: «You are the salt of the earth. But if salt has lost its strength, how can it be made salty again? It has become useless. It can only be thrown away and people will trample on it. You are the light of the world. A city built on a mountain cannot be hidden. No one lights a lamp and covers it; instead it is put on a lamp stand, where it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way your light must shine before others, so that they may see the good you do and praise your Father in heaven».

«Do not think that I have come to remove the Law and the Prophets. I have not come to remove but to fulfill them. I tell you this: as long as heaven and earth last, not the smallest letter or stroke of the Law will change until all is fulfilled. So then, whoever breaks the least important of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be the least in the kingdom of heaven. On the other hand, whoever obeys them and teaches others to do the same will be great in the kingdom of heaven».

«You are the salt of the Earth (…). You are the light of the world»

Fr. Juan Carlos ALAMEDA Vega
(San Cristóbal de La Laguna, Spain)

Today, the feast of St. Alphonsus Marie Liguori (1696-1787), we appeal to the mediation of someone who knew how to say "Yes" to the Lord and who took very seriously the words of the Gospel: "You are the salt of the Earth" (Mt 5:13).

Alphonsus, intelligent and studious, belonged to a distinguished family. A lawyer at the age of 19 and a fair-minded man who never loses a case! One day he discovered that he had upheld - without realizing it - a cause that was not fair, and that led him to radically reconsider his life. After a retreat he received the Confirmation. These two events revitalized his fervor. The following year, on two occasions, he heard an interior voice saying: “Leave the world and give thyself to me”. Very soon God confirmed him what was His will.

He went to the Church of our Lady of Mercy to ask to be admitted into the Oratory. That led him to consecrate himself to Our Lady by being in his apostolate a true reflection of his love to the Blessed Virgin. In the words of the Pope Francis: 'Mary is the Mother of 'Yes'. Yes to God’s dream, yes to God’s

care, yes to God’s will. It was a yes that, as we know, was not easy to live. That is why we love her so much and find in her a true Mother, one who helps us to keep faith and hope alive in the midst of complicated situations”.

To discover - as St. Alphonsus Mari Liguori did - the authentic "Glories of Mary", is to discover the meaning of following Jesus Christ in fullness, of knowing Him and loving Him, to bring others the joy of the Gospel. Today’s saint generously loved God, the Virgin Mary our Mother and all the people: a good example for us! In our daily prayer we could ask the Lord what He wants from us, and be attentive - as St. Alphonsus Marie was - to respond to his call. Let us be generous! and answer as our Mother in Heaven did: "May it be done to me according to your Word" (Lk 1: 38).