November 15th: Memorial of Saint Albertus Magnus, Bishop and Doctor of the Church

Gospel text (*Mt* 13:47-52): Jesus said to his disciples, «Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a big fishing net let down into the sea, in which every kind of fish has been caught. When the net is full, it is dragged ashore. Then they sit down and gather the good fish in buckets, but throw the worthless ones away. That is how it will be at the end of time; the angels will go out to separate the wicked from the just and throw them into the blazing furnace, where they will weep and gnash their teeth». Jesus asked, «Have you understood all these things?». «Yes», they answered. So He said to them, «You will see that every teacher of the Law who becomes a disciple of the Kingdom is like a householder who can produce from his store things both new and old».

«Like a householder who can produce from his store things both new and old»

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Today, the Gospel reveals very well the work of St. Albertus Magnus (1193-1280), bishop and – never better said - Doctor of the Church. By using up judgment at the service of the faith, he became an experienced sage in those aspects of natural sciences and of the science of thought. The natural understanding of the work of creation does not call faith into question, but quite the opposite: "Faith and reason are like two wings on which the human spirit rises to the contemplation of truth" (John Paul II).

In actual fact, faith is like a «net that is let down into the sea and caught all kind of fish [truths] » (cf. Mt 13.47); faith is not closed to the natural realities of creation or to the manifestations of natural order. St. Albert had the special merit of having acquainted us with very valuable aspects of Aristotle's philosophical thought, by putting them at the service of theological thinking. In addition, St. Albert was also the teacher of Thomas Aquinas, the "Doctor Angelicus": St. Thomas kept going on and led to very high levels this way of integration and complementarity between philosophy and theology. Until then, Christianity had only shown sympathy and openness towards Platonism, but only logic science had been accepted from the master Aristotle (4th century B.C.)

Thus, by paraphrasing Jesus Christ, we could say that the theologian that «has become disciple of the Kingdom of Heaven is like the owner of a house who brings out of his storerooms new treasures as well as old» (Mt 13:52). The progress made by the science of faith - theology - throughout twenty centuries of

Christianity is impressive. The fundamentals have not changed though: the word of God which, precisely because it is God's word, speaks of deep realities and, at the same time, lights up - moral guidance – over so many realities of temporal order. Theological research should not give us any fear. What we should be afraid of is of theology without prayer, without any dialogue with who is God's Word Incarnated.