

September 17th

Saint ALBERT, Patriarch of Jerusalem and Lawgiver of the Order of Carmelites

Optional memorial

Albert was Bishop of Bobbio and Vercelli (Piedmont) where for nearly twenty years he worked for peace and conversion of hearts. He was asked by the Canons Regular of the Holy Sepulchre to take charge of the Jerusalem Patriarchate and Pope Innocent III appointed him Legate of Palestine (1205) where he arrived in 1206. The Muslims did not allow him to enter Jerusalem, so he established his residence in St. Jean d'Acree, from where he was able to act on behalf of the Pope with wisdom, prudence and vigour. About 1208-1209 it was he who gave the hermits of Mount Carmel their first Rule at the request of their first Prior, St Burchard. This Rule, approved by Pope Honorius III in 1226, is an important document for the spirituality of the Middle Ages, focusing on the spirit of prayer, meditation on the Word of God and detachment so as to live closer to God. Albert died on 14 September 1214, foully murdered during a procession to St. Jean d'Acree.

St. Albert was a faithful preacher of the Word and, after the example of St. Paul, «he became all things to all so as to save some, at any price». He did not hesitate to lay down his life, in imitation of Christ, thus fulfilling the words of the psalm ; «Here I am, Lord, I come to do your will» (Ps 39).

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON: Josh 1: 8

Keep this book of the law on your lips. Recite it by day and by night, that you may observe carefully all that is written in it.

COLLECT

Lord, eternal Shepherd, who chose the blessed bishop St. Albert to nourish your faithful by his words of preaching, to encourage them by his example and to give up his life for them, grant us, we pray, that the same ardent charity can make us willing to risk our lives for our brothers.

Through Our Lord ...

FIRST READING

A reading from the first letter of Saint Paul to the Corinthians 9: 16-19, 22-23

Brethren, if I preach the gospel, this is no reason for me to boast, for an obligation has been imposed on me, and woe to me if I do not preach it! If I do so willingly, I have a recompense, but if unwillingly, then I have been entrusted with a stewardship. What then is my recompense? That, when I preach, I offer the gospel free of charge so as not to make full use of my right in the gospel. Although I am free in regard to all, I have made myself a slave to all so as to win over as many as possible. To the weak I became weak, to win over the weak. I have become all things to all, to save at least some. All this I do for the sake of the gospel, so that I too may have a share in it.

The Word of the Lord.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM Ps 40: 1. 4a. 7-8a. 7b-8. (R. 9a)

R. I delight to do your will, O my God

1. I waited, I waited for the LORD,  
and he stooped down to me.  
He put a new song into my mouth,  
praise of our God.

2. You delight not in sacrifice and offerings,  
but in an open ear.  
You do not ask for holocaust and victim.  
Then I said, "See, I have come."

3. In the scroll of the book  
it stands written of me:  
"I delight to do your will, O my God;  
your instruction lies deep within me."

4. Your justice I have proclaimed  
in the great assembly.  
My lips I have not sealed;  
you know it, O LORD.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION                      John 10: 14

R. Alleluia. Alleluia.  
I am the good shepherd, and I know mine and mine know me.  
R. Alleluia.

GOSPEL

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew                      9: 35-38

At that time, Jesus went around to all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom, and curing every disease and illness. At the sight of the crowds, his heart was moved with pity for them because they were troubled and abandoned, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is abundant but the laborers are few; so ask the master of the harvest to send out laborers for his harvest."  
The Gospel of the Lord.

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Lord, who have chosen us to witness to your love in the world, accept this offering which we humbly present to you, that it may obtain for us the grace to faithfully keep and proclaim your Word.  
Through Christ our Lord.

PREFACE

Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God of hosts...

COMMUNION ANTIPHON    Matt 19: 27-29

Jesus said to them, "Amen, I say to you who have given up everything and followed me, that you will receive a hundred times more, and will inherit eternal life.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Through the power of the Eucharist and the intercession of St. Albert, grant us, O Lord, to be ever vigilant in your presence and, assiduous in prayer, to ponder upon your law day and night, so that we may merit one day to live in your glory forever.  
Through Christ our Lord.