

OCTOBER 9th

Saint ABRAHAM, Patriarch

Memorial

Abraham is the "Father in faith" of Jews, Christians and Muslims. The book of Genesis tells us about his life, his departure from Ur of the Chaldeans, his experience of the unknown because of the call of God, the blessing which he received and which was to fall upon all the peoples of the earth, and the Promise he was made that his descendants "would be as numerous as the stars of heaven" and he would be given the land of Canaan.

The father of Ishmael by his serving girl Hagar, Abraham finally had a son from Sarah, Isaac, who would become the heir of the Promise and who received circumcision as a sign of the Covenant. Genesis tells us how the Patriarch was tested by God and was ordered to sacrifice his son; how he obeyed in an act of unconditional faith, obedience to which God responded by sparing Isaac and by confirming his promises and blessings.

A model of obedience, Abraham is also the intercessor who dares to speak with his Lord, the friend to whom God reveals the secret of his designs and the finest example of respect for the rules of hospitality.

According to the Bible, Abraham died at the age of 175 years and was buried in Machpelah. His cult is attested from ancient times: from the time of Constantine, a basilica was built in the Herodian precinct of Mamre. In the sixth century, there was a church above the tomb of the Patriarchs, over the Cave of Machpelah, in Hebron. This sanctuary became more important at the time of the Crusaders, and it was at this time that the feast of the three Patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, was celebrated with its own proper office.

Jesus was born as a descendant of Abraham and inherited all the fullness of the Promise, and all who believe in Him, Jews and Gentiles, are called to share in the blessings of the Patriarch. The Gospel shows us Abraham striving towards this fulfillment in Jesus and yearning to see the "Day" of the Lord that would satisfy his hope: "Your father Abraham rejoiced in the hope of seeing my day." (John 8, 56).

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON: Sir 44: 20

Abraham, father of many peoples, none his equal in honour, kept the Law of the Most High.

COLLECT

Lord, you rewarded the faith of Abraham by promising that one of his descendants would be your Only Son; grant to us, we beseech you, to live the faith that we have received at our baptism until our death, so that we may merit to be reborn to the life of heaven.  
Through our Lord Jesus Christ...

FIRST READING

A reading from the Letter to the Hebrews 11: 8-12. 17-19

By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to a place that he was to receive as an inheritance; he went out, not knowing where he was to go. By faith he sojourned in the promised land as in a foreign country, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, heirs of the same promise; for he was looking forward to the city with foundations, whose architect and maker is God. By faith he received power to generate, even though he was past the normal age - and Sarah herself was sterile - for he

thought that the one who had made the promise was trustworthy. So it was that there came forth from one man, himself as good as dead, descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and as countless as the sands on the seashore.

By faith Abraham, when put to the test, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises was ready to offer his only son, of whom it was said, "Through Isaac descendants shall bear your name." He reasoned that God was able to raise even from the dead, and he received Isaac back as a symbol. The Word of the Lord.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Luke 1: 69-70. 71-72. 73-75 (R. Ps 40: 8a. 9a)

R. "See, I have come to do your will, O my God".

1. He has raised up a horn for our salvation within the house of David his servant, even as he promised through the mouth of his holy prophets from of old.

2. He promised salvation from our enemies and from the hand of all who hate us, to show mercy to our fathers and to be mindful of his holy covenant.

3. He swore the oath to Abraham our father, to grant us that, rescued from the hand of enemies, without fear we might worship him in holiness and righteousness before him all our days.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

John 8: 56

R. Alleluia. Alleluia.

Abraham your father rejoiced to see my day; he saw it and was glad.

R. Alleluia.

GOSPEL

A reading from the holy Gospel according to saint John 8: 51-59

Jesus said to the Jews: "Amen, amen, I say to you, whoever keeps my word will never see death."

(So) the Jews said to him, "Now we are sure that you are possessed. Abraham died, as did the prophets, yet you say, 'Whoever keeps my word will never taste death.' Are you greater than our father Abraham, who died? Or the prophets, who died? Who do you make yourself out to be?"

Jesus answered, "If I glorify myself, my glory is worth nothing; but it is my Father who glorifies me, of whom you say, 'He is our God.' You do not know him, but I know him. And if I should say that I do not know him, I would be like you a liar. But I do know him and I keep his word. Abraham your father rejoiced to see my day; he saw it and was glad."

So the Jews said to him, "You are not yet fifty years old and you have seen Abraham?"

Jesus said to them, "Amen, amen, I say to you, before Abraham came to be, I AM."

So they picked up stones to throw at him; but Jesus hid and went out of the temple area.

The Gospel of the Lord.

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Father of all goodness, may this sacrifice make us truly your adopted children so that we may follow the example of blessed Abraham in his prayer and never fear to persevere in asking for your generous gifts.

Through Christ our Lord.

PREFACE

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

COMMUNION ANTIPHON James 2: 23

Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness, and he was called "the friend of God."

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Lord, may the Eucharist that we have received arouse in us that faith and obedience of the Father of the nations that allowed him to be called your Friend.  
Through Christ our Lord.