

September 4th

Saint MOSES, Lawgiver and Prophet

Memorial

Moses, who was for the Jewish people the supreme master of doctrine, to whom God had entrusted his secrets, his rules of life, to pass on to Israel. His dominant trait was without doubt his loyalty to a difficult and thankless task: to lead his fellow Israelites out of Egypt and through the wilderness, passing on to them the Law of God and organising their religious life while they journeyed towards the Promised Land.

He lived in exceptional intimacy with God ever since his vision of the burning bush (Exod 3), his encounters with God on the mountain and in the tent of meeting (Exod 19, 20, 24), from which he returned with the skin of his face lit up by a radiant light (Exod 34: 29-35), and until his mysterious death on Mount Nebo (Deut 34). As a prophet, and indeed the greatest among them, he constantly interceded for his people and, as Deuteronomy says: "Since then no prophet has arisen in Israel like Moses, whom the LORD knew face to face." (Deut 34:10).

The first Christians saw in Moses:

- the prophet whose writings bear witness to Jesus. Thus (John 1: 45) Philip says: "We have found the one about whom Moses wrote in the law!"
- the one who, as the liberator of his people, in the face of contradictions, stubbornly announced Jesus by his life;
- and who, before dying, predicted the coming of a new prophet raised up by God and invited the people to listen to him.

All this is called to mind for us by the Gospel of the Transfiguration: Jesus is radiant with divine glory, while Moses and Elijah, his two witnesses, converse with Him, and the Voice from heaven proclaims: "This is my beloved Son, listen to him."

We are called to listen, and to respond with utter fidelity to the covenant that God wanted Moses to initiate and which He wants to renew with us in Jesus His Son, whose word must enlighten our lives.

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON: Sir 45: 1

Beloved of God and people, Moses, whose memory is blessed.

COLLECT

Lord, who through Moses you led your people out of the land of slavery and gave them your holy law, graciously grant, we pray, that freed from the bondage of sin and by faithfully following your law, we may be led to our eternal homeland.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ...

FIRST READING

A reading from the Book of Deuteronomy 34: 1-12

Then Moses went up from the plains of Moab to Mount Nebo, the headland of Pisgah which faces Jericho, and the LORD showed him all the land - Gilead, and as far as Dan, all Naphtali, the land of Ephraim and Manasseh, all the land of Judah as far as the Western Sea, the Negeb, the circuit of the Jordan with the lowlands at Jericho, city of palms, and as far as Zoar. The LORD then said to him, "This

is the land which I swore to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob that I would give to their descendants. I have let you feast your eyes upon it, but you shall not cross over."

So there, in the land of Moab, Moses, the servant of the LORD, died as the LORD had said; and he was buried in the ravine opposite Beth-peor in the land of Moab, but to this day no one knows the place of his burial. Moses was one hundred and twenty years old when he died, yet his eyes were undimmed and his vigor unabated. For thirty days the Israelites wept for Moses in the plains of Moab, till they had completed the period of grief and mourning for Moses. Now Joshua, son of Nun, was filled with the spirit of wisdom, since Moses had laid his hands upon him; and so the Israelites gave him their obedience, thus carrying out the LORD'S command to Moses. Since then no prophet has arisen in Israel like Moses, whom the LORD knew face to face. He had no equal in all the signs and wonders the LORD sent him to perform in the land of Egypt against Pharaoh and all his servants and against all his land, and for the might and the terrifying power that Moses exhibited in the sight of all Israel.
The Word of the Lord.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM Deut 32: 1-2. 3-4a. 10-11. (R. 3.)

R. I will sing the LORD'S renown ; proclaim the greatness of our God!

1. Give ear, O heavens, while I speak; let the earth hearken to the words of my mouth!
May my instruction soak in like the rain, and my discourse permeate like the dew.

2. For I will sing the LORD'S renown. Oh, proclaim the greatness of our God!
The Rock - how faultless are his deeds, how right all his ways!

3. As an eagle incites its nestlings forth by hovering over its brood,
So he spread his wings to receive them and bore them up on his pinions.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION Exod 15: 1

R. Alleluia. Alleluia.
Give praise to the Lord; He is covered in glory.
R. Alleluia.

GOSPEL

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Saint John 6: 28-35

So the crowd said to him, "What can we do to accomplish the works of God?"
Jesus answered and said to them, "This is the work of God, that you believe in the one he sent."
So they said to him, "What sign can you do, that we may see and believe in you? What can you do? Our ancestors ate manna in the desert, as it is written: 'He gave them bread from heaven to eat.'"
So Jesus said to them, "Amen, amen, I say to you, it was not Moses who gave the bread from heaven; my Father gives you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is that which comes down from heaven and gives life to the world."
So they said to him, "Sir, give us this bread always."
Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me will never hunger, and whoever believes in me will never thirst".
The Gospel of the Lord.

Or else:

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Saint Mathew 17: 1-9

Jesus took Peter, James, and John his brother, and led them up a high mountain by themselves. And he was transfigured before them; his face shone like the sun and his clothes became white as light. And behold, Moses and Elijah appeared to them, conversing with him. Then Peter said to Jesus in reply, "Lord, it is good that we are here. If you wish, I will make three tents here, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah." While he was still speaking, behold, a bright cloud cast a shadow over them, then from the cloud came a voice that said,

"This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to him." When the disciples heard this, they fell prostrate and were very much afraid. But Jesus came and touched them, saying, "Rise, and do not be afraid." And when the disciples raised their eyes, they saw no one else but Jesus alone.

As they were coming down from the mountain, Jesus charged them, "Do not tell the vision to anyone until the Son of Man has been raised from the dead".

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Lord, receive these gifts offered in memory of your servant Moses. May our oblation become one with that of your Son, who ratified the new and eternal covenant with his blood.
Through Christ our Lord.

PREFACE

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

COMMUNION ANTIPHON Exod 16, 15

This is the bread that God gives us for our nourishment.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

For forty years, Lord, you fed your people in the desert and brought them to the Promised Land. May we who participate in this sacred banquet be fortified by it for this present life and for eternity.
Through Christ our Lord...