



St. Albert the Great (1193-1280) is a Doctor of the Church and the patron saint of scientists and philosophers and was the master of St. Thomas Aquinas. The native German joined the newly formed Order of Preachers (Dominicans) in the early 13th century. Albert became known as "Great" because of his intellectual abilities.

First Reading: (1 Macc 1:10-15, 41-43, 54-57, 62-64-64) There came forth a sinful root, Antiochus Epiphanes, son of Antiochus the king; he had been a hostage in Rome. He began to reign in the one hundred and thirty-seventh year of the kingdom of the Greeks. In those days lawless men came forth from Israel, and misled many, saying, "Let us go and make a covenant with the Gentiles round about us, for since we separated from them many evils have come upon us." This proposal pleased them, and some of the people eagerly went to the king. He authorized them to observe the ordinances of the Gentiles. So they built a gymnasium in Jerusalem, according to Gentile custom, and removed the marks of circumcision, and abandoned the holy covenant. They joined with the Gentiles and sold themselves to do evil. Then the king wrote to his whole kingdom that all should be one people, and that each should give up his customs. All the Gentiles accepted the command of the king. Many even from Israel gladly adopted his religion; they sacrificed to idols and profaned the sabbath. Now on the fifteenth day of Chislew, in the one hundred and forty-fifth year, they erected a desolating sacrilege upon the altar of burnt offering. They also built altars in the surrounding cities of Judah, and burned incense at the doors of the houses and in the streets. The books of the law which they found they

tore to pieces and burned with fire. Where the book of the covenant was found in the possession of any one, or if any one adhered to the law, the decree of the king condemned him to death. But many in Israel stood firm and were resolved in their hearts not to eat unclean food. They chose to die rather than to be defiled by food or to profane the holy covenant; and they did die. And very great wrath came upon Israel.

Ps 118:53, 61, 134, 150, 155, 1
R./ Give me life, O Lord, and I will do your will.

Gospel: (Lk 18:35-43) As Jesus drew near to Jericho, a blind man was sitting by the roadside begging; and hearing a multitude going by, he inquired what this meant. They told him, "Jesus of Nazareth is passing by." And he cried, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!" And those who were in front rebuked him, telling him to be silent; but he cried out all the more, "Son of David, have mercy on me!" And Jesus stopped, and commanded him to be brought to him; and when he came near, he asked him, "What do you want me to do for you?" He said, "Lord, let me receive my sight." And Jesus said to him, "Receive your sight; your faith has made you well." And immediately he received his sight and followed him, glorifying God; and all the people, when they saw it, gave praise to God.

REFLECTION

Profound, Sincere and Courageous proclamation of Faith always is rewarding. It was the deep Faith of the blind man that Jesus can heal him and that Jesus is the incarnation of God's mercy to him that enabled him to give expression to his faith by calling upon Jesus, in spite of the crowd, noise and rebukes. It reaches the attention of Jesus. He cannot allow such profound faith to go unheard or unnoticed. So Jesus asks him "What do you want me to do for you?" Again the blind man is not ashamed to tell him the seemingly impossible request where his strong conviction in Jesus' power and mercy was expressed. "Lord, let me receive my sight." Faith is the key to open the treasure box of God's blessing. **We need to give expression to our faith by professing it, by nourishing it, proclaiming it and by defending it.** How strong, profound and expressive is our faith?