

# ABRAHAM, THE BEGINNING OF GOD'S PLAN FOR THE SALVATION OF THE WORLD

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Homily of Monday, 12<sup>th</sup> Week of the Year, June 20, 2011  
Gen. 12:1-9, Ps. 32, Matt. 7:1-5

“Now the Lord said to Abram, ‘Go from your country and your kindred and your father’s house to the land that I will show you. And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you, and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and him who curses you I will curse; and by you all the families of the earth shall bless themselves’” (Gen. 12:1-3).

With this call of Abraham, God began his special revelation to the Hebrews as his plan for the salvation of the world. In Abraham all the nations of the earth will be blessed. God justified Abraham through his faith in God’s promise to give him many descendents. “And he believed the Lord; and he reckoned it to him as righteousness” (Gen. 15:6; Rom. 4:3). This would be fulfilled in his descendent Jesus Christ, because all who believe in him will be justified by the merits of his death on the cross for them. Thus in Christ, Abraham’s descendent, all the nations of the earth will be blessed.

This is God’s plan for the salvation of the world in his only Son, who became incarnate in the world only once, in Palestine in the days of King Herod. Christ then sent his apostles and their successors to be his witnesses unto the ends of the earth (Acts 1:8), to preach the gospel of God’s salvation in Jesus Christ to every creature (Mark 16:15) and to make disciples of all nations, baptizing them and teaching them all that he taught them (Matt. 28:19-20). Truly, as God sent his Son into the world, so the Son sent his apostles into the world to preach the gospel of salvation. “As the Father has sent me, even so I send you” (John 20:21).

Thus the Church has a great responsibility for the salvation of the world. It is the mission of the Church to give to all the opportunity to know Jesus Christ and to hear the gospel, so that each person can either accept it for his salvation or reject it unto his condemnation (John 3:36).

We should not ask why it has taken so long to bring this message of salvation to all the peoples of the world. Only God knows that, and he has not revealed it to us. We only know what we need to know, namely that the Church has a great

responsibility to spread the gospel to all parts of the world, to every tribe, language, and culture. Who does this work? Today, Christians in every country do it, evangelizing their neighbors. But there are also organizations, societies, and religious orders in most countries of the world that do this work as their specialization. They do it both in their own country and in other countries. They are specialists organized to do this, and the Church commends this work to them in the name of the whole Church.

It is the revealed will of God for the salvation of the world that the Church preach the gospel unto the ends of the earth, to all nations. This is what God wants his Church to do. Although God can bring to that faith in Christ which is necessary for salvation those who have not yet heard the proclamation of the gospel, by ways that he alone knows (LG 16; AG 1.7; GS 22), our responsibility is clear—it is to evangelize all that we can. This is God’s revealed will for his Church, namely that it evangelize and explicitly preach Christ, when it is possible, to the entire world.

This is why God called Abraham, to prepare the way for the incarnation of his Son in the world for the salvation of all. Only by the death of Jesus Christ on the cross is one saved, and one must believe in him and invoke the merits of his death to be saved. There is no other way of salvation, for “there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved” (Acts 4:12; cf. John 14:6; 1 John 5:12; John 3:36).