LIFE OF SAINT PHILIP OF FLORENCE

I LEGENDA "VULGATA

Introduction

Our knowledge of the life and spirituality of Saint Philip owes more to the *Legenda beati Philippi* or *Life of Saint Philip* (abbreviated LP) than to any other writing. It was widely known in the Servite Order from the fourteenth century. Therefore some call it the "vulgata", that is, the common or popular life.

After the author of the *Legenda de origine Ordinis*, whom a consistent and authoritative tradition identifies as Peter of Todi, prior general of the Servants of Mary from 1314 to 1344, had narrated the story of the foundation of the Order, he announced that he was prepared to narrate also the life of Blessed Philip. He presents Philip as the natural crowning of his preceding narrative.

But no trace of this work has been found. It was to have been divided into fifteen chapters. So the ultimate question is whether or not Peter of Todi maintained his promise to write a *Legenda beati Philippi*. The answer is affirmative. He certainly did compose such a life of blessed Philip, which could be called the *legenda "maior" beati Philippi*. This *legenda*, unfortunately, has not come down to us in its contents and in his original length. For, at least from the fifteenth century, the original text as it came from the pen of Peter of Todi has been lost.

The life of Saint Philip, certainly composed by Peter of Todi and then lost, is known only through an abridged version. This abridged version is today called the *Legenda beati Philippi* (LP). This new and abbreviated form was perhaps made for liturgical or choral use. As we have said at the beginning of this introduction, some have called it the *legenda "vulgata"*, because of its wide diffusion throughout the Order.

Differing styles, a different chronology, and certain omissions persuade one that the LP was not written by the same author as the LO.

The style of the LP is concise, essential, immediate. That of the LO is redundant, heavy, and involved. There are differences in the chronology of the two accounts. The omission of some material from the LP is a further confirmation. To cite merely one example: Contrary to what the author of the LO seems to announce about Philip's family, the author of the LP passes over in almost complete silence the life of Philip before his religious conversion.

Although there are two distinct authors, nevertheless the author of the LP does depend upon the author of the LO. This is seen by the fact that the general plan of the LP follows that promised in the LO. In addition, the author of the LP makes use to written sources which were already in circulation about Philip, as we see in paragraph 11: "We read of him ...".

Fr. Davide Montagna believes that this shortened version of the LP (or *Legenda "minor"*, as he calls it) was made about the years 1375-1380, under the generalate of Fra Andrea of Faenza (1374-1396), who is known to have propagated the memory of Blessed Philip in view of obtaining formal approval of his cult from the Apostolic See.

Thus separated from its position as part of the LO, the LP soon became the *Legenda* par excellence for the figure of Fra Philip Benizi of Florence.

We possess various codices of the LP dating from the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. The oldest manuscript, which belonged originally to the library of SS. Annunziata in Florence (given the number 276 during the eighteenth century), is found at the present time in the Servite General Archives in Rome. This handsome codex, lettered in gothic-humanistic characters, was destined perhaps for the priory in Todi, for the coat of arms of that city is found on folio 4. It is decorated with finely crafted miniatures of various types. It opens with a proemium to the LP (f. 2-3), taken from several passages of the LO about Saint Philip (that is, LO, numbers 1, 4, 5, 6, 11, 12, 59, 61).

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Then follows the Latin text of the LP (f. 3v-11r), after which is an Italian translation of the same *Legenda* (f. 13-20v).

At the end of this translation, on folio 20v, an important marginal note in the same hand informs us that both the Latin and Italian version of the LP was "*...ex autenticho biblioteche conventus Florentie libro, per me Petrum Locti fideliter exemplata, sub annis Domini millesimo quadringentesimo sexto decimo, die quarta junii*". On the basis of this note it is certain that the first section of the codex was copied in 1416 by a certain Peter Lotti, who copied it from an authentic book in the library of Santissima Annun-ziata in Florence. Unfortunately we are not able to ascertain how old the book was from which Peter Lotti copied. It is most likely, however, that it dates at least from the late fourteenth century. In fact in one of the registers of income and expenses from Santissima Annunziata there is an entry which states that in 1403: "The *Legenda* of Saint Philip was copied in order to send it to Todi" (Tozzi, *Libro di spogli*, Arch. Gen. OSM, at that date).

The present importance of the figure of Saint Philip is well expressed in the vision which inspired him to enter the Order of the Servants of Mary. He seemed to see a golden chariot with four wheels, on which the Blessed Virgin was seated. The chariot was drawn by a lamb and a lion, while a dove circled around it (LP, n. 3). This passage is a clear introduction to his journey. It is also a authoritative summary of Servite spirituality, for the explanation of this vision is placed in the mouth of Saint Bonfilius, the first of the Seven Fathers who began the family of the Servants of Saint Mary. "The golden chariot", explained Saint Bonfilius, "gloriously decorated as it was, stood for the Order of the holy Virgin Mary; its four wheels were the four holy Gospels, in which our life consists, as we read in Ezechiel, 'The spirit of the living creatures was in the wheels'. And our Savior tells us in the Gospel, 'Do this and life will be yours'. The animals drawing the chariot were a lamb and a lion. From this we should understand that two things above all are required of the servant of God; first of all, gentleness, for the Psalm says, 'The gentle shall inherit the land'; and secondly, strength, in order to resist vices and sin, for our Savior says, 'Be strong in battle and fight against the ancient serpent and you will receive an eternal kingdom'. In the dove is symbolized simplicity, of which the Gospel says, 'You must be simple as doves'".

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TEXT

BEGINNING OF THE LIFE OF BLESSED PHILIP OF THE ORDER OF SERVANTS OF SAINT MARY

1. **I**n the year of the Lord 1244[1], in the Oltrarno district of the city of Florence, there lived a very rich man, born of noble parents, James and Albaverde, of the noble family of the Benizi[2]. The man's name was Philip. He was skilled in medicine and a God-fearing man. Well-versed in divine wisdom, his whole heart was set on the law of the Lord[3], and on that law, day and night, his thoughts dwelt. He tamed the impulses of the flesh by modest use of food and drink. He set aside regular hours of the day for prayer; out of devotion he also recited the office of the holy Virgin, the penitential psalms and the office of the dead. In the middle of the night he would rise to sing praise to God. All this, in fact, he had begun to do from his youth.

2. When he was thirty years of age[4], urged on by divine love, he conceived the desire to leave behind the attractions of the world and devote his entire energy and love to the service of the most high God. During the whole of Lent he had been visiting the churches of Fiesole[5], performing penitential acts and giving assistance to the poor of Christ. After Easter he continued to visit the churches both at Fiesole and in Florence. It happened one day that he entered the church of the Servants of St. Mary at Florence in order to take part in the mysteries of the holy Mass. As soon as he had knelt down, he began to pray. Now, the liturgy which the friars were celebrating was that of the Thursday after Easter, and when they came to the Epistle, Philip heard these words of the Scriptures: "Philip, go up and join that chariot[6]". Philip took these words to heart[7]; filled with holy fervor, he immediately became oblivious to all about him and was carried away by the spirit of the Lord[8]. In this state he was granted the following vision.

3. He saw himself on a very deserted road, groping his way laboriously through briars, stones and mud and threatened by serpents. Philip cried out to God to come to his aid and, when he had insisted for some time, he heard repeated the words of the Epistle, "Philip, go up and join that chariot". At that, he looked up to heaven and there before his eyes was a golden four-wheeled chariot upon which sat the Blessed Virgin, surrounded by a multitude of angels and saints and covering the chariot with a black mantle. The golden chariot was drawn by a lamb and a lion and round it circled a white dove. Eagerly, blessed Philip tried to reach the chariot.

4. While he was thus rapt in vision, the Mass had come to an end. The sacristan was about to close the church door, when he saw blessed Philip praying before the statue of Our Lady and asked him to leave the church. But so transported by the Holy Spirit was Philip that he did not hear him speaking. Again the sacristan said to him, "Man of God, rise up. The divine services are over and it is time for you to be going back home". Then blessed Philip was roused from his dream, rose up and said to the friar, "May the Lord be merciful to you, Fra Alexis[9], for you have deprived me of a tremendous joy". Then, humbly leaving the church, he went back home, restored by heavenly nourishment.

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[1] Following the LO this date should read 1254.
[2] The Benizi home is found on the present via Guicciardini. The Benizi family be came extinct about 1560.
[3] Cf. *Ps* 1, 2.
[4] Twenty years of age, if one accepts the chronology of the LO which places his birth in 1233.
[5] A pilgrimage to churches and shrines outside the city in order to discover the will of God in making difficult decisions, was, in the Middle Ages, together with penance and almsgiving, a first step toward the penitential state.
[6] *Acts* 8, 29. It is the first reading of the Mass of Thursday of Easter Week.
[7] Cf. the action of Mary who "kept all these thing, reflecting on them in her heart" (*Lk* 2, 19).
[8] *Acts* 8, 39.
[9] One of the Seven Holy Founders of the Servite Order (cf. LO, chapter 5).

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5. That night, God's servant Philip was visited in vision by the glorious Virgin accompanied by a multitude of angels. She said to him, "Philip, go to my Servants, that is, to the friars who are called Servants of St. Mary". As soon as morning had come, with this voice still sounding in his ears, he hurried to the Servants of St. Mary and asked to see the prior. Now, the prior at that time was a certain worthy father called Fra Bonfilius[10]. He came immediately to see Philip and together they spent several hours conversing about holy things. Point by point, Philip expounded his vision to Bonfilius and in conclusion begged to be received into the company of the friars. The prior was overjoyed at Philip's words and gave thanks to God that he should direct to the Order such an outstanding man.

6. He spoke very kind words to Philip, pointing out to him the splendid joys of divine life. Then he gave him a clear explanation of the vision he had received[11]. The deserted road, he told him, so full of obstructions, was to be understood as that empty love of this world which not only tosses man about but torments him with eternal fire and suffering. The golden chariot, gloriously decorated as it was, stood for the Order of the holy Virgin Mary; its four wheels were the four holy Gospels, in which our life consists, as we read in Ezechiel, "The spirit of the living creatures was in the wheels"[12]. And our Savior tells us in the Gospel, "Do this and life will be yours"[13]. The animals drawing the chariot were a lamb and a lion. From this we should understand that two things above all are required of the servant of God; first of all, gentleness, for the Psalm says, "The gentle shall inherit the land"[14]; and secondly, strength, in order to resist vices and sin, for our Savior says, "Be strong in battle and fight against the ancient serpent and you will receive an eternal kingdom"[15]. In the dove is symbolized simplicity, of which the Gospel says, "You must be simple as doves"[16]. They continued talking of these things for a long time.

7. Since the hour for the midday meal had now arrived, God's servant Philip joined the friars for dinner. When they had finished, they gathered together in chapter and received Philip among them as a brother and companion. Thus, in the year of the Lord 1259 or thereabouts[17], blessed Philip was clothed as a lay brother in the Order. He received, as it were, the armor of humility and obedience with which to resist all the tactics of the evil one.

8. He had been following this pattern of life for some time when it pleased the Almighty to look favorably on the friars of the Order and to manifest to them the wisdom of this man destined to illuminate the whole Order. It happened that Philip, out of obedience, went on a journey to Siena with a friar by the name of Victor. On the road they were met by two religious of the Order of Preachers coming from Germany. These were puzzled at seeing our friars' habit. Their curiosity soon led them to a conversation with blessed Philip and they enquired what kind of life they led and what Order's habit they were wearing. The man of God, Philip, in true humility and with marvelous wisdom, made the following reply: "If your question is about our place of origin, we are sons of this land. But if you wish to know our status, we are called Servants of the glorious Virgin, the habit of whose widowhood we wear. We lead the life instituted by the holy Apostles, and follow the rule of

[10] One of the Founders of the Servite Order. The LP is the only fourteenth-century literary source which names him. Bonfilius and Alexis are both found on all the lists of the founders which have come down to us.
[11] The author of the LP places the first of two summaries of the spirituality of the Order on the lips of Bonfilius (cf. no. 8).
[12] *Ez* 1, 20-21
[13] *Lk* 10, 28.
[14] *Ps* 37, 11.
[15] These words are not found in the Gospels, but they are the words of the Magnificat antiphon for Second Vespers of the Apostles.
[16] *Mt* 10, 16.
[17] According to the LO the correct year is 1254.

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the saintly doctor Augustine"[18]. As they continued their conversation, they began to discuss profound questions, to which the man of God replied with great wisdom and conviction, proving his adherence to true doctrine in every case and his ability to support it with numerous authorities and examples from the lives of the saints. When they had finished, each went his own way.

9. Then blessed Philip's companion said to him, "Brother, when you were received into the Order, why did you not make known the knowledge you possess, as we are so short of men of learning? Just now, you have shown great scholarship in debating with those religious. I can tell you for a certainty that this very day the light of learning has begun to shine in our Order". Then blessed Philip begged him on his knees, for the love of God, not to reveal this to anyone. But as soon as they had both returned to Florence, Fra Victor began to speak and make known to all the others how blessed Philip had dealt with those strangers. This caused much rejoicing among the friars. They promoted Philip to the clerical state and gradually advanced him to sacred Orders.

10. The day came when the prior, Fra Bonfilius, went the way of all human flesh. Then, in the year of the Lord 1266, the friars gathered to celebrate the chapter in the city of Florence. In that year Fra Manetto of Florence, the General of the Order, resigned his office. Elected in a previous chapter, he had succeeded Fra James of Siena[19] in that office. Then the entire chapter, inspired by the Holy Spirit, unanimously elected blessed Philip, even though he was at that time resident at Cesena[20]. Humble and gentle as he was, he did not wish to accept the office. But eventually, after much urging, he agreed. His learning and his fame increased daily. That is how it should be with any prelate and worker in the vineyard of the Lord of Hosts, as St. Isidore says: "A learned ecclesiastic should shine both by his doctrine and his life, for doctrine is true when it is ratified by one's way of living"[21]. In both of these ways the man of God, blessed Philip, proved himself fully proficient. God the Father endowed him with many miracles, in supplying the poor with what they needed, curing numerous illnesses, correcting offenders, recalling sinners to repentance and in many other works too numerous to mention here.

11. We read of him that he governed the Order in the office of prior general for nineteen years[22]. Every year at the chapter he besought the friars with tears to release him from the office, asserting out of humility that he was not equipped for such a task. But the friars took into consideration Philip's holiness and the good of the Order, and so were never willing to grant his request. He would then spend days weeping to himself because he was not able to carry out his desire. When the holy man saw that it was in vain for him to try to obtain the consent of the friars to his resignation, and unable to put the matter out of his mind, he contemplated achieving his goal through the Holy See. An occasion to do this presented itself when he had to go to Rome with some companions to see to affairs of the Order.

12. Therefore, on the appointed day he took with him Fra Lotaringo of Florence[23], who afterwards succeeded him in office, and went to the papal palace with all the privileges of the Order. Without mentioning anything to his companion, he intended handing to the Pope his resignation

[18] A second summary of the life and spirituality of the Servants of Mary. For the symbolism of the habit cf. LO, no. 52.

[19] The chronology here is confused. Bonfilius' successor was Bonayunta. He was succeeded on 5 September 1257 by James of Siena (1257-1265). On 29 May 1265 Manetto was confirmed as prior general after the resignation of James. Manetto resigned on 5 June 1267.

[20] The earliest documentation we have for the existence of a Servite priory in Cesena is August 1300. It is possible to read this passage also as "at Siena", for some manuscripts of the LP have this reading.

[21] *Sententiarum libri tres*, III, 36 (PL 83, 707).

[22] In fact, however, Philip was general for eighteenth years, since he was elected in 1267. But perhaps the year 1266, as found in the LP, corresponds to the Florentine calendar.

[23] Lotaringo is found as friar and prior in many documents before 1285. After Philip's death, he succeeded him as prior general of the Order until the early years of the fourteenth century. The Servite General Archives conserves the register of his administration, with some initial administrative notes by Saint Philip himself.

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from the office of General, fearing that if he were to reveal his intention, Fra Lotaringo would prevent him. But Fra Lotaringo, a prudent and wise man, knowing Philip's mind from other occasions, became suspicious of what blessed Philip wished to do, although he was not yet certain. Besides, the previous night blessed Philip had seen in a vision that he would have cut off his own hand if he had not been prevented by a certain friar, and in the morning he had revealed this vision to his companion. And so, while Fra Lotaringo was going with blessed Philip to the palace of the lord Pope, fearing what he had heard, he asked why they were going there. He said that he would not move another step until he learned the truth. Then blessed Philip, since he could not hide or change the truth, revealed to him his real intention and begged of him sincerely to help him carry out his wish. Fra Lotaringo was very upset on hearing this, and insisted that Philip should banish the thought from his mind, since it would be to the Order's disadvantage and contrary to the wish of all the friars, adding that he would never help him in such a matter in the audience with the Supreme Pontiff. So, this time also blessed Philip could not effect his purpose.

13. I heard also from his nephew, Fra Forte of Florence[24], that when blessed Philip was made prior general, he concealed the office from his parents for almost eight years; and whenever he visited them, which was rarely, he was accustomed to go not as General but as a simple friar.

14. At a time when the people of Florence were waging war against Arezzo[25] and had destroyed all the vegetation of the countryside, a great famine arose there. For the friar Servants of blessed Mary in Arezzo this occasioned such a shortage of food that they scarcely could keep alive. When blessed Philip heard of their necessity and hunger, he hastened to them as fast as he could, as the good shepherd who always goes to the aid of the desolate. One day, when the friars had passed beyond the hour of dinner, the man of God Philip tried to comfort them as best he could. Entering the church, he turned to the Blessed Virgin, begging and imploring her that, as a loving mother, she would not allow her servants to die of hunger. While he was thus praying, an unexpected knock was heard at the priory door. One of the friars rushed out at once and found no one there, but instead, two baskets of beautiful white bread. He brought them to the friars and they went to their meal. So, together with blessed Philip, they were all miraculously revived. And from then on, through the merits of Philip, they were never short of bread or other provisions.

15. On a certain occasion when the man of God Philip was travelling on a visitation of the Order, he approached the village of Gagliano[26] and came across a leper sitting by the roadside, who begged alms of him. Blessed Philip gave him his tunic. As soon as he put it on, the leper was cured and ran after Philip crying, "Please wait for me, man of God, so that I may give you thanks". Philip, when he saw him, replied, "Give glory to God the Father and go in peace; but make sure you tell nobody". The cured man ran and came to the castle of Monte Accianico[27], and there he soon made known how he had come to be healed.

16. The fame of this reached the ears of the whole people and was even circulated openly in the Roman Curia; and, since the Holy See was then vacant, some cardinals of the Church declared blessed Philip worthy of the office of Pontiff. Among these cardinals was the venerable father and most revered Cardinal Ottaviano degli Ubaldini[28]. The cardinals, hearing of the immediate cure of the leper and many other miracles worked by blessed Philip, were of one opinion that this man was

[24] For Fra Forte of Sommaia, see LO, no. 6.

[25] This war was between Florence, which was Guelf and was protected by Charles of Anjou, and the Guibelines of Tuscany.

[26] Gagliano in Val di Sieve, in the Mugello, on the road toward the Passo della Futa.

[27] The castle of Monte Accianico is also in the Val di Sieve, near Scarperia. It was constructed by Cardinal Ottaviano degli Ubaldini († 1273). It was destroyed several times by the Guelfs of Florence in their war against the Ubaldini.

[28] Ottaviano, of the Florentine family of the Ubaldini, was bishop of Bologna from 1240 to 1244 and he was then created cardinal by Innocent IV on 31 May 1244. He was a person of great importance during the pontificate of Alexander IV and he gave Florence to the Guibelines with the help of the citizens of Siena. Dante places him in hell (*Inferno* X, 120).

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most suited for the office of Supreme Pontiff. [But blessed Philip out of Christian humility withdrew from all human contact and hid for some days][29].

When this miracle was performed there were two friars with blessed Philip, travelling a little distance ahead of him. They were Fra Sostene and Fra Hugh[30]. They saw the holy man speaking with the leper and immediately suspected what in fact had happened, but only when they were back in Florence did they learn for certain.

17. Another time, the man of God Philip was journeying through the province of Lombardy on his way to Milan, in order to pass on from there to Germany[31]. It was the season when kings are wont to go to war, when the zodiac sign Leo prevails and the whole land burns in the heat of the sun. He came across a huge leafy tree along the road and took shelter under it. There was already a crowd of men there, sheltering from the heat also, and to them Philip spoke in the following manner: "There are here among you, my beloved brothers, certain men on whom the wrath of God will descend this day unless they do penance for their sins". But some of the men, being evil-minded and not fearing divine Judgement, immediately broke out into filthy language against the man of God. Philip replied to them, "You are the very ones on whom God's anger will descend today to devour you". Then blessed Philip called the others and went out from under the tree. When they had gone just a short distance, a cloud suddenly appeared over the tree; then a fierce storm arose and a flash of lightning came down and destroyed the tree and those evil men along with it, before the very eyes of Philip and the others. Thus, blessed Philip possessed the spirit of prophecy, for he had foretold the sudden death of those men. But those who had gone with the holy man changed their lives and turned back to the Lord.

18. On another occasion blessed Philip was on his way towards Germany to visit newly-founded houses of the Order. He came to a lonely wood where there was neither bread nor water to be found. His companion was overcome by the heat of the sun and began to cry for God's help, that he might not die of hunger. Moved to pity, the man of God prayed with tears to the Lord in these words: "Lord God, almighty Father, you provided nourishment for your people, and you never cease to feed all your creatures. I beg you to give food to this child of yours, the servant of your most blessed mother". On finishing the prayer, blessed Philip looked around and saw a hut which was used by shepherds for a resting place. The man of God went over to it, went inside and saw – put there by Providence – some very white bread and a jar of water. So they were provided with wonderful nourishment and went on to Germany.

19. When the time arrived for the man of God Philip to receive heavenly glory with the blessed, he was enlightened by the Lord about it. He immediately directed his steps towards the region of Todi, where there was a newly-erected priory of the friar Servants, the poorest and least important of the whole Order[32]. As the man of God approached the vicinity, a great crowd of people began to gather in the city. Then they all made their way out through the city gate, broke off branches from the trees and with great rejoicing rushed in the direction of the man of God chanting, "Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord"[33]. When Philip saw this, he felt contempt for the deceptive joys of this world and fled from their praises. He took another route, crossed the river Tiber and made towards the Orvieto gate, in order to enter the city of Todi and arrive at the priory with the utmost secrecy.

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[29] This last sentence is not found in all the manuscripts. Attavanti and later writers identify this place of hiding as Monte Amiata, where there is still a chapel dedicated to Saint Philip.

[30] Fra Sostenes and Fra Hugh are well documented in the first seventy years of the Order.

[31] Germany was the general name for the territory in Europe north of the Alps. Servite presence there is first documented on 5 April 1277, regarding the priory of Saint Mary of Paradise in Halberstadt.

[32] The priory of Saint Mark in Todi was certainly founded before 1285 and it remained in Servite hands until 1599 when the Servites moved to Santa Maria delle Grazie, today called the church of Saint Philip, near the Porta Romana.

[33] *Mt* 21, 9.

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20. As he was making this detour, Philip encountered two prostitutes who were plying their trade. To them the man of God said, “May God pardon you, wretched women! I beg of you to be mindful of God, who redeemed you with his precious blood. Think of the punishment due for sin and do not delay in abandoning your sinful ways”. The women, however, replied that they could not desist from sinning since they had no other means by which to live. Then Philip said to them, “I ask this favor of you, out of love of the Virgin Mother of God: for the next three days do not sin with anyone, and here is enough money to support you!”. As soon as they had received the money from the holy man, they were touched in their hearts by the grace of the Holy Spirit.

21. The man of God left the women and continued on his way. Just as he was entering the city, the crowd came upon him and surrounded him, waving branches and shouting loudly and repeatedly, “Here is the man of God! Here is the holy man, the healer of the sick, the helper of the afflicted. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!”. But blessed Philip addressed himself to them: “Friends, people of Todi, why do you torment me? Give glory to God the Father and go back home”. Having said this, he entered the church and, immediately approaching the altar, exclaimed, “This is my resting place forever”[34].

22. On the following day the two prostitutes whom the man of God had called to penance arrived. Crying aloud, they asked Philip to obtain forgiveness for them. Then, weeping at his feet, they confessed their sins. The man of God, therefore, gave them absolution and they returned no more to their sinful ways. Instead, they withdrew to a kind of recluse cell and lived there in great holiness until God called them to his glory; and thus they died in the Lord[35].

23. When the feast of the Assumption of Our Lady in August was over, it was the will of God that his servant Philip be raised up by the angels. On the octave of this feast, a Sunday[36], while all the friars were praying, the man of God was taken to heaven. It was the year of the Lord 1285.

24. While blessed Philip was dying, a woman, paralyzed for her entire life, called to her father from her bed: “Father, if you want your daughter to regain her health, hasten to send me to Saint Mark’s, because a holy man has just gone up to Christ. Through his merits I will regain my health”. He then carried his sick daughter in great haste and placed her on the bier of the man of God. And immediately she began to recover her health. Thus through the prayers of this holy man she left that place healthy and, walking by herself, she returned happy to her home.

25. In those days this miracle also took place. It happened in this way. In the territory of Orvieto there was a peasant who had an only son, blind from his birth. He heard of the fame of the holy man, that is, how he would heal the sick. He hastened to the tomb of the saint with his son and began to pray for him. When the prayer was finished, the son regained his sight.

26. In the city of Todi there was a widow who had sent her only son into the vineyard. While he was going along the road, he met a wolf which seized him by the throat. A man, who was passing along the same road, saw the wolf attack the boy and he began to cry out. The wolf then fled and the man approached the boy and carried his dead body to his mother. The mother, sobbing and shouting, went to the tomb of blessed Philip and began to cry out: “Man of God, Philip, pray for my son”. While she was saying this, suddenly before all the people the dead boy came back to life

[34] *Ps* 132, 14.

[35] Tradition says that the names of the two women were Helen and Flora and that they withdrew to a village between Acquasparta and Narni. Renowned for holiness, they died in 1310 (*Annales OSM*, I, 137).

[36] In 1285 the octave of the Assumption fell on Wednesday. The combination of the octave of the Assumption and Sunday indicates symbolically the perfect conformity of Saint Philip to Our Lady and to His Virgin Mother.

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27. In the same city a woman had been tormented by a devil for a long time. Her parents brought her, tied with ropes, to the tomb of the man of God; and she was immediately freed.

28. One day, there was a great fire near the church of Saint Mark of the Order of Servants of Saint Mary in Todi. A man named Benedettuccio, who was most devoted to blessed Philip, saw that his house was surrounded on all sides by the fire. He took two sandals of woven reeds that blessed Philip, while he was alive, had given him. He put these in front of the fire and immediately the flames receded and thus that section of the city was saved through the merits of blessed Philip

29. Also in the city of Todi there was a man who in his house had the mattress on which blessed Philip had slept and on which he died. The man's name was James. In his house there was a great fire and nothing remained except the mattress on which blessed Philip had slept.

30. In addition, one day in the month of May a great storm broke out around the city of Todi. It was so violent that the grain and vineyards were in danger of being destroyed. Then the friars took the scapular of blessed Philip and put it atop a cross and went in procession through the city, praying in a loud voice: "Have mercy on us, O God, for you do not want anyone to perish; free your servants who hope in you, through the merits of blessed Philip, your faithful servant, and grant calm to your devoted people". When they had finished saying these words, immediately blue sky and joy reappeared in the heavens.

31. And again, in this city there was a man who almost his entire life had suffered a serious illness, commonly called epilepsy. He went to the tomb of blessed Philip and he was completely cured.

32. Again in the same city while a certain friar of San Fortunato[37] was preaching, out of envy he said inane things about the man of God, speaking in this way: "Senseless citizens of Todi, you have indeed become blind as to render such honor to this friar Philip. Don't believe what they say about him". And while he was saying this, he was struck dumb and fell paralyzed, while all watched with astonishment. The friars devoutly carried him to the body of the holy man, through whose merits he immediately regained his health and they placed an image there.

[Translation of blessed Philip]

33. In the year of the Lord 1317, the 10th day of the month of June[38], the friars wished to move his body. They called the bishop of the city and many other clerics and, by means of town-criers, they invited everyone. A large crowd came from all sides to witness this event. And while they were transferring the body from the grave to a beautiful altar, suddenly a strong perfume filled the place and the city, and all the images that were in the church miraculously turned toward the holy man.

34. On the same day, there was a woman who had a withered hand, with which she could no nothing. She could not even lift it to her head. She made a vow and then near his tomb she was cured, so that she was able to move her hand up and down, forward and backward, and she was able to do all sorts of work. To make the miracle more evident, she went to the fountain and with the same hand she placed a jar of water on her head.

35. On Monday, the day after the translation, there was a poor man who for a long time had been sick and was paralyzed over almost all of his body to the point that even with a cane he could

[37] The church of San Fortunato, located in the upper part of Todi, belonged to the Franciscans.
[38] It should read "12th day", if the translation really took place on Sunday, for in 1317 June 10th fell on Friday.

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scarcely move. He came to blessed Philip's tomb at the third hour, and tearfully prayed to blessed Philip. Suddenly he smelled the fragrance of perfume and pleasant odors, and he fell asleep for a short time. When he awoke, he found that he had been cured and from that time he always walked without a cane.

36. On the same day and at the same hour in which this man, freed from his illness, showed himself to the people, another man came to the tomb with his wife, carrying a young boy in his arms. In the presence of all he cried out in a loud voice that the boy, their son, on the evening of the preceding day, that is the day of the translation, had been at the point of death because of a serious attack of fever. They had prayed to blessed Philip and immediately he was healed, as if there had been no sickness.

37. The same day at the ninth hour, a young girl, who for six years could not see with her left eye and kept it closed, was brought to his tomb and she made a vow. She opened her eye and she had recovered her sight.

38. On the same day a boy, who for a very long time had suffered from epilepsy and was tormented by violent attacks of this illness, so much so that he fell ten or twelve times a day frothing at the mouth and shaking. He came to declare that the morning of the translation of the holy man he had prayed to blessed Philip and from that moment he had not had any more epileptic fits either in the daytime or at night. He said that he was therefore freed from that illness.

39. On Tuesday, that is the third day[39] after the translation, there was a neighbor of ours who, because of a serious fall two years earlier, limped so badly that he could not walk without a cane and even with the cane only with great effort was he able to move his foot. He came to the tomb of the holy man and, putting his foot within, was healed, and after that he was able to move about without a cane.

40. Then in evening of the same day, there was another neighbor of ours, whose father had received two sandals of reeds from blessed Philip, when he was still alive. His father had conserved them with great devotion for all his life, and when dying he entrusted them to his son. This son and neighbor of ours suffered from a painful illness of both knees so that he could get no rest, He had the sandals of blessed Philip brought to him with great reverence. He covered one knee with a linen cloth and with devotion and respect he placed one of the sandals on the knee thus covered; and immediately that knee was healed. But as the pain ceased in one knee, it seemed that the other gave greater pain than before. He then covered the other knee with a clean cloth in the same manner and he placed the other sandal on it, and when he did this he was completely healed.

41. On Wednesday, the third day after the translation, a woman tormented by a devil came to blessed Philip's tomb. For six years she had anxiously looked for a rope, cord or some other thing to hang herself. For this reason her parents had to watch her constantly so that she would not do this. She prayed to blessed Philip and immediately fell asleep. In a dream she saw blessed Philip approaching her in a great light and he said to her: "Have confidence, daughter, for I shall restore you to health and I shall free you from the power of the devil and from the evil desire which you have had till now. And the Holy Spirit will be with you from now on". With those words she awoke and found herself freed; and in the future she never had any temptation to hang herself.

42. On Thursday, the fourth day after the translation a boy came to blessed Philip's tomb to be cured of a stone in the bladder, which gave him great pain. He devoutly prayed to God and

[39] In reality this would have been the second day. Perhaps the day of translation itself was included; something which was not done in numbers 41, 42, and 44.

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blessed Philip to free him and immediately the calculus was expelled near the tomb and he was cured.

43. The same day there was a woman who for nearly three years had suffered from a flow of blood, so that, when her monthly period came, it would last for eight continuous days, taking away all her strength and giving great suffering. She came to blessed Philip's tomb and, praying devoutly, recovered completely.

44. On Friday, the fifth day after the translation, there was a poor girl from Monte Castello, in the district of Todi, who had suffered for many years an unsupportable pain in her body and kidneys, so that she could not stand upright without helping herself with her hands and a cane. Her right hand was so withered that she could not open her fingers nor could she make the sign of the cross or do any work. Her father carried her to blessed Philip's tomb, and there she prayed with great devotion to be freed. After having entered the tomb, she was cured, so that by herself, without effort and without a cane, she was able to rise and sit; and she could use her right hand just as the other. With it she made the sign of the cross and was able to do other work.

45. Every day down to the present miracles of this holy man have flourished and they more numerous than we can imagine; etc. Here ends the history of blessed Philip, of the Order of Servants of Saint Mary.

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