

December 10

BLESSED JEROME OF SANT'ANGELO IN VADO

Blessed Jerome was born in Sant'Angelo in Vado, Italy, at the beginning of the fifteenth century. While still a youth, he entered the Servite monastery in his native town, and after completing his studies he returned there as a priest. Jerome is best known for his love of silence and solitude, his spirit of prayer, and his ability as a spiritual director. He died about 1468 and his cult was approved by Pius VI in 1775.

From the common of saints and blessed of our Order, or from the common of holy men.

Office of Readings

SECOND READING

Choose one of the following readings.

From a treatise on Matthew by Saint Chromatius, bishop
(Tract. XIX, I-IV: CCL 9A, pp. 285-287)

Let us shine like spiritual lamps through holy deeds inspired by faith

The Lord said, *You are the light of the world. A city built on a mountain cannot be bidden, nor do men light a lamp and put it under a bushel basket, but on a lamp stand so that it may give light to all in the house.* The Lord has already called his disciples the salt of the earth, because they seasoned with heavenly wisdom the hearts of those that the devil had rendered flat and tasteless. Now the Lord also calls them the light of the world, because he, the true and eternal light, has enlightened them, and they themselves therefore have become a light in the darkness. Since he is the Sun of justice, he rightly calls his disciples, too, a light for the world, for through them, as through gleaming rays, he communicated the light of knowledge of himself to the whole universe. They manifested the light of truth and dispelled the darkness of error from the hearts of others. They enlightened us, and we too have been changed from darkness into light, as the Apostle says: *You were once darkness but now you are light in the Lord; walk as children of the light.* Elsewhere he says: *You are not the children of night and darkness, but children of the light and children of the day.* Rightly has Saint John borne witness in his letter that *God is light and he who abides in God dwells in light, just as God dwells in light.* Therefore, since to our joy we have been freed from the darkness of error, we ought always to walk in the light as children of the light. The Lord continues: *A city built on a mountain cannot be bidden.* The "city" here is the Church, of which many passages in the divine Scriptures speak. David in particular speaks of it when he says: *Glorious things have been said of you, city of God;* and again: *a flood of water gladdens the city of God;* and still again: *As we have heard, so have we now seen in the city of the Lord of hosts, the city of our God; God has established it forever.* And to make it clear that he is speaking of city, the Holy Spirit also mentions the mountains: *To the city of our God, on his holy mountain.* By the city built on a mountain, then, the Lord means the Church that is built on the foundation of faith in our Lord and Saviour, and clad in heavenly glory. By a spiritual act the Church rises above the lowly station proper to her earthly weakness and becomes gloriously visible to the whole world. No longer is she veiled in the shadows that accompanied the giving of the law, but stands forth visible to all through the unveiled preaching of the gospel truth.

The Lord continues: *Nor do men light a lamp and place it under a bushel basket, but on a lampstand, so that it may give light to all in the house.* Let us consider what this statement of the Lord means. We know that we do not light a lamp and then cover it with a basket or otherwise hide it, for, if we did, the lamp would be of use to no one. We light it rather on a lampstand, so that from its elevated position it may dispel the blindness caused by darkness and allow those in the house to use its light. The Lord would have us realize that we have been enlightened by the grace of faith

and the light of the Spirit in

order that through holy deeds inspired by faith we too may shine as spiritual lamps and that we may, with the light of truth, dispel the night of ignorance and enlighten those who sit in the darkness of error. This is why the Apostle says: *Among them you shine like stars in the firmament, as you hold fast to the words of life.*

The spiritual lamp lit for the sake of our salvation should always shine in us. We have the lamp of heavenly commandments and spiritual grace. David refers to that lamp when he says: *Your commandment is a lamp for my feet and a light for my paths.*

RESPONSORY See Matthew 5:16; Colossians 3:17

- V. Your light must shine before all,
R. so that they may see your good works and give praise to your Father in heaven.
V. Whatever you do in word and deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus,
R. so that they ...

Alternative:

In the hearts of those who discern wisdom makes her home

Jerome was born at the beginning of the fifteenth century in Sant'Angelo in Vado, Italy. His deeply Christian parents reared him in the fear of God. As a young man he received the habit of the Servants of Mary in the Servite monastery of his native town. After earning a degree in sacred theology, he was ordained a priest and returned to Sant'Angelo. There he adopted a rigorous life and dedicated himself to penitential practices and prayer, tempering silence and solitude with the duties of community life and works of charity.

While at Sant'Angelo, he held the office of vicar of the Roman Province. About 1450 he helped build the cloistered convent of Saint Mary of Grace for our Servite nuns, including Blessed Victoria, who was also from Sant'Angelo. Jerome was mindful of the needs of the people and was known as a spiritual director. Frederick, Duke of Urbino, held him in great esteem and relied on his advice in important matters, but Jerome wished to dedicate himself only to the Lord and so refused the honours and life of the ducal court.

Jerome died about 1468 and at once people began to come to his grave to seek his intercession. Soon after, as the stories of miracles spread, the people acclaimed him a saint. His incorrupt body is preserved under the main altar of the former Servite church in Sant'Angelo in Vado, and even today the faithful continue to venerate it. Pius VI confirmed his cult in 1775.

RESPONSORY Proverbs 2:10-11; Tobit 4:19; Proverbs 2:2

- V. Wisdom will enter your heart and knowledge will be the delight of your soul.
R. Prudence will watch over you and understanding will be your guardian.
V. Seek advice from all who are wise and incline your heart to understanding.
R. Prudence will watch ...

PRAYER

Heavenly Father, you wondrously endowed Jerome with the gifts of your Spirit. Grant, through his intercession, that, filled with the wisdom of Christ, we may be prudent in all we do. We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.