

July 4

BLESSED UBALD OF BORGO SANSEPOLCRO

Ubald was born at Borgo Sansepolcro around the middle of the thirteenth century. He entered the Order of Servants and was ordained a priest. As a Servite friar he was noted for the holiness of his life and works. He was a close friend of Saint Philip. It is said that when Philip was dying Ubald came to his friend's bedside; Philip regained consciousness for a moment and then died in Ubald's arms. Ubald died at Monte Senario in 1315. Pope Pius VII approved the devotion to him in 1821.

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 the treatise *On Spiritual Friendship* by Saint Aelred of Rievaulx, abbot
(Lib. III, 115-118. 131.134; CCL Cont. Med. 1, 344-345, 348-350)

One who is praying to Christ for a friend will keep attention fixed on him with care and deep desire

It is worthwhile to investigate how friendship ought to be cultivated. There are some who think they are not loved because it is not possible to give them high office; they think they are despised because they are not involved in management and administration. Distressing quarrels may even arise on this account between those who were thought to be friends, hurt feelings turning to estrangement, ten estrangement to reviling. Thus we see that in apportioning dignities or offices, especially in the Church, the greatest discretion is needed. Do not consider who it is that you would like to see promoted, but rather the spiritual strength of the one to be promoted.

There are many worthy of our love, who nevertheless should not be given office and we may cherish with tender affection some who could not be involved in distracting business without grave guilt on our part, and serious damage to them. Hence reason, not affection, should be the judge in such matters, and we should not impose either the honour or the burden on the one who is dearer to us, but on the one who is more able to bear it.

One should not feel slighted because an office is given to another since in this matter of rank, the Lord Jesus put Peter before John. Yet the fact that he gave Peter the primacy did not detract from his special affection for John. To Peter he entrusted his Church, to John his dearly loved mother. He gave the keys of the kingdom to Peter, but admitted John to his heart's deepest intimacy. Let us give our friend the best of our love, gratitude, tenderness, and kindness; but those questionable honours and real burdens to whomever reason indicates; assuredly a person who is not satisfied with friendship unless it yields some paltry personal gains is no true friend. At the same time we must take great care that close friendship not impede a greater good; we may be unwilling that those we care for most should be absent from us, or that they should have some load to carry, when actually this service would be to the profit of many. Thus rightly. ordered friendship considers the common good more than its own pleasure, allowing the mind to rule the heart in this matter.

Friends should be so attuned to each other that, immediately upon seeing one another, even the facial expression of the one becomes like the other's, whether that expression be weighed down with sadness or serene with joy. You can securely choose a friend when you have made certain that he or she would never do, or ask a friend to do, anything unbecoming; when you are assured that he or she considers friendship a virtue and not a chance for gain and avoids flattery and despises obsequiousness; finally when you have determined that your friend is honest and yet discreet, patient under correction, firm and steady in affection, then you will know spiritual delight, namely:

How good and pleasant it is to live together as one.

It will then be an advantage to grieve for one another, to work for each other, to bear one another's burdens, while each finds it a delight to forget self for the ' sake of the other, to prefer the other's will to one's own, to care for the other's needs before one's own, to oppose and expose oneself to hardships. Meanwhile, what joy friends find in conversing with one another, each sharing personal interests with the other, examining all things together and agreeing on them all! In addition, they pray for each other. Such prayer from friends accomplishes more because it is offered to God with more affection, with tears aroused by fear, elicited by affection or induced by sorrow. And so when one prays to Christ for the friend's sake, attention is directed with loving desire to Christ. Then it sometimes happens that suddenly and imperceptibly the one love passes over into the other love, and the friend thus comes into close touch, as it were, with the sweetness of Christ himself and begins to *taste how sweet he is* and to *experience how delightful he is*. And so, rising from that holy love in which he embraces a friend to that in which he embraces Christ, a person will joyfully attain the fullness of the spiritual fruit of friendship, while awaiting the fullness of all things in the future. Then, all fear, the cause of our anxiety and worry for each other now, will be banished; all adversity which we must bear for one another now will be dispelled; and above all, the sting of death and even death itself will be destroyed, whose darts constantly torment us and cause us to grieve for each other.

When our safety is secure, we will rejoice that this, the highest good, will last forever. When this friendship which only a few experience in this world is extended to all and when all return it to God, then *God will be all in all*.

RESPONSORY See Proverbs 17:17; John 15:13

V. A friend is always a friend.

R. A brother or sister is born for the time of stress.

V. There is no greater love than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends.

R. A brother or sister ...

Alternative.

He left us an example of a holy life

Ubaldo was born at Borgo Sansepolcro, in Tuscany, toward the middle of the thirteenth century. Fra Paolo Attavanti tells us that his attraction to religious life dated from his early years. When he completed his study of philosophy and letters, he joined the Order of Friar Servants of Mary. Then he studied theology. Brother Ubaldo was a tall, good-looking man. He was respected as a fine example of chastity. He was a man of work and initiative who made no compromises with life's comforts. His friendship with Saint Philip highlights another dimension of his personality and confirms the accounts of his holiness. Fra Taddeo Adimari and Nicolò Borghese both repeat an earlier life of Saint Philip which describes his death at Todi. Ubaldo had miraculously learned that his friend was dying and arrived at Todi when Philip had been unconscious for three hours. Philip awoke, embraced his friend and brother, then died. We do not know in which monastery Ubaldo lived for most of his religious life. It is thought that he passed the last years of his life at Monte Senario, where he died in 1315. He was well known there because of the many miracles attributed to him. Fra Michele Poccianti states that his body was buried in the church of Monte Senario.

In 1707 the remains of a tall man were found under the main altar near the tomb of the Seven Holy Fathers. It is generally believed that these are the remains of Ubaldo. In 1821, Pope Pius VII confirmed the devotion to Blessed Ubaldo. In 1969 the remains of Blessed Ubaldo were transferred to the chapel of Saint Joseph where they are still venerated.

RESPONSORY See 2 Corinthians 7:6, 1:3-4; Titus 1:4

V. God consoles those who are afflicted.

R. And strengthens us by the arrival of a friend in faith.

V. Blessed be God who consoles us in all our crosses.

V. And strengthens ...

PRAYER

Lord, our God, source of all love, help us by the prayers and example of Blessed Ubald. Fill us with your gifts so that we may glorify you in total love. 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.