DAILY COMPASS
Managing Director Riccardo Cascioli
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Saint Leonard of Noblac

SAINT OF THE DAY 06_11_2024

Very popular in the Middle Ages and especially in Central Europe, Saint Leonard of Noblac or Noblat († c. 559) was born into a family of noble Franks. He was baptised on Christmas Eve 496 by St Remigius, then Archbishop of Reims, with King Clovis as godfather. The Merovingian king had also received Baptism on the same day, thus the Salian Franks became the first Germanic people to adopt Catholicism. The oldest news we have about the saint dates back to the 11th century, when his name appeared first in a piece of writing by the monk and historian Adémar de Chabannes and then in an

anonymous *Vita Sancti Leonardi*. We know that in his youth he refused to undertake a career as a knight, preferring to become a disciple of Remigius.

As his master before him had done, Leonard also obtained from Clovis the privilege of freeing prisoners (mainly of war) that he had met on his way and considered innocent. He declined the offer of a bishopric because he preferred the hermit life. For some time he lived in the monastery of Micy. He then retired to a forest in the Limousin region (the saint is also known as Leonard of Limoges), where he was followed by some of the people he had freed. One day he found himself helping Queen Clotilde (future saint) in the pangs of childbirth: according to tradition, out of gratitude Clovis granted him all the land that the hermit managed to demarcate on the back of his donkey within a day.

In that space Leonard built an oratory dedicated to Our Lady and an altar to his master, Remigius, who died in the odour of sanctity. A village, today called Saint-Léonard-de-Noblat, developed around the growing monastery. He taught his disciples to love God and transmitted with simplicity the biblical teachings: “Remember that it is written that the little of the just is worth more than the riches of all the wicked”.

Patron of: childbirths, prisoners of war and convicts