BOOKLET TO PRINT

Saint Blimond

Life, prayer, novena and pilgrimage

Feast day: January 3

IN BRIEF

Saint Blimond

7th-century Frankish monk, disciple and successor of Saint Valery as abbot of Leuconay (Saint-Valery-sur-Somme).

Feast day	January 3
Born	late 6th or early 7th century, Dauphiné or the Oise valley, according to the sources
Died	January 3, 673 (or 650 according to other sources), Leuconay (Saint-Valery-sur-Somme, Somme)
Canonized	immemorial cult
Era	7th century

In this booklet

Life

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Church of Saint-Blimont

Credits and sources

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LIFE

Saint Blimond

Saint Blimond (Blidemundus in Latin, Blimont in Picard place names) was a 7th-century Frankish monk, disciple and successor of Saint Valery as head of the monastery of Leuconay, today Saint-Valery-sur-Somme in northern France. Healed by his master according to tradition, he rebuilt the abbey after its destruction and died there, probably in 673. A village in the Somme bears his name and keeps his relics. His feast day is January 3.

Who was Saint Blimond?

Blimond belongs to the generation of monks formed in the wake of Saint Columbanus, who made monastic life flourish in northern Gaul in the 7th century. His master, Saint Valery, had founded a monastery at Leuconay, at the mouth of the Somme, around 611. Blimond succeeded him and ensured the survival of this foundation in troubled times.

The sources on his life are few and late, and they do not always agree. The date of his birth is unknown, and even his origin: some traditions have him come from the Dauphiné, while Abbé Jules Corblet, a 19th-century historian of the saints of the diocese of Amiens, says he came from the Oise valley. The date of his death also wavers between 650 and 673. This page keeps to what can be said with caution.

Key dates in the life of Blimond

- **Late 6th or early 7th century**: Born, in the Dauphiné or in the Oise valley according to the sources.
- **c. 615**: Arriving crippled at the monastery of Leuconay, he is healed by Saint Valery, according to tradition, and stays with him.
- **c. 622**: He succeeds Saint Valery as abbot of Leuconay.

- **Then**: The monastery is destroyed during an invasion; Blimond takes refuge at the abbey of Bobbio, in northern Italy.
- **627**: At Bobbio, he witnesses the death of Abbot Saint Attalus.
- **After his return**: He raises the abbey of Leuconay from its ruins.
- **January 3, 673**: Dies at Leuconay (Abbé Corblet suggests 650).
- **1121**: The village of *Sanctus Blimundus*, today Saint-Blimont, is recorded under this name.
- **French Revolution**: His statue and relics are taken from Saint-Valery to Saint-Blimont.

The healed disciple

Tradition reports that Blimond arrived at Leuconay crippled, and that Saint Valery healed him. Grateful, he wished to stay with the one who had raised him up, and became a monk under his guidance. With him he discovered a faith lived in prayer, work and poverty, in the spirit of the monks who had come from Luxeuil. This account, which cannot be checked in detail, expresses well the bond between master and disciple: Blimond owed Valery both his health and his vocation.

The abbot of Leuconay

When Valery died, around 622, Blimond took charge of the monastery. The sources then report that the abbey was destroyed during an invasion. Blimond took refuge at Bobbio, the monastery founded by Saint Columbanus in northern Italy. He was there in 627, when he witnessed the death of Abbot Attalus, Columbanus's successor.

Then he returned to the banks of the Somme. There he raised the abbey from its ruins and gathered the community again. Thanks to him, Saint Valery's foundation survived. He died at Leuconay on January 3, probably in 673, after governing the monastery for many years.

Devotion and memory

Saint Blimond is celebrated on January 3. His name has remained attached to a village about ten kilometers from Saint-Valery-sur-Somme: Saint-Blimont, recorded as early as 1121 in the Latin form *Sanctus Blimundus*. During the Revolution, the saint's statue, carved in polychrome wood in the 15th century, and his relics were taken there from Saint-Valery. The village church, dedicated to him and rebuilt in the 19th century, keeps this statue and a reliquary, both protected as historic monuments. Stained-glass windows there tell several episodes of his life.

What can we learn from Saint Blimond?

Blimond is a man of faithfulness. Raised up by his master, he took his place; driven away by violence, he knew how to wait; returning to the ruins, he rebuilt. Without him, Saint Valery's work might have disappeared. You can pray to him for those who carry on a work after its founder, for those who must rebuild after a trial, and for the sick who hope for healing.

To pray with him, see the prayer to Saint Blimond and the novena to Saint Blimond.

Where to pray to Saint Blimond

- **Saint-Blimont** (Somme): the church dedicated to him, which keeps his statue and relics.
- **Saint-Valery-sur-Somme** (Somme): the former Leuconay, where he was monk and then abbot.

PRAYER

Prayer to Saint Blimond for the Sick and for Those Who Rebuild

Saint Blimond, healed by Saint Valery according to tradition, became his disciple and then his successor as head of the monastery of Leuconay, which he raised from its ruins. Prayer composed for Saintspedia, in the spirit of Church tradition. It entrusts to him the sick, those who carry on a work and those who must rebuild.

Prayer to Saint Blimond

Saint Blimond,
you came crippled to Leuconay
and found with Saint Valery
healing and your vocation.
Present to the Lord the sick I entrust to him,
and teach me gratitude.

You took your master's place
and faithfully kept what he had founded.
When everything was destroyed, you waited without despair,
then you came back to rebuild.
Give me your patience in trials
and your courage to begin again.

Watch over communities at prayer,
over those who carry a responsibility after others,
and over the land of Picardy.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

When to pray to Saint Blimond

- On his feast day, January 3, or during a visit to the church of Saint-Blimont.
- For someone who is sick, disabled or has difficulty walking.
- When you take over a responsibility from someone else.
- To rebuild after a trial, a loss or a failure.
- For monks, nuns and vocations.

A prayer for the sick

> *Saint Blimond, you who were raised from your infirmity,*
> *pray for those who suffer in their bodies.*
> *Amen.*

To prepare for his feast, you can pray the novena to Saint Blimond from December 26 to January 3, and read the life of Saint Blimond.

NOVENA

Novena to Saint Blimond

Novena composed for Saintspedia, in the spirit of Church tradition. It is inspired by the life of Saint Blimond, a 7th-century monk and abbot of Leuconay, today Saint-Valery-sur-Somme. It is not an official liturgical text. To finish it on his feast day, January 3, begin on December 26. You can also pray it at any other time of the year.

How to pray this novena

Each day, begin with the Sign of the Cross and entrust your intention to God. Read the meditation, say the prayer of the day, then an Our Father, a Hail Mary and a Glory Be. End with: "Saint Blimond, pray for us." The act suggested each day helps you live the novena concretely. The sources on his life are rare and late: the episodes recounted are those handed down by tradition.

Day 1: Coming as you are

According to tradition, Blimond arrived at Leuconay crippled. He did not come with strength or merits, but with his weakness.

Prayer: Lord, I dare to come to you with my weaknesses. Welcome me as I am.

Act of the day: In a moment of silence, entrust to God a fragility you carry.

Day 2: Healing

Saint Valery healed Blimond, tradition reports. Through the master, it is Christ who raises up the sick man.

Prayer: Lord Jesus, you who healed the crippled, look kindly on the sick I entrust to you.

Act of the day: Visit or call someone who is sick.

Day 3: Staying out of gratitude

Once healed, Blimond wanted to stay with his benefactor. His vocation was born of gratitude.

Prayer: Lord, thank you for all I have received. Make my gratitude a gift of myself.

Act of the day: Write or say thank you to someone who has helped you.

Day 4: Learning from a master

With Saint Valery, Blimond learned the life of prayer and work of the monks formed at Luxeuil. No one becomes a disciple alone.

Prayer: Lord, bless those who handed on the faith to me, and make me attentive to your witnesses.

Act of the day: Pray for someone who formed you in the faith.

Day 5: Taking over

When Valery died, Blimond became abbot. Following a saint calls for humility and faithfulness.

Prayer: Lord, help those who carry a responsibility after others to keep what matters and to serve humbly.

Act of the day: Carefully complete a task you received from someone else.

Day 6: When everything is destroyed

The monastery was destroyed during an invasion. Blimond saw the work entrusted to him disappear.

Prayer: Lord, support those who see what they built collapse. Keep them in hope.

Act of the day: Pray for the victims of war and for refugees.

Day 7: Exile at Bobbio

As a refugee at Bobbio, in Italy, Blimond witnessed the death of Abbot Attalus. Exile became for him a time of communion with other monks.

Prayer: Lord, bless those who live far from home, and give them brothers and sisters on their way.

Act of the day: Welcome kindly someone who has come from elsewhere.

Day 8: Rebuilding

Back on the banks of the Somme, Blimond raised the abbey from its ruins. Thanks to him, Saint Valery's work survived.

Prayer: Lord, give me the courage to rebuild what is damaged in my life and around me.

Act of the day: Repair something: an object, a relationship, a forgotten promise.

Day 9: A life given to the end

Blimond died at Leuconay on a January 3, probably in 673, in the midst of the community he had restored. His relics are kept today at Saint-Blimont.

Prayer: Lord, grant me to serve you faithfully to the end. Through the intercession of Saint Blimond, grant me the grace I ask in this novena, if it is your will.

Act of the day: If possible, attend Mass and pray for the departed members of your family.

Living the novena with Saint Blimond

We know little about Saint Blimond, but what matters is enough: a man raised from his infirmity, who gave his life to God and rebuilt what violence had destroyed. During these nine days, you can carry the sick, those who carry on a work and those who must rebuild everything. If you can, visit the church of Saint-Blimont.

Closing prayer

> *Saint Blimond,*
> *disciple of Saint Valery and father of Leuconay,*
> *you were raised up by the goodness of God*
> *and you rebuilt what had been destroyed.*
> *Present to the Lord the intention I have entrusted to you.*
> *Keep me faithful and trusting in trials.*
> *Through Christ our Lord. Amen.*

You can also pray the prayer to Saint Blimond at any time, and read the life of Saint Blimond.

PILGRIMAGE

Church of Saint-Blimont

The church of Saint-Blimont stands in the village of the same name, in the Somme department of northern France, about ten kilometers from Saint-Valery-sur-Somme. Dedicated to Saint Blimond, a 7th-century monk and successor of Saint Valery as head of the monastery of Leuconay, it keeps his old statue and his relics. It is today the main place where this saint of Picardy can be honored.

A village that bears the saint's name

The name of Saint-Blimont directly recalls the abbot of Leuconay. The village is recorded as early as 1121 in the Latin form *Sanctus Blimundus*, then in similar forms over the following centuries. The final *t* of the present spelling only became established at the time of the Revolution.

It was also during the Revolution that the village received its most precious treasure. The statue of Saint Blimond and his relics, until then kept at Saint-Valery, were taken to Saint-Blimont. They have remained there ever since, making the village church the place where the saint is remembered.

What you can see

The present church was rebuilt in the 19th century, but it keeps some older elements, such as some of its beams. Three objects in it are protected as historic monuments. The statue of Saint Blimond, in polychrome wood, dates from the 15th century: it is the one brought from Saint-Valery. The reliquary is also protected. Finally, the baptismal font comes from the village's first church and predates the 16th century.

Several stained-glass windows in the church show episodes from the life of the saint. They allow visitors to meditate, on site, on the story of the monk healed by Saint Valery, who became abbot and restorer of his monastery.

Praying on site

Before you come, you can read the life of Saint Blimond. Before his statue and relics, entrust to him the sick, those who carry on a work and those who must rebuild after a trial, then say the prayer to Saint Blimond. These suggestions are offered by Saintspedia.

Other places of Saint Blimond

- **Saint-Valery-sur-Somme** (Somme): the former Leuconay, where he was monk and abbot, and where he died.
- **Bobbio** (Italy): the abbey founded by Saint Columbanus, where he found refuge.

Practical information

Saint-Blimont lies not far from the Bay of the Somme, about ten kilometers from Saint-Valery-sur-Somme. The church is a place of worship: silence and modest dress are requested. Opening hours and Mass times are not fixed: check with the parish, the town hall or the tourist office before you come, especially if you wish to see the statue and the reliquary.

Credits and sources

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