

## AUGUST 18

## SAINT ALBERT HURTADO CRUCHAGA

## PRIEST, RELIGIOUS

## OPTIONAL MEMORIAL

Saint Albert Hurtado Cruchaga was born of January 22, 1901, in Viña del Mar, Chile, and entered the Society of Jesus on August 14, 1923, in Chillán; he was ordained a priest on August 24, 1933. His life's work was mostly teaching, help for the poor, and care for children. He began a retreat house, and in 1947 founded a Chilean trade union movement (*Asociación Sindical Chilena*); in 1951 he started a new review, the *Mensajero*. His constant activity—priestly, apostolic, educational, charitable, and social—sprang from his love of Christ and the poor. He died on August 18, 1952, and was beatified by John Paul II in 1983. He was canonized on October 23, 2005, by Pope Benedict XVI, becoming his country's second saint.

From the Common of Pastors, or the Common of Men Saints, for Religious.

## THE OFFICE OF READINGS

## Second Reading

From unpublished writings of Blessed Albert Hurtado Cruchaga, S.J., *Always in Contact with God*.

*Calmness in God*

You ask me how I manage to put some balance into my life. This is a question I ask myself, as each day I am swallowed up more by my work—letters, telephone calls, articles, visits: the wearing routine of business—congresses, study sessions, conferences agreed to out of weakness, because I could not say no, or because I did not want to miss an opportunity to do good; bills to be paid, decisions to be made in the stress of unforeseen circumstances. Then there is some pressing apostolate, the urgency to arrive before materialism gains a complete victory. So

often I feel I am on a rock, battered from all sides by rising waves. The only escape route is heavenwards. For an hour or a day, I let the waves beat upon the rock; I stop looking out to the horizon and only look upwards towards God.

How blessed is the active life, a life completely consecrated to God and completely given over to those around me! Its very demands lead me to rediscover myself and direct myself to God. God is the only possible way out. In all my worries, He alone is my refuge.

There are also dark times. There comes a moment when my mind is being pulled in so many directions that I cannot stand it any longer; the body cannot go along with the will; it has obeyed so often, but now it gives in. My head is an aching void. Ideas fail to come. My imagination ceases to function, and my memory is a blank. We have all had moments like this!

The only remedy seems to be to resign oneself for a few days, or for a few months, or perhaps even for a few years. To be obstinate would be no help: one simply has to give in. And then, as in all the difficulties, I escape to God. I hand over to Him all my being and all my desires, everything to his fatherly Providence, even if I lack the strength to speak to him. What understanding God has shown me in his goodness even in those moments!

In God I feel a hope that is almost boundless. My worries disappear. I let them go, and I let myself go completely into his hands. . . . I belong to him, and He takes care of all and of me myself. At long last my soul can surface once more, tranquil and serene. Yesterday's worries, the thousand and one preoccupations about "Thy kingdom come," and even the dreadful torment I felt just now

fearing the triumph of his enemies. . . everything gives way to calmness in God, looking ineffably in the very depth of my soul. God, the rock against which all waves break in vain, God, the perfect radiance marred by no shadow, God, the all-conquering victor, dwells within me. I can reach him fully, as the highest aim of my love. My whole soul is within him. And then, sweetly and surely, it is as if all life's trials, all the insecurities and uncertainties, had left me completely. I am bathed in light. He fills me with his strength. He loves me.

**Responsory** (Gal. 2:20; Is. 61:1)

**R.** I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me.

**V.** The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me to bring good tidings to the afflicted, he has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted. It is no longer. . . .

**Concluding Prayer**

God our Father, in Blessed Albert Hurtado, your priest, you have given us a magnificent sign of your love. Through his intercession grant that, always faithful to your will, we may love all with the sentiments of your Son and thus ceaselessly promote your kingdom of justice, love, and peace. We ask this through your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.